FAMILY AND CONSUMER EDUCATORS' OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD BLOCK SCHEDULING

by

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to describe Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers' attitudes and perceptions regarding block scheduling measured by the researcher's instrument.

The four part research instrument was developed by the researcher to measure demographics, attitudes of Family and Consumer Education teachers toward block scheduling, the extent of resources available to Family and Consumer Education teachers during implementation of block scheduling, and perceived advantages and disadvantages of block scheduling.

The research instrument was developed and administered during the 2002-2003 school year to 225 randomly selected middle and high school Family and Consumer Education teachers identified by a database provided by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The sample involved 154 respondents, with 38 subjects teaching in a block schedule.

Statistics used in this study were the analysis of variance (ANOVA), a two-way analysis of variance, the student Newman-Keuls Multiple Comparison Test, the T-Test and the Pearson Correlations Test.

The findings of this study indicated that attitudes of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers toward block scheduling were significantly influenced by age, years teaching experience teaching Family and Consumer education, and years teaching with block scheduling. A significant correlation was found between and the amount of resources Family and Consumer Education teachers received and teacher attitudes towards five subcategories: transition to block scheduling, teacher satisfaction, perceived student satisfaction, teaching strategies, and teacher workload. Evidence from this study supports the theory that providing teachers with appropriate and useful resources will help with the success of block scheduling.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Introduction

Alternative scheduling is not a new concept. Schools have been experimenting with alternative types of schedules since the inception of formal education. The traditional twentieth century model of high school education may prove to be inadequate to meet the challenges of the next century, so the possibility of alternative styles of time management at this level is refreshing (Hess, Wronkovich, & Robinson, 1999). Alternative scheduling made a surge in the 1960s and 1970s when modular scheduling existed. The move away from modular scheduling showed that there were issues related to it, which made it unsuccessful and unpopular.

Recently, there has been an increased use of a type of scheduling called block scheduling, which lengthens the period of time a class meets on any given day. Shortt and Thayer (1999) identified two high school scheduling configurations that are most commonly identified as block scheduling. These schedules are usually called A-B or alternating day and 4 x 4 or semester block. Classes on the A-B schedule generally meet every other day for the entire school year or semester for 90-minute blocks. Those on a 4 x 4 schedule generally meet every day for 90 minutes for one or two terms or for 45 days. This type of scheduling is sometimes referred to as the concentrated model, intensive model, straight block model, or four-block model (Schoenstein, 1995). Some teachers teach in combinations of the block and traditional scheduling, while others teach in only one of the scheduling methods. Due to the various forms of block scheduling, each teacher has different attitudes.

A review of the literature by Rettig and Canady (as cited in George & McEwin, 1999), estimates that more than fifty percent of U.S. high schools are either using or considering a model

of block scheduling. With fifty percent of schools considering or currently using block scheduling, it is important to know the effects of this alternative form of scheduling on education. Research studies to this point focus on the four core subjects of science, math, social studies, and English. Although these subjects are important, vocational education, specifically Family and Consumer Education, should not be neglected.

Vocational educators have different needs than the core areas, so their attitudes and opinions on block scheduling may vary significantly different from those of other non-vocational educators. Additionally, more research is available on the successful implementation strategies for teachers than on what opinions, perceptions, and attitudes teachers have regarding block scheduling (Queen & Isenhour, 1998; Schoenstein, 1995). Addressing the opinions, perceptions, and attitudes surrounding block scheduling may help develop appropriate successful implementation strategies.

Some roadblocks that are commonly encountered in block scheduling include under trained faculty, lack of parental or teacher support, and under planned scheduling of students. According to Queen and Isenhour (1998), the biggest problem in making a successful transition to a block schedule may be a lack of communication between administration and faculty. Whether it is communication about the positive outcomes or daily struggles, teacher/administrator communication needs to be addressed. Administrators may find that teachers are dealing with similar types of issues. Administrators can then provide additional training and resources for their teachers. Training and resource availability will help schools to be more effective in their new scheduling.

To implement block scheduling successfully, faculty must be trained and given support, including funds or necessary materials (Hassenpflug, 1999). The most important aspects of

preparing for the transition from traditional to block scheduling relate to planning, and this planning must include appropriate faculty training (Stokes & Wilson, 2000; Shortt & Thayer, 1995). Some teachers will inevitably need more training than others will. Staff development activities should be appropriate, continual, and available to all teachers throughout the year (Jenkins, Queen, & Algozzine, 2001).

Planning and availability of resources to teachers is a cornerstone in the success of block scheduling. Teachers who have taught their entire career using traditional scheduling methods need to be provided and encouraged to use resources for a successful transition to an alternative type of scheduling. Many of these lifetime teachers worked through the short-lived modular scheduling and other forms of alternative scheduling already. The attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of these experienced teachers may differ from other educators who have not experienced these scheduling modifications.

It is important to determine teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the block schedule after extended use, of the factors crucial in making a smooth transition from regular to the block, and the advantages and measurable outcomes of block scheduling (Stokes & Wilson, 2000). Teacher attitudes will make or break implementation of block scheduling. Block periods challenge teachers to carry out their roles as leaders and coaches, besides being sources of information, and to create classrooms where students are consistently engaged in learning (Marshak, 1998).

Naturally, the areas of hands-on coursework offered in vocational education programs need more time during class periods to accomplish their objectives. Vocational educators have been pushing for longer blocks of time for their classes to accomplish the goals of their curriculum. Now that a large number of schools are utilizing block scheduling, how have these teachers found

success? By listening to the experiences of other Family and Consumer Education teachers, we can determine if they are satisfied with the form of block scheduling that their schools use. Family and Consumer Education teachers should be able to share their success and stumbling blocks to help each other out. Some Family and Consumer Education teachers will favor block scheduling and have more favorable attitudes toward the block than others. The reasoning behind this is unexplored territory. These attitudes and opinions should be shared throughout the field so that Family and Consumer Education teachers can be one step ahead when implementing a block schedule. Family and Consumer Education teachers can share resource information that they found helpful when they made the switch, as well as warn against strategies to avoid in block scheduling.

A review of the literature shows that fifty percent of United States schools are currently using or considering the use of block scheduling. Studies have also shown that vocational educators are generally satisfied with the shift from traditional scheduling to block scheduling.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers' attitudes and perceptions regarding block scheduling measured by the researcher's instrument.

This study will focus on the following questions:

1. How many Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers were using some form of block scheduling?
2. What was the level of satisfaction of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers toward block scheduling?

3. What types of resources and training did Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers receive prior to and during block schedule implementation?
4. What were the perceived of advantages and disadvantages of the block schedule for Wisconsin Family and Consumer educators?
5. Were the attitudes of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers regarding block scheduling influenced by independent variables of age, sex, years of teaching experience at current school or years of total teaching experience?

Methodology

The research instrument was developed and administered during the 2002-2003 school year to 225 middle and high school Family and Consumer Education teachers identified by a database provided by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The 225 teachers were derived from randomly selected schools.

Each Family and Consumer Education teacher was asked to participate in the survey. Respondents were asked to return the questionnaire in sealed envelopes to the researcher.

The teachers were requested to provide demographic information and respond on Likert type scales for items dealing with attitudes toward block scheduling. Attitude questions were divided into seven subcategories: transition to block scheduling, classroom management, teacher satisfaction, perceived student satisfaction, teaching strategies, teacher-student relationships, and teacher workload.

In addition, teachers responded to questions on scales for items dealing with resources available during the transition to block scheduling. The research was used to determine and analyze the current perceptions of Family and Consumer Education.

Definition of Terms

The following is a list of terms used in the study:

ALTERNATING DAY OR A-B SCHEDULING: A scheduling option where classes generally meet every other day for the entire school year or semester for an extended period of time.

BLOCK SCHEDULING: A scheduling configuration that lengthens the period of time a class meets on any given day.

CONCENTRATED MODEL: The same as semester block.

DECA: Distributive Education Clubs of America. This student organization focuses on the ideals relating to business and marketing education.

FOUR-BLOCK MODEL: The same as semester block.

INTENSIVE MODEL: The same as semester block.

SEMESTER BLOCK OR 4 X 4 SCHEDULING: A scheduling option where classes generally meet every day for 90 minutes for one or two terms.

STRAIGHT BLOCK MODEL: The same as semester block.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

The review of literature focuses on Family and Consumer Education teachers attitudes about block scheduling. The review is divided into six major sections. The first section discusses the benefits of block scheduling by current education experts. The second section reveals the challenges that block scheduling presents to various schools, teachers, students, and administration. The third section addresses implementation strategies of block scheduling. Section four focuses on the student perspectives of block scheduling. Section five explores the vocational education areas and their opinions on block scheduling while section six specifically discusses Family and Consumer Education teachers and their opinions of block scheduling.

Review of Related Literature

Education professionals have varying views regarding block scheduling. Teachers, students, administrators, and communities must make adjustments when they transition to block scheduling. This review of literature will discuss the resources and steps needed for successful implementation, advantages, disadvantages, reasons for switching, issues, and concerns of block scheduling.

The one constant in the state of American education today is change. Educators need to be accustomed to change; the educational pendulum swings left to right and back again. State legislators, parent groups, even the President of the United States frequently call for changes in school curricula, disciplinary policies, and scheduling practices (Hannaford, Fouraker, & Dickerson, 2000).

Block scheduling enters some communities embraced by its members. Other community members will have questions, comments, and concerns about block scheduling, its implementation, and evaluation. The block package is sometimes marketed as the do all-end all of problems in education. There is no guarantee that simply restructuring the school day in the form of a block schedule will deliver increased test scores, higher grades, and more graduates being prepared to find jobs in the work place (Shortt & Thayer, 2000).

Benefits of Block Scheduling

There are two sides to the block scheduling debate. First, the benefits of block scheduling will be presented and then the challenges. When time is used well in school, not only does the climate of the school improve, but the opportunity for learning increases (Shortt & Thayer, 1999). This is one of several reasons for implementation of block scheduling, increased learning for student success. Fortunately, teachers can manipulate time to make it an ally of education, using it efficiently to plan activities that appeal to students' natural inquisitiveness (Louden & Hounshell, 2000).

If there were not benefits to block scheduling, educators would not support this concept. Through the reviews of various sources of literature, numerous reasons were cited for the use of block scheduling. One such benefit to teachers is their ability to use varied styles of delivery in block scheduling. Teachers reported that the longer block of time permitted them to conduct activities more efficiently (Shortt & Thayer, 1999). Variety includes not only different kinds of activities, such as discussion, media presentations, role-playing, lecture, projects, simulations, reading, discussions, use of computer-based technology, research, and so on, but also different

grouping structures such as whole class, small group, paired, and individual work (Marshak, 1998).

There are various reasons that some teachers support block scheduling and others do not. The chance to use field trips into the community as well as off-site life training for special education students motivate some teachers to support the block, while others see it as a way to incorporate technology into all areas of the curriculum (Dow & George, 1998). At Newberry High School in Newberry, Florida, teachers now use many more labs, more cross-disciplinary teaching, and more strategies such as cooperative learning (Dow & George, 1998).

Louden and Hounshell (2000) conducted a study of block scheduled biology classes and found that there was a significantly higher level of achievement in classes that used student-centered learning methods, regardless of the schedule. They also found that teachers who believed that student-centered learning methods were effective made these methods fit into the class schedule type. As previously stated, the delivery method of the teacher plays an important role in the success of the child and the block.

Teachers believe that the greatest advantages of block scheduling for teachers are their increased planning time and higher expectations for student learning (Stokes & Wilson, 2000). It is important to note that not all models of block scheduling increase teacher preparation times. Many schools now allow common planning time for their teachers. This common planning time allows for teachers to discuss curriculum and cooperative learning activities. This type of common time is rare to find in traditionally scheduled classrooms due to time constraints. Time is an available resource for schools, teachers, and administrators. Teachers and administrators must be able to use the opportunities created by the schedule to increase student achievement (Shortt & Thayer, 1999). Although achievement and student success are important, other changes occur in

schools with block scheduling. Schoenstein (1995) reports a calmer pace, fewer fights, less vandalism, and a slowed-down pace across the building. Students have a chance to stay and ask a question, finish that last problem, or chat with a friend before heading to their next class. In a study by Shortt and Thayer (1999), principals noted that the change created a more relaxed environment for teachers and students and that block scheduling cut down on unsupervised movement within the school. They noted a decline in discipline referrals to the administrative offices. Administrators suggested that block scheduling improved teacher morale and had a positive impact on teacher attendance.

Florida teachers were asked to identify from a list of eight possibilities, the top reasons for adopting the new schedule (Dow & George, 1998). The following reasons were the most frequently cited:

1. We wished to reduce the number of students each teacher taught daily.
2. We wished to encourage teachers to use different instructional strategies.
3. We wished to provide teachers with more flexible time frames.
4. We wished to improve student behavior in classroom and school.

Teachers clearly perceive block scheduling to have advantages over traditional scheduling methods. They also believe that it is more effective overall. DiRocco (1999) explains the positive gains of block scheduling to the Hawthorne effect of teachers who were excited about the schedule change and put forth a renewed effort in the design and implementation of their lessons.

As a result of the schedule change at University School in Orlando, Florida, "poor teachers don't get better, but students like the fact that they have them only half the calendar period." Complaints about poor teachers have been cut in half. Beginning teachers learn from their

mistakes and can make corrections much earlier than waiting for the following academic year (Dow & George, 1998).

Shortt and Thayer (1999) found that one of the greatest assets of block scheduling is the flexibility to use time to meet the needs of at-risk students who are neither prepared nor willing to function successfully in the traditional school setting. Further, they found that the flexible use of time affords opportunities for pregnant teens, working mothers, and students who financially support their family. This flexible use of time to accommodate students' needs is a major factor in allowing nontraditional students to stay in school and prepare for productive futures. Since a large number of teen parents drop out of school, block scheduling may address some of their needs and keep them in school. A student on A-B scheduling may be able to attend school only every other day. This makes childcare more affordable and the possibility of employment in addition to school and parenthood more of a reality.

Challenges of Block Scheduling

Not all teachers, students, parents or academic areas support block scheduling. The subject areas that are most opposed to block scheduling are foreign language, math, music, and advanced placement courses. Shortt and Thayer (1999) have collected data that support the perceptions of teachers and administrators that block scheduling has had positive impacts on the behavior of students with low academic ability, on achievement in math classes, on AP scores, on foreign language classes, and on achievement of at-risk students. This data does little to change the minds of those teachers who are resistant to the change.

After three and four years of experience with block scheduling, teachers rated block scheduling as more effective than traditional scheduling (Wilson & Stokes, 1999). For some

schools, it may take three to four years to address the trouble spots. Other schools seem to embrace successful block scheduling in one or two years. If after four years, the success is questionable regarding block scheduling, it is important to figure out what the problem really is. Are teachers resisting? Are parents unhappy? A school's ability to adapt to change will increase its likelihood for success. The goal of each school is not to gain widespread acceptance, but willingness to try a new strategy. As with any type of change, there will be areas that do not run smoothly. After sufficient time, there are some schools that do not seem to be successful in block scheduling. Some teachers do not make the appropriate adjustments to block scheduling and find the change troublesome.

The block can be boring for the teacher who has a class that does not respond (Dow & George, 1998). One of the problems may be the style of teaching. Teachers who continue to lecture as their primary instruction method tend to allow considerable chunks of class time to be used for "hanging out" and homework (Marshak, 1998). After the first year, administrators should begin holding teachers accountable, but the move to this type of observation and assessment should be gradual. Experts suggest that administrators monitor teachers for misuse of the last thirty minutes of class on a regular basis. These final minutes of class time are habitually abused by at least thirty percent of teachers using block scheduling (Queen & Isenhour, 1998). This is especially true for teachers who take the material from a previous fifty-minute class and try to use it in a ninety-minute block. Marshak's (1998) Cedarcrest High School study suggests that lecture might be employed for no more than ten percent of class time in the block period. At Flagler/Palm Coast High School in Bunnel, Florida, school leaders monitor classes to ensure teachers have at least three activities each period. Exceptions were made only for band and chorus (Dow &

George, 1998). As a result, in their survey, ninety-four percent of respondents agreed classes were more student centered as a result of more cooperative learning and workshop instruction.

The most frequently voiced concerns are the ability of students to retain knowledge from one semester or year to the next, curriculum pacing, and teachers using instructional strategies appropriate to the long block (George & McEwin, 1999). Faculty and administrators should address each of these concerns. Instructional strategies and curriculum pacing should be addressed during inservice. Retention of knowledge should also be addressed during inservice, but also discussed in use of appropriate scheduling. It is noteworthy that teachers reported more problems with the implementation of block than administrators seemed to perceive (Swope, Fritz & Goins, 1998). Why do teachers and administrators see two different views in the same school? Some suggest that administration may not get into the classrooms with the teachers and students to see what is really going on. Also if teachers do not communicate with administrators, they may not be aware of the struggles.

Steps for Successful Implementation of Block Scheduling

To be successful in the block schedule transition, a series of steps must occur. During the first year, it is important to realize that the block scheduling process is an evolutionary process, not a revolutionary process. Queen and Isenhour (1998) developed a three-step process for administrators to follow when a school is ready to examine the idea of block scheduling. The first is to select a design team, a curriculum committee, or group composed of teacher representatives and one administrator. The committee should read current literature and research about block scheduling and discuss these findings. Second, committee members should then visit schools that have been successful and unsuccessful in implementing a block model and investigate why they

have been successful or unsuccessful. After analyzing all the findings, the committee members present these to the full faculty with the recommendation to accept or reject a particular block design. Teachers need ownership in the process and implementation of block scheduling for greater likelihood of success. If at least seventy percent of teachers are ready to adopt some type of block scheduling model, it has a greater possibility for success. They also suggest that it is not necessary to ask the permission of parents, but they must be informed of the transition to a block schedule.

Another model suggests that the whole school does not go to block scheduling at the same time. The incoming class enters with block scheduling and as they progress, the school progresses in the number of classes offered in the block. Ninth grade students traditionally have the greatest difficulty in adjusting to any high school environment, so it would be reasonable to prepare these students for two major transitions: adjusting to high school and to a block format (Queen & Isenhour, 1998).

The transition to block needs to be well thought out and planned appropriately. There is a continual need for feedback from teachers, students, parents, and the community. It is important to keep students involved and to monitor their feelings about their classes. Students can provide valuable insights about block scheduling and should not be ignored. Block scheduling largely impacts students. Some students, by nature, are more resilient to change, while others will struggle with the change. If the administration fails to seek faculty support, teachers may feel undervalued, angry, and adversarial. Teachers who resent the change will not benefit from the philosophy of block scheduling as a reform tool, and may continue their traditional methods of teaching versus a reevaluation of curriculum and instructional practices.

A parent/community survey issued at the end of every year will keep the communication flow going both ways. It is important to send parent surveys home at the end of the first semester of the block to allow parents to express any feelings or concerns they may have (Queen & Isenhour, 1998). These survey results should not be ignored. The results may not be what the school wants to hear, but the surveys should be used to address problem areas and training issues.

A misconception parents and students have about the block is that students will be bored. This concern is a valid one. If teachers do not adjust their teaching methods, students will be bored. A teacher who had lectured for 45 minutes prior to block, may (without training) now lecture for 90 minutes.

Teachers will need to make adjustments to the longer periods. The long periods persuade many teachers to find ways to enrich their instruction. Teachers must also re-evaluate their mental modes of learning, curriculum, coverage, and assessment. Effective implementation of the block requires a shift from lecture as a main means of teaching to a more hands-on, project-orientated approach (Schoenstein, 1995). Alternative scheduling calls for modified instructional time frames that increase opportunities for students to apply learning, establish relevance, and increase their performance (Swope, Fritz & Goins, 1998). Many areas of school programs already use project-orientated activities in their classroom. Those who have traditionally not used hands on focus will find the shift to be more difficult. When educators in Florida high schools with block schedules were asked about the outcomes, ninety-eight percent said the new schedule encouraged more creative and innovative teaching methods (Dow & George, 1998).

Teachers should use the first year the change is made to bock scheduling to master instructional strategies and restructure their pacing guides. Observations by administration and other faculty should be non-threatening and promote teaching strategies. It is imperative to give

teachers the first year for experimentation in a non-threatening environment (Queen & Isenhour, 1998). Teachers should feel coached by administrators, not punished for experimenting with student activities.

Practical staff development is an important component of block scheduling. Jenkins, Queen, and Algozzine (2001) concluded that many U.S. school systems have not provided appropriate in-service training to help practicing teachers transition to the block. Also, novice teachers have not been adequately equipped in their preparation programs to meet the challenges of block scheduling. Colleges and universities are now taking notice of the increased use of block scheduling and are making appropriate adjustments. Many student teachers will be placed in schools where block scheduling is already implemented. Their college and university training can be a valuable asset to a school district making the transition to block scheduling.

In Conventry Local Schools (Ohio), the area of training was addressed by, in the first year, providing ten paid inservice days to present teaching methods that would be useful in the block format to the staff members. During the following year, these teachers were given regular inservice training at scheduled staff meetings. After that time, inservice was provided only to those staff members who were new to the district or who were teaching on the block for the first time. Full-staff inservice training was implemented through large-group staff meetings, which provided teachers an avenue for feedback and the opportunity to make modifications in their own teaching strategies (Hess, Wronkovich, & Robinson, 1999).

The Florida schools reporting great success with longer classes emphasize the hours of inservice training completed in the year prior to implementing the schedule change. Fifty-four percent of respondents agreed teachers still need more help adapting their instructional strategies to the longer classes of the block scheduling models (Dow & George, 1998).

Student Perspectives of Block Scheduling

Students have varying opinions on block scheduling. There are clear advantages and disadvantages to these students. The greatest advantage for students is that they have more opportunities to gain credits for graduation (Wilson & Stokes, 1999). In a 4 x 4 or alternating block, a student can earn eight credits a year. Students would then have the opportunity to meet their graduation requirements earlier in their high school career. This may free up junior and senior time for students to do career exploration in an assortment of elective courses. Some students are opting to graduate early from high school and enter college or world of work early.

Scheduling is a major concern of students and administration. In one school, the first-year students reported they had problems balancing required and elective courses across the semesters (Dow & George, 1998). Depending on the type of scheduling used, students may actually have more difficulty selecting and getting their desired courses. Some schools have gone to hand scheduling for each student to balance their schedules.

Also, students will have their opinions as to why block scheduling is not effective in their schools. One reason that students have trouble in block scheduling is absences, whether personal or school related. Students absent from block classes do miss more in each class. This is a natural consequence for a change to block scheduling. A student absent the whole day, however, misses four classes instead of six, seven, or even eight. It becomes easier for a student to speak to four teachers instead of six or more. With the increased class length, the teacher would have more in class time to speak with the student about what they have missed. On the other hand, the student missed twice as much material in the four classes in which they are enrolled.

Vocational Educators and Block Scheduling

Vocational educators across the nation have been using block scheduling since its inception. Studies are now being completed that address the needs and perceptions of various vocational areas.

In a study by Swope, Fritz, and Goins (1998), marketing teachers were asked whether there had been greater student participation in DECA (Distributive Clubs of America) since the change to block schedules, and whether students were now better prepared for competitive events, they said "no." However, principals said "yes." Similarly, teachers answered "no" and principals "yes" when asked if block facilitated the work experience of the marketing program, and if teachers had more coordination time since the change. Importantly, about one-fourth of the marketing teachers responding to the survey indicated that blocks made the school-to-work component no longer essential to their programs. If a cooperative education is to remain a key component of the marketing program, teachers must examine how they organize and implement these experiences. To have both an effective school-to-work component and a successful DECA chapter, teachers may require additional time for preparation, program coordination, and flexibility in activities related to performing these roles.

Marketing teachers and their principals reported agreement that students appear to like block schedules, and enrollment in marketing classes has increased in one study. Both groups observed that students seem to be able to focus better on their studies because they have fewer classes (Swope, Fritz & Goins, 1998).

As with any other type of elective vocational area, Family and Consumer Education teachers show hesitation toward change. Enrollment relates to staffing which is an enormous concern in many school districts. An understudied schedule change could have negative

enrollment implications. What appears on paper to increase elective enrollment could essentially eliminate a vocational area if not properly executed.

Family and Consumer Education Teachers and Block Scheduling

Time and scheduling are major concerns for Family and Consumer Education teachers. Teachers are limited by shorter periods. Vocational educators have fought for longer periods over the years. It takes time to get materials and to clean up. In a 45-minute period, 15-20 minutes can easily be spent in set up and clean up procedures. Teachers feel that they can't do hands on, fieldwork, or integrated learning in traditional setting. Florida's Newberry High School home economics teachers reported that the schedule works much better, providing time for guest speakers, use of complex recipes, and extended role-playing activities (Dow & George, 1998).

Family and Consumer Education teachers teach a variety of curricular topics such as food preparation, child care skills, interior decorating, family relationships, apparel construction, food service careers, parenting, and even work and careers. The variety of courses may indicate that block scheduling works for one particular course, but not for another.

The literature neglects the area of Family and Consumer Education in reference to teachers' perceptions toward block scheduling. As reviewed, numerous studies address the block scheduling change is the four core areas, and additionally, some research exists in small areas of vocational education such as marketing, business, and agriculture.

Summary

The review of literature focused on block scheduling and the attitudes and perceptions that educators and students hold towards block scheduling. Benefits and challenges weigh on each

side of the debate of block scheduling. Educators of core areas, vocational education, and Family and Consumer Education each hold varying opinions regarding block scheduling.

Benefits of block scheduling include the opportunity for increased learning for student success, teacher's ability to use a variety of delivery methods, increased planning time for teachers, calmer pace, and the flexibility to use time to meet the needs of at-risk students. These benefits must be weighed against the challenges of block scheduling in order to make the best decision for a school.

Challenges of block scheduling also exist. There is strong opposition to block scheduling from the areas of foreign language, math, music, and advanced placements courses. Their opposition to block scheduling includes the ability of students to retain knowledge from one semester or year to the next and curriculum pacing.

Education professionals suggest a variety of implementation strategies for success of block scheduling. In an implementation strategy, the transition to block scheduling needs to be well thought out and planned. Students, administrators, parents and teachers must be involved in this process for a greater chance of success.

Student perceptions of the block vary as well. Advantages to students include the opportunity for students to gain more graduation credits and ability to free up more time for electives. Disadvantages perceived by students are the difficulty in scheduling their desired classes and making up work after an absence.

Other vocational areas, besides Family and Consumer Education, tend to like block scheduling. In one study, enrollment in marketing classes increased. This is not only exclusive to this group of vocational educators.

Family and Consumer Education teachers also have concerns and hopes for block scheduling. Their needs are perhaps different than other academic areas, as the content and delivery tend to be significantly different. The literature neglects the area of Family and Consumer Education.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of Family and Consumer Education teachers toward block scheduling. This section will provide a review of the sample selection and an explanation of how the instrument was developed and administered. The procedures used to determine Family and Consumer Education teacher's opinions and attitudes toward block scheduling and data analysis conclude this chapter.

Research Questions

The study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. How many Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers currently use some form of block scheduling?
2. What was the level of satisfaction of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers toward block scheduling?
3. What types of resources and training did Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers receive prior to and during block schedule implementation?
4. What were the perceived of advantages and disadvantages of the block schedule for Wisconsin Family and Consumer educators?
5. Were the attitudes of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers regarding block scheduling influenced by independent variables of age, sex, years of teaching experience at current school or years of total teaching experience?

Subjects

The survey was sent to two hundred and twenty-five teachers of middle and high school Family and Consumer Education in the state of Wisconsin. A questionnaire was sent via the United States Postal Service to the teachers throughout the state. The list of schools and names of the Family and Consumer Education teachers were obtained through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction computer database. A random sample from the over 700 schools on the list was made by selecting every third school listed in the database, excluding any elementary schools.

Instrumentation

The development of this research project was based on a literature review around attitudes toward block scheduling. Data was gathered around seven subcategories: transition to block scheduling, classroom management, teacher satisfaction, perceived student satisfaction, teaching strategies, teacher-student relationships, and teacher workload. In transition to block scheduling, the topics of adequate training and ease of the transition were addressed. Teaching strategies subcategories consists of items such as satisfaction with block scheduling strategies and the strategies used in both lab and non laboratory courses within the Family and Consumer Education curriculum. In perceived student satisfaction, items related to student boredom, student dislike of block scheduling, student adjustment, and student learning in Family and Consumer Education. Subcategory teacher satisfaction included satisfaction with the type of block schedule currently used, preference of block scheduling to traditional scheduling, and lowered stress levels in the block schedule.

Teacher workload related to reducing daily preparations, workload, number of classes annually taught, class sizes, and enrollment. Teacher-student relationships category include two

items which address making personal connections, working one on one with students, and the quality of relationships between teachers and students. In the classroom management subcategory, the topics of discipline, attendance, homework, make up work and classroom breaks were included.

This study was to examine teacher perceptions of block scheduling, while assessing the number of Wisconsin high school family and consumer educators utilizing block scheduling.

The researcher, during the applied evaluation in home economics course, developed the four-part research instrument. The four part research instrument was developed to measure demographics, attitudes of Family and Consumer Education teachers toward block scheduling, the extent of resources available to Family and Consumer Education teachers during implementation of block scheduling, and perceived advantages and disadvantages of block scheduling (see Appendix A).

The demographic items were representative of independent variables which might provide information regarding behavior affecting their attitudes. The independent variables were selected following a preliminary review of literature. These independent variables included: age, gender, total enrollment of school building, grade levels served at school building, current employment status, number of Family and Consumer Education teachers in school building, number of years in current district, number of years as a Family and Consumer Education teacher, years in block scheduling, and type of alternative scheduling used.

The attitude statements in part two were developed to measure attitudes and opinions toward block scheduling. These attitude statements include the seven subcategories of transition to block scheduling, classroom management, teacher satisfaction, perceived student satisfaction, teaching strategies, teacher-student relationships, and teacher workload. A Likert type scale, with

a range of one to five, was used to measure the extent of agreement (1=strongly disagree, 3=undecided, and 5=strongly agree).

The resources used during implementation section, part three, used a scale that was designed to determine the degree of resource availability during block scheduling implementation. Also collected, were a list of resources that Family and Consumer Education teachers found most helpful.

The open ended statements, part four, were designed to allow respondents the opportunity to state their perceived advantages and disadvantages with block scheduling. Data were presented in list form of the comments given.

A draft of the four-part questionnaire was pilot tested in August of 2001. The questionnaire was given to ten Family and Consumer Education teachers in southeastern Wisconsin. This pilot study was limited by the small sample size available. After a tabulation of the results, multiple items were revised or removed.

Procedure

The procedures used to administer the questionnaire began in September 2002. The first letter requesting participation (see Appendix B) and questionnaire were sent during January 2003 to the 225 randomly selected Family and Consumer Education teachers. These teachers were asked to participate in the study. All participants were asked to return their questionnaire in the self-addressed, stamped envelope. A total of 122 questionnaires, representing 54% were returned. Three weeks after the initial request, in February 2003, a follow-up letter (see Appendix C), questionnaire, and self-addressed stamped envelope were sent to those who had not responded. An additional 32 questionnaires were returned, making a total of 154 respondents. This represents

a 68 % response rate. Four questionnaires were not used as the respondents failed to complete all the sections of the instrument. Thirty-eight of the 150 questionnaires returned were teachers who had experience with block scheduling.

Unknowns

There were concerns of personal bias that some participants may have. Also, the number of respondents with block scheduling was a concern. Some Family and Consumer Education teachers may feel that they need to provide professional answers and therefore may not answer the questions openly and honestly.

Data Analysis

Demographic data is displayed in table form for easy review for the reader. Frequency counts and percentages were calculated on items 1-3, grades, 4 (A-G), 5A (Part I), items 6-8, 9A (Part I), and Item 110 (Part I) for the total group of respondents. Frequency counts, percentages, mean, median, and standard deviation on Item 5B (Part I) and Item 9B (Part I) for the total respondents were determined.

In Part II, frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation on items 1-34 were analyzed. The same analysis was then completed for the seven subcategories of the items in Part II. These seven subcategories included transition to block scheduling, classroom management, teacher satisfaction, perceived student satisfaction, teaching strategies, teacher-student relationships, and teacher workload.

Frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation were also calculated on Item 301 (Part III) for the group of respondents with block scheduling experience. Also in Part III,

frequency counts and percentages on Item 2 (A-T) were determined for the group of respondents with block scheduling experience.

Data or quotations of the respondents from Part IV are formatted in table presentations grouped by the researcher. The original responses are located in Appendixes D, E, and F.

A one way analysis of variance using a Student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test was performed on items in Part I (demographics) and the attitude statements found in Part II of the researcher's survey. The seven subcategories designed by the researcher were also analyzed against the Part III question on resource availability.

A Pearson Correlation was also run on the attitude statements (Part II) and resource availability (Part III). In addition, a Pearson Correlation was preformed on the seven researcher developed subcategories and resources availability (Part III).

Summary

This chapter has discussed methodology for this research study. The following chapter will include the survey results and a discussion of those findings. The final chapter will summarize the study, draw conclusions for the results of the survey, and state further recommendations.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

Introduction

This chapter includes the findings of a questionnaire administered to 225 Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers. The questionnaire had four sections including demographics, attitudes of Family and Consumer Education teachers toward block scheduling, the extent of resources available to Family and Consumer Education teachers during implementation of block scheduling, and perceived advantages and disadvantages of block scheduling. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings.

Demographics

Demographic information was collected for descriptive purposes. Information regarding age, gender, total enrollment at high school building, grade level(s) of students at school building, current employment status, number of Family and Consumer Education teachers, number of years teaching with district, number of years as a Family and Consumer Education teacher, number of years teaching in a block schedule, and type of alternative schedule used were collected from 154 respondents.

Age

Age of the Family and Consumer Education teachers was divided into five categories. The largest group of participants were 51-60 year old group (n=61, 40.4%). Teachers in the 41-50 year old group comprised the second largest group (n=58, 38.4%). The 31-40 year old group

(n=21, 13.9%), 20-30 year old group (n=10, 6.6%), and 61 and over (n=1, .7%) made up the remaining groups. See Table 1.

Table 1: Age Category of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Valid Percent
20-30 years old	10	6.6
31-40 years old	21	13.9
41-50 years old	58	38.4
51-60 years old	61	40.4
61 or older	1	.7
Total	151	100.0

Gender of Respondents

Almost all respondents were female (n=148, 98.7%). Two males responded to the survey (1.3%). See Table 2.

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Valid Percent
Female	148	98.7
Male	2	1.3
Total	150	100.0

Total Enrollment at Middle/High School Building

The largest group of respondents taught in school buildings with 251-500 students (n=35, 24.1%). The second largest group were employed in school buildings with 1501 or more students (n=26, 17.9%). The remainder of the schools fell in the following order: 501-750 students (n=24,

16.6%), 751-1000 students (n=17, 11.7%), 1251-1500 students (n=16, 11.0%), 100-250 students (n=14, 9.7%), 1001-1250 students (n=9, 6.2%), and less than 100 students (n=4, 2.8%). See Table 3.

Table 3: Total Enrollment at Middle/High School Building

Enrollment	Frequency	Valid Percent
Less than 100 students	4	2.8
100-250 students	14	9.7
251-500 students	35	24.1
501-750 students	24	16.6
751-1000 students	17	11.7
1001-1250 students	9	6.2
1251-1500 students	16	11.0
1501 or more students	26	17.9
Total	145	100.0

Grade Level of Students in Middle/High School

Respondents were asked to indicate the grade levels that their middle/high school building serves. The majority specified that their school serves 9^{th}-12^{th} grade (n=94, 62.7%). Fourteen respondents selected 6^{th}-12^{th} grade schools (9.3%) or 6^{th}-8^{th} grade schools (9.3%). Thirteen respondents replied 7^{th}-12^{th} grade schools (8.7%). Five respondents designated 7^{th} and 8^{th} grade (3.3%). Four respondents replied 10^{th}-12^{th} grade (2.7%). Two respondents selected 8^{th}-12^{th} grade (1.3). The remaining respondents were the only schools with grade levels responded: 6^{th}-7^{th} grade (n=1, .7%), 7^{th} & 9^{th}-12^{th} grade (n=1, .7%), 11^{th} grade only (n=1, .7%), and 12^{th} grade only (n=1, .7%). See Table 4.

Table 4: Grades Level of Students in Middle/High School

Grade Levels	Frequency	Valid Percent
6th-12th grade	14	9.3
6th-8th grade	14	9.3
6th-7th grade	1	.7
7th-12th grade	13	8.7
7th-8th grade	5	3.3
7th & 9th-12th grade	1	.7
8th-12th grade	2	1.3
9th-12th grade	94	62.7
10th-12th grade	4	2.7
11th grade only	1	.7
12th grade only	1	.7
Total	150	100.0

Grade Level Served at Middle/High School Building

When asked which grade levels are served at the middle/high school level, data was collected by grade level. Twenty-nine schools served 6th grade (19.3%), forty-eight schools had 7th grade (32.0%), forty-eight schools provided 8th grade (32.0%), 124 schools served 9th grade (82.7%), 128 schools served 10th grade (85.3%), 129 schools had 11th grade (86.0%) and 129 schools served 12th grade (86.0%). See Table 5.

Table 5: Grade Level at Middle / High School Building

Grade Levels	Yes-Frequency	Yes-Valid Percent	No-Frequency	No-Valid Percent
6th grade	29	19.3	121	80.7
7th grade	48	32.0	102	68.0
8th grade	48	32.0	102	68.0
9th grade	124	82.7	26	17.3
10th grade	128	85.3	22	14.7
11th grade	129	86.0	21	14.0
12th grade	129	86.0	21	14.0

Current Employment Status

Participants were asked to indicate their current employment status in their district. One hundred and forty-six respondents indicated that they are full-time employed (96.7%), while five indicated part-time status (3.3%). See Table 6.

Of the five respondents selecting part-time status, one indicated a 50% employment status (20.0%), one selected 60% employment status (20.0%), one responded 67.0% employment status (20.0%), one specified 82.5% employment status (20.0%) and one designated a 92.0% employment status (20.0%). See Table 7.

Table 6: Current Employment Status

Employment Status	Frequency	Valid Percent
Full-time teaching	146	96.7
Part-time teaching	5	3.3

Table 7: Percent Part-Time

Percent Employed	Frequency	Valid Percent
50.0 percent	1	20.0
60.0 percent	1	20.0
67.0 percent	1	20.0
82.5 percent	1	20.0
92.0 percent	1	20.0
Total	5	100.0

Number of Family and Consumer Education Teachers in School Building

Each participant was asked how many Family and Consumer Education teachers were employed in their school building. Fifty-four teachers (36.0%) were the only Family and Consumer Education teacher in their building. Fifty-six teachers (37.3%) taught with another Family and Consumer Education teacher. Forty teachers (26.7%) taught with two or more other Family and Consumer Education teachers. See Table 8.

Table 8: Number of Family and Consumer Education Teachers in School Building

FCE Teachers	Frequency	Valid Percent
Only one	54	36.0
One other	56	37.3
Two or more others	40	26.7
Total	150	100.0

Number of Years Teaching in Current School District

The number of years teaching in the current school district varied. Thirty-four respondents worked 1-5 years (22.7%) in their current school districts. Twenty-five respondents selected that they had 21-25 years of experience (16.7%) in their current school district. Twenty-three respondents responded that they had 6-10 years of experience (15.3%). Eighteen respondents indicated 11-15 years of experience (12.0%) or 26-30 years of experience (12.0%). Sixteen respondents specified 16-20 years of experience (10.7%). Twelve respondents designated 31-35 years of experience (8.0%), while four respondents indicated less than one year of experience (2.7%). See Table 9.

Table 9: Number of Years Teaching in Current School District

Years Taught	Frequency	Valid Percent
Less than 1 year	4	2.7
1-5 years	34	22.7
6-10 years	23	15.3
11-15 years	18	12.0
16-20 years	16	10.7
21-25 years	25	16.7
26-30 years	18	12.0
31-35 years	12	8.0
Total	150	100.0

Number of Years Teaching Family and Consumer Education

The respondents in the survey had a variety of years of Family and Consumer Education experience. The top response was 26-30 years (n=32, 21.2%), followed by 11-15 years (n=25, 16.6%) and 21-25 years (n=25, 16.6%). Answers in descending order were: 16-20 years (n=23,

15.2%), 31-35 years (n=16, 10.6%), 1-5 years (n=16, 10.6%), 6-10 years (n=10, 6.6%), less than one year and 36 years or more (n=2, 1.3%). See Table 10.

Table 10: Number of Years Teaching Family and Consumer Education

Years Taught	Frequency	Valid Percent
Less than 1 year	2	1.3
1-5 years	16	10.6
6-10 years	10	6.6
11-15 years	25	16.6
16-20 years	23	15.2
21-25 years	25	16.6
26-30 years	32	21.2
31-35 years	16	10.6
36 years or more	2	1.3
Total	151	100.0

Number of Years Teaching with Block Scheduling

Block scheduling experience for the participants varied between one to thirteen years. Eight respondents indicated that they taught with block scheduling for five years (21.1%). Seven respondents replied that they taught with block scheduling for three years (18.4%). Six respondents selected that they taught with block scheduling for four years (15.8%). Four respondents specified two years or seven years of experience (10.5%). For three respondents, this was their first year of teaching in block scheduling (7.9%). Two respondents designated six years of experience (5.3%). Respondents with eight, nine, ten, twelve, and thirteen years of experience numbered one (2.6%). See Table 11.

Table 11: Number of Years Teaching with Block Scheduling

Years with Block Scheduling	Frequency	Valid Percent
1 year	3	7.9
2 years	4	10.5
3 years	7	18.4
4 years	6	15.8
5 years	8	21.1
6 years	2	5.3
7 years	4	10.5
8 years	1	2.6
9 years	1	2.6
10 years	1	2.6
12 years	1	2.6
13 years	1	2.6
Total	38	100.0

Type of Alternative Scheduling Currently Used

There are three basic types of alternative schedules called block scheduling. Close to half of those who taught in block scheduling had the 4 x4 block (n=18, 47.4%). Eight others had the combined block (21.1%). Seven respondents were on the alternate day or A-B block (18.4%). Five other respondents were teaching in some other type of alternative scheduling (13.2%). See Table 12.

Table 12: Type of Alternative Scheduling Currently Used

Types of Scheduling	Frequency	Valid Percent
4 x 4 block	18	47.4
Alternate day/ A-B	7	18.4
Combined block	8	21.1
Other	5	13.2
Total	38	100.0

Attitudes Toward Block Scheduling

To determine Family and Consumer Education teachers attitudes towards block scheduling, participants were asked to respond to 34 statements on a Likert scale with a range of 1 (strongly disagree) to 3 (undecided) to 5 (strongly agree). Table 13 shows the means and standard deviations on all items in part two of the survey.

Items numbered 3, 12, 13, 15, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, and 33 were reversed for statistical analysis purposes. These items are represented by **R** in Tables 13 and 14.

The attitude items were subgrouped into seven categories related to block scheduling: transition to block scheduling, classroom management, teacher satisfaction, perceived student satisfaction, teaching strategies, teacher-student relationships, and teacher workload. Items 8 and 13 are related to transition to block scheduling. Items 4, 7, 9, 12, and 29 are related to classroom management. Items 10, 14, 16, 20, 23, 26, and 28 are related to teacher satisfaction. Items 15, 24, 30 and 33 are linked to perceived student satisfaction. Items 2 and 21 correspond to teacher-student relationships. Items 1, 3, 5, 6, and 22 are related to teacher workload. See Table 14.

Table 13: Attitude Statements Regarding Block Scheduling

Rank Order	Item Number	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	11.	Block scheduling is better for lab courses like foods, clothing construction, and housing.	4.71	.835
2	30.	Most students have adjusted to block scheduling.	4.55	.724
3	33.	Block scheduling has a negative impact on student learning in family and consumer education courses. **R**	4.50	.980
4	2.	I am able to make personal connections and work one on one with my students in block scheduling.	4.47	.647
5	31.	I am satisfied with my current teaching strategies in block scheduling.	4.39	.755
6	22.	Block scheduling has resulted in decreased enrollment in family and consumer education. **R**	4.32	1.016
7	28.	I dislike block scheduling. **R**	4.29	1.037
8	23.	I would like to go back to traditional scheduling. **R**	4.29	1.113
9	14.	I am satisfied with block scheduling at my school.	4.24	1.149
10	20.	I prefer block scheduling to the traditional 6-8 period day.	4.24	1.149
11	16.	Block scheduling is exciting to teach in.	4.21	.991

12	10.	I am satisfied with the type of alternative scheduling my school uses.	4.18	.955
13	21.	Block scheduling has improved the quality of my relationships with students.	4.16	.945
14	13.	I had difficulty making the transition to block scheduling. **R**	4.11	1.085
15	24.	Students dislike block scheduling. **R**	3.95	1.089
16	26.	I feel less stress teaching in block scheduling.	3.95	1.138
17	25.	It is difficult to teach non-laboratory classes such as family relationships, child development and consumer economics using block scheduling. **R**	3.79	1.318
18	19.	My instruction has improved as a result of block scheduling.	3.74	.860
19	3.	Block scheduling increases my workload. **R**	3.61	1.220
20	1.	Block scheduling reduces my daily preparations.	3.53	1.447
21	4.	Block scheduling reduces discipline incidents I have in my classroom.	3.42	1.056
22	7.	Block scheduling improves my student attendance.	3.32	.933
23	8.	I feel like I had adequate training in block scheduling before its implementation.	3.29	1.228
24	15.	Students are more frequently bored in block scheduling. **R**	3.29	1.250

25	6.	Block scheduling has increased my class sizes.	3.18	1.205
26	27.	I recommend that middle school family and consumer education courses are taught in block scheduling format.	3.03	1.568
27	18.	I do not like to use substitute teachers in block scheduling.	2.97	1.284
28	12.	Block scheduling makes it harder for students to complete makeup work. **R**	2.95	1.610
29	34.	I feel that I do not cover as much course content in block scheduled courses as I would in a traditionally scheduled semester long course.	2.89	1.448
30	29.	I give my students a short break half way through my block scheduled classes.	2.79	1.318
31	17.	Substitute teachers in my area have more problems with block scheduled courses.	2.76	1.051
32	5.	Block scheduling increases the number of classes that I teach annually.	2.68	1.509
33	32.	Even though I teach in block scheduling, I could use more instructional time.	2.53	1.224
34	9.	My students receive more homework in block scheduling.	2.18	1.087

Subcategory Analysis of Attitude Statements Regarding Block Scheduling

After individual analysis of each attitude statement, a calculation of the seven average subcategories scores were completed for the categories of transition to block scheduling,

classroom management, teacher satisfaction, perceived student satisfaction, teaching strategies, teacher-student relationships, and teacher workload.

The means of each of the subcategories were examined to determine the rank of the subcategories. Ranking first was the subcategory teacher-student relationships (mean=4.316). Second was teaching strategies (mean=4.298) while third was teacher satisfaction (mean=4.199). Ranking forth was perceived student satisfaction (mean=4.072) and fifth was transition to block scheduling (mean=3.697). Sixth ranked category was teacher workload (mean=3.463) and seventh was classroom management (mean=2.931). See Table 15.

Table 14: Subcategories of Attitude Statements Regarding Block Scheduling

Rank Order	Item Number	Subcategory/Item	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
1		Teacher-Student Relationships	4.316	4.500	.7016
	2.	I am able to make personal connections and work one on one with my students in block scheduling.			
	21.	Block scheduling has improved the quality of my relationships with students.			
2		Teaching Strategies	4.298	4.667	.7303
	11.	Block scheduling is better for lab courses like foods, clothing construction, and housing.			
	25.	It is difficult to teach non-laboratory classes such as family relationships, child development and consumer economics using block scheduling. **R**			
	31.	I am satisfied with my current teaching strategies in block scheduling.			

3		Teacher Satisfaction	4.199	4.357	.8709
	10.	I am satisfied with the type of alternative scheduling my school uses.			
	14.	I am satisfied with block scheduling at my school.			
	16.	Block scheduling is exciting to teach in.			
	20.	I prefer block scheduling to the traditional 6-8 period day.			
	23.	I would like to go back to traditional scheduling. **R**			
	26.	I feel less stress teaching in block scheduling.			
	28.	I dislike block scheduling. **R**			
4		Perceived Student Satisfaction	4.072	4.250	.8756
	15.	Students are more frequently bored in block scheduling. **R**			
	24.	Students dislike block scheduling. **R**			
	30.	Most students have adjusted to block scheduling.			
	33.	Block scheduling has a negative impact on student learning in family and consumer education courses. **R**			
5		Transition to Block Scheduling	3.697	3.500	.9339
	8.	I feel like I had adequate training in block scheduling before its implementation.			
	13.	I had difficulty making the transition to block scheduling. **R**			
6		Teacher Workload	3.463	3.400	.5283
	1.	Block scheduling reduces my daily preparations.			

	3.	Block scheduling increases my workload. **R**		
	5.	Block scheduling increases the number of classes that I teach annually.		
	6.	Block scheduling has increased my class sizes.		
	22.	Block scheduling has resulted in decreased enrollment in family and consumer education. **R**		
7		Classroom Management	2.932 2.900	.8709
	4.	Block scheduling reduces discipline incidents I have in my classroom.		
	7.	Block scheduling improves my student attendance.		
	9.	My students receive more homework in block scheduling.		
	12.	Block scheduling makes it harder for students to complete makeup work. **R**		
	29.	I give my students a short break half way through my block scheduled classes.		

ANOVA of Age Group on Attitudes Toward Block Scheduling

Using a one way analysis of variance, a significant difference was found at the .05 level on item number 202 "I am able to make personal connections and work one on one with my students in block scheduling." Student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test revealed a significant difference at the .05 level. Teachers in the 51 years and older (mean=4.62) and 20-40 years old (mean=4.69) group scored significantly higher than the 41-50 years old (mean=4.08) group. See Table 15.

Using a one way analysis of variance, a significant difference was found at the .05 level on the item number 205 "Block scheduling increases the number of classes that I teach annually." Student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test revealed a significant difference at the .05 level. Teachers in the 51 years and older (mean=3.00) and 41-50 years old (mean=3.25) group scored significantly higher than the 20-40 years old (mean=1.85) group. See Table 15.

Using a one way analysis of variance, a significant difference was found at the .05 level on item number 226 "I feel less stress teaching in block scheduling." Student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test revealed a significant difference at the .05 level. Teachers in the 51 years and older (mean=4.38) and 20-40 years old (mean=4.15) group scored significantly higher than the 41-50 years old (mean=3.25) group. See Table 15.

Using a one way analysis of variance, a trend was found on item number 227 "I recommend that middle school Family and Consumer Education courses are taught in the block schedule format." Although this was not significant at the .05 level, the same pattern occurred as in the previous three items. Those who were 20-40 years old scored lower than those 41-50 years old and 50 years and older. See Table 15.

Table 15: ANOVA of Age Group on Attitudes Toward Block Scheduling

Item Number	Item Description	N	Age Group	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
202	I am able to make personal connections and work one on one with my students in block scheduling.	13	20-40 yr.	4.69	.480		
		12	41-50 yr.	4.08	.793		
		13	51 yr. or older	4.62	.506		
						3.717	.034
205	Block scheduling increases the number of classes that I teach annually.	13	20-40 yr.	1.85	1.068		
		12	41-50 yr.	3.25	1.288		
		13	51 yr. or older	3.00	1.780		
						3.570	.039
226	I feel less stress teaching in block scheduling.	13	20-40 yr.	4.15	.987		
		12	41-50 yr.	3.25	1.357		
		13	51 yr. or older	4.38	.768		
						3.981	.028
227	I recommend that middle school family and consumer education courses are taught in block scheduling format.	13	20-40 yr.	2.23	1.363		
		12	41-50 yr.	3.50	1.446		
		13	51 or older	3.38	1.660		
						2.811	.074

ANOVA of Years Teaching Family and Consumer Education on Attitudes Toward Block Scheduling

Using a one way analysis of variance, a significant difference was found at the .05 level on item number 227 "I recommend that middle school Family and Consumer Education courses are taught in block scheduling format." Student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test found that those teachers with 11-20 years (mean=3.83) of experience and those teachers with 21 years (mean=3.07) or more of experience scored significantly different than those teachers with 1-10 years (mean=2.09) of experience at a significant difference at the .05 level. It was also found that those teachers with 11-20 years (mean=3.83) of experience scored significantly different than

those teachers with both 1-10 years (mean=2.09) of experience and those teachers with 21years or more (mean=3.07) of experience also significantly different at the .05 level. See Table 16.

Table 16: ANOVA of Years of Teaching Family and Consumer Education on Attitudes Toward Block Scheduling

Item Number	Item Description	N	Years of Experience	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
227	I recommend that middle school family and consumer education courses are taught in block scheduling format.	11	1-10 yr.	2.09	1.446		
		12	11-20 yr.	3.83	1.267		
		15	21 yr. or more	3.07	1.580		
						4.158	.024

ANOVA of Years Teaching with Block Scheduling on Attitudes Toward Block Scheduling

Using a one way analysis of variance, a significant difference was found at the .05 level on item number 201 "Block scheduling reduces my daily preparations." Student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test indicated a significant difference at the .05 level. Teachers with 6-13 years (mean=3.90) of experience and 1-3 years (mean=4.00) of experience scored significantly higher than those teachers with 4-5 years (mean=2.79) of experience. See Table 17.

Using a one way analysis of variance, a trend was found on item number 212 "Block scheduling makes it harder for students to complete make up work" using a student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test. Although this was not a significant difference at the .05 level, the same pattern occurred as in the previous item. Those who had 6-13 years of experience scored higher than those with 1-3 and 4-5 years of experience. See Table 17.

Table 17: ANOVA of Years with Block Scheduling on Attitudes of Block Scheduling

Item Number	Item Description	N	Years of Experience	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
201	Block scheduling reduces my daily preparations.	14	1-3 yr.	4.00	1.038		
		14	4-5 yr.	2.79	1.626		
		10	6-13 yr.	3.90	1.370		
						3.276	.050
212	Block scheduling increases the number of classes that I teach annually.	14	1-3 yr.	3.29	1.069		
		14	4-5 yr.	2.36	.842		
		10	6-13 yr.	3.30	1.418		
						3.205	.053

ANOVA of Subcategories with Resources

Attitude statements were grouped into their appropriate subcategories for further analysis. See Table 14 for groupings. Five significant differences were found.

Using a one way analysis of variance, a significant difference was found at the .01 level on the subcategory transition to block scheduling. Student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test revealed a significant difference at the .01 level. Teachers who indicated that the resources provided during the transition to block scheduling were somewhat helpful or ok (mean=3.633) scored significantly higher than the teachers who felt that the resources they received were none or that they felt not equipped (mean=3.039).

Using a one way analysis of variance, a second significant difference was found at the .01 level on the subcategory transition to block scheduling. Student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test revealed a significant difference at the .01 level. It was found that there was a significant difference between teachers who indicated that the resources provided during the transition to block scheduling were very helpful (mean=4.650) scored significantly higher than the teachers who felt that the resources they received were somewhat helpful or ok (mean=3.633).

Using a one way analysis of variance, a third significant difference was found at the .01 level on the subcategory transition to block scheduling. Student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test revealed a significant difference at the .01 level. Additionally, it was found that there was a significant difference between teachers who indicated that the resources provided during the transition to block scheduling were very helpful (mean=4.650) scored significantly higher than the teachers who felt that the resources they received were none or felt they were not equipped (mean=3.039). See Table 18.

Using a one way analysis of variance, a significant difference was found at the .05 level on the subcategory perceived student satisfaction using a student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test. Teachers who indicated that they received no resources or were not equipped (mean=3.654) and those teachers who indicated that the resources received were somewhat helpful or okay (mean=4.017) scored significantly higher than the teachers who indicated that the resources that they received were very helpful (mean=4.700) group. See Table 18.

Using a one way analysis of variance, a significant difference was found at the .05 level on the subcategory teaching strategies using a student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test. Teachers who indicated that they received no resources or were not equipped (mean=3.949) and those teachers who indicated that the resources received were somewhat helpful or okay (mean=4.267) scored significantly higher than the teachers who indicated that the resources that they received were very helpful (mean=4.800). It was also found that teachers who indicated that they received no resources or were not equipped (mean=3.949) and those teachers who indicated that the resources received were very helpful (mean=4.800) scored significantly higher than the teachers who indicated that the resources that they received were somewhat helpful or ok (mean=4.267). See Table 18.

Using a one way analysis of variance, a significant difference was not different enough to be significant on subcategory teacher workload using a student Newman-Keuls Multiple Range Test. See Table 18.

Table 18: ANOVA of Subcategories with Resources

Subcategory	N	Resource Adequate	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Transition to Block Scheduling	10	Very Helpful	4.650	.530		
	15	Somewhat Helpful/OK	3.633	.790		
	13	Not Equipped/None	3.039	.721		
					14.790	.000
Classroom Management	10	Very Helpful	3.260	.517		
	15	Somewhat Helpful/OK	3.733	.458		
	13	Not Equipped/None	2.908	.301		
					4.563	.017
Teacher Satisfaction	10	Very Helpful	4.843	.2647		
	15	Somewhat Helpful/OK	4.067	.8169		
	13	Not Equipped/None	3.857	1.0068		
					4.686	.016
Perceived Student Satisfaction	10	Very Helpful	4.700	.3496		
	15	Somewhat Helpful/OK	4.017	.7876		
	13	Not Equipped/None	3.654	1.0131		
					4.959	.013
Teaching Strategies	10	Very Helpful	4.800	.3220		
	15	Somewhat Helpful/OK	4.267	.7988		
	13	Not Equipped/None	3.949	.6918		
					4.620	.017
Teacher Workload	10	Very Helpful	3.800	.3266		
	15	Somewhat Helpful/OK	3.387	.5423		
	13	Not Equipped/None	3.292	.5515		
					3.212	.052

Pearson Correlation of Subcategories

A Pearson Correlation of subcategories was conducted on the seven subcategories developed by the researcher in conjunction with the resources received for block scheduling. For five of the subcategories, a significant relationship was found between resources available during implementation and transition to block scheduling, teaching strategies, perceived student satisfaction, teacher satisfaction, and teacher workload. See Table 19. No correlation was found between the subcategories teacher-student relationships and resources in implementation, as well as classroom management and resources in implementation.

In transition to block scheduling, the topics of adequate training and ease of the transition were addressed. Teaching strategies subcategories consists of items such as satisfaction with block scheduling strategies and the strategies used in both lab and non-laboratory courses within the Family and Consumer Education curriculum.

In perceived student satisfaction, items related to student boredom, student dislike of block scheduling, student adjustment, and student learning in Family and Consumer Education. Subcategory teacher satisfaction included satisfaction with the type of block schedule currently used, preference of block scheduling to traditional scheduling, and lowered stress levels in the block schedule. Teacher workload related to reducing daily preparations, workload, number of classes annually taught, class sizes, and enrollment. Teacher-student relationships category include two items which address making personal connections, working one on one with students, and the quality of relationships between teachers and students. In the classroom management subcategory, the topics of discipline, attendance, homework, make up work and classroom breaks were included.

Table 19: Pearson Correlation of Subcategories

Subcategory	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Sig.
Transition to Block Scheduling	14.790	.000
Teaching Strategies	4.620	.002
Perceived Student Satisfaction	4.959	.011
Teacher Satisfaction	4.686	.014
Teacher Workload	3.212	.016

Resources Provided During Transition

Family and Consumer Education teachers were asked to indicate the adequacy of the resources they received for block scheduling transition. Ten found the resources to be very helpful (26.3%) and nine educators found them somewhat helpful (23.7%). Six Family and Consumer Education teachers selected that the resources were ok or that they were impartial regarding the resources (15.8%). Six felt that they were not well-equipped (15.8%) and seven received no resources (18.4%). See Table 20.

Table 20: Adequacy of Resources in Block Scheduling Transition

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes, Very Helpful	10	26.3
Yes, Somewhat Helpful	9	23.7
Impartial/OK	6	15.8
No, Not Well Equipped	6	15.8
No, No Resources	7	18.4
Total	38	100.0

Helpful Resources for the Transition to Block Scheduling

Family and Consumer Education teachers were asked to indicate "what types of block scheduling resources were the most helpful in making the transition to block scheduling." The respondents were asked to select up to three responses. Fourteen respondents answered school visits (45.2%), thirteen chose speakers (34.2%), eleven selected paid in-service (28.9%), ten selected paid summer work (26.3%), and nine chose peer training (23.7%). Seven participants (18.4%) answered either videos or other training. Six respondents (15.8%) selected either books or curriculum guides. Four participants (10.5%) indicated unpaid in-service or college coursework. Three respondents (7.9%) selected internet resources. One respondent (2.6%) answered either DVD, pamphlets, CD-ROM, or unpaid summer work. No respondents chose CESA support, no resources provided, other AV material, or audiocassettes. See Table 21.

Table 21: Frequencies of Helpful Resources in the Transition to Block Scheduling

Type of Resource	Frequency
School Visits	14
Speakers	13
Paid In-Service	11
Paid Summer Work	10
Peer Training	9
Other Training	7
Videos	7
Books	6
Curriculum Guides	6
Unpaid In-Service	4
College Coursework	4
Internet Resources	3
DVD	1
Pamphlets	1
CD-ROM	1
Unpaid Summer Work	1
CESA Support	0
Audiocassette	0
No Resources Provided	0
Other AV Material	0

Valuable Resources Indicated by Family and Consumer Educators

The researcher was interested in learning more about the resources that Family and Consumer Education teachers received during block scheduling implementation. Specifically, the researcher asked "what one resource was the most valuable to you?" For a complete list of the responses indicated on the surveys, see Appendix D.

Generally, the responses were grouped in categories including: school visits, experience, peer training, resources, teacher panels, and inservice. Teachers indicated that school visits were the most valuable resource. This included seeing classes in action and talking to the teachers that were actually experiencing the block scheduling format. During this time, teachers shared curriculum ideas as well as course offering ideas. Some school districts sent various teachers to different schools to bring back the information on block scheduling to share with the entire faculty.

Teachers also felt that experience was a valuable resource. Some schools tried versions of the block for limited amounts of time before full implementation. Teaching in the block and developing a sense of personal organization of materials were types of experience that were invaluable.

Peer training came from fellow Family and Consumer Education teachers as well as those in other disciplines. One teacher responded that her membership in a professional organization enabled her to make contacts for peer training. For a teacher who was new to the block scheduling system, fellow department members helped the acclimation process. Teacher panels were helpful to some teachers.

Also found to be helpful were printed resources, whether provided by the school district or by sought out by the individual. Teachers were not specific in the printed resource names, which may have proven valuable to other teachers. Although inservice time was valuable for Family and Consumer Educators as a resource, one person felt that the concept was presented too simplistically.

Perceived Advantages of Block Scheduling

The researcher was also interested in developing a comprehensive list of the perceived advantages of block scheduling by Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers. Once these advantages were collected, they were sorted into categories for ease of reading.

The overwhelming response given by Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers was the amount of project / laboratory time. Related to more time for projects and labs were the set up and clean up time that was saved. Teachers commented that their students now had time to do the hands on portion of the lab. In addition, they were able to process the lab with a follow up discussion. Also, the classes that benefited the most were listed as foods, child development and sewing. Teachers felt that the students did not have to quit as soon as they started and that there was more flexibility in the lab.

The in-depth coverage of subject matter and ability to cover more curriculum were also listed advantages. Teachers felt that there was a greater opportunity to do more advanced study and to cover more material on various subject matters.

Teachers felt less stress under block scheduling. Some attributed this lowered stress to the fact that they had fewer daily preparations. The fewer daily preparations also meant an increased amount of daily prep time. One teacher indicated that she could now use her 90 minute prep time to do her grocery shopping. Another teacher said that the fewer preps per day allowed her to concentrate on a few classes at a time and do a better job.

Student motivation and achievement were also indicated as advantages. Teachers felt that the student stress level was lessened and therefore the students were more motivated to achieve. Also, the amount of time for teacher / student interaction increased.

Listed by teachers as other advantages were the increased time for field trips and service projects, increased teacher creativity, having no study halls, the ease in sharing staff, increased enrollment, grading advantages, more time for homework, increased use of technology, more variety of students, less parent teacher conferences, better storage for projects, increased passing time, and that students are not as hard on lab equipment. For a complete list of the perceived advantages, see Appendix E.

Perceived Disadvantages of Block Scheduling

Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers also found disadvantages to block scheduling. Listed as the most common disadvantage was the need for variety in lesson planning. One teacher commented that some students can't focus for 90 minutes and that it just wasn't possible to break the period into three segments. Teachers stated that in discussion type classes, days of lecture did not work. Also, they stated that the switch from lab mode to discussion or written project mode was difficult as well.

Student and teacher absences were repeatedly listed by teachers as a disadvantage. Teachers felt that it was difficult for students to make up work after an absence. One replied that if the student missed one day, it was actually like missing two days. They also felt that substitute teachers were a problem for block scheduling. If there was a poor blend of students, it was difficult for the substitute teacher to teach the entire block. In addition, some substitutes can not always follow the lesson plan, which causes more lost instructional time to the classroom teacher.

Scheduling was another perceived disadvantage. Within scheduling, teachers felt that fewer classes were offered and that early graduation was a problem. One teacher commented that their school was small and general scheduling was a problem. It created a lot of singleton classes

and less flexibility for students in scheduling classes. Teachers felt that it helped to be scheduled opposite physical education or some other type of required course.

Several teachers stated that they felt there were no disadvantages to block scheduling. Other disadvantages included less content covered, difficulty in developing relationships, lack of student focus, don't see the students as often, need for fillers, less prep time, and prep work increases.

Discussion

What does the average Family and Consumer Educator look like?

The research data showed that the average Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teacher was a 41-60 year old female. The average teacher was employed by their school district with a full-time contract. They have been employed by their district for 1-10 years and have been a Family and Consumer Education teacher between 11-30 years.

Where do these Family and Consumer Education teachers teach?

Most respondents to the survey taught in schools with grades 9-12, with a student population of 251-1000 students. The school had either one, two, or more Family and Consumer Education teachers who have been in block scheduling on average 3-5 years. The type of block scheduling most commonly used was the 4 x 4 block.

What are the implications for Family and Consumer Education teachers?

Block scheduling was more effective for time use in lab courses such as foods, clothing construction, and housing. It was the opinion of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education

teachers as well as the research that has been completed by several researchers (Dow & George, 1998). Family and Consumer Education teachers have been limited by shorter periods. It takes time to get materials and to clean up in a lab setting. In a 45-minute period, 15-20 minutes can easily be used for set up and clean up procedures. In a 90-minute class, the 15-20 minutes of set up and clean up are not as noticeable. The urgency to rush to start and rush to finish is lessened. Teachers felt that they couldn't do hands-on activities, fieldwork, or integrated learning in traditional setting. This was where block scheduling was most helpful to Family and Consumer Education teachers.

In one study, Florida's Newborn High School home economics teachers reported that the block worked much better, providing time for guest speakers, use of more complex recipes, and extended role-playing activities (Dow & George, 1998). This was also found in the researcher's study.

Although no research studies were found, Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers also indicated that they slightly disagreed with the statement "block scheduling has resulted in decreased enrollment in family and consumer education." As with all elective areas, number of students enrolled is a critical item and worry of teachers. For some, it appears that block scheduling has increased enrollment, while for others, it has resulted in decreased enrollment.

Results for Student Success

When time is used well in school, not only does the climate of the school improve, but the opportunity for learning increases (Shortt & Thayer, 1999). The study by Shortt & Thayer (1999) supported the research completed in this researcher's study. Teachers felt that the opportunity for

learning increases, but this depends on both the teacher and the student. It is the job of the teacher to provide quality instruction while students should come ready to learn. Increased student success then becomes more possible. This is one of several reasons for a deliberate, concentrated effort of successful implementation of block scheduling, increased learning for student success. The most frequently voiced concerns of block scheduling in one study was the ability of students to retain knowledge from one semester or year to the next, curriculum pacing, and teachers using instructional strategies appropriate to the long block (George & McEwin, 1999). These concerns were also expressed by Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers in their curriculum as well as their concern for English curriculum and the necessity to incorporate cross disciplinary studies. This, again, should be addressed in teacher inservice regarding block scheduling, so that student success is maximized.

Scheduling was a major concern of students, as perceived by teachers and administrators. In one school, the first-year students reported they had problems balancing required and elective courses across the semesters (Dow & George, 1998). Depending on the type of scheduling used, students may actually have more difficulty selecting and getting their desired courses. This was also found to be true in the researcher's study. Teachers listed scheduling as a disadvantage of block scheduling, especially for smaller schools. Some schools have gone to hand scheduling for each student to balance their schedules.

Another reason that students have trouble in block scheduling is absences, whether personal or school related. This was found to be true in the researcher's study. Students absent from block classes missed more content in each class. This is a natural consequence for a change to block scheduling. A student absent the whole day, however, misses four classes instead of six, seven, or even eight. It becomes easier for a student to speak to four teachers instead of six or

more. With the increased class length, the teacher would have more in class time to speak with the student about what they have missed. On the other hand, the student missed twice as much material in the four classes in which they were enrolled.

In a 4 x 4 or alternating block, a student can earn eight credits a year. Students would then have the opportunity to meet their graduation requirements earlier in their high school career. In this researcher's study, one disadvantage was early graduation. With students graduating early, they are not able to take more elective courses such as Family and Consumer Education. Although some students may choose this option, other may not, thus freeing up junior and senior time for students to do career exploration in an assortment of elective courses. Some students are opting to graduate early from high school and enter college or the world of work early while others stay and explore other curricular areas.

Results for Lesson Design

Fortunately, teachers can manipulate time to make it an ally of education, using it efficiently to plan activities that appeal to students' natural inquisitiveness (Louden & Hounshell, 2000). Lesson design was a clear concern for Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers. Although teachers generally felt that their current teaching strategies were satisfactory, they were better developed after training, multiple resources, and experience. One benefit of block scheduling is the teacher's ability to use varied styles of delivery in block scheduling. In one study, teachers reported that the longer block of time permitted them to conduct activities more efficiently (Shortt & Thayer, 1999). In the researcher's study, one disadvantage given was the difficulty in designing lessons with several parts and variety. Variety includes not only different kinds of activities, such as discussion, media presentations, role-playing, lecture,

projects, simulations, reading, discussions, use of computer-based technology, research, and so on, but also different grouping structures such as whole class, small group, paired, and individual work (Marshak, 1998). Other teachers in the researcher's study felt that the time opened opportunities that they were once unable to use in curriculum delivery.

According to one study, teachers believe that the greatest advantages of block scheduling for teachers are their increased planning time (Stokes & Wilson, 2000). This contradicts what some Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers felt. Some teachers felt that their planning time decreased with block scheduling. Others felt the time increased and that they were able to accomplish more in the block prep time. This included the ability to do grocery shopping for labs in a given block of time. It is important to note that not all models of block scheduling increase teacher preparation times. One Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teacher noted that her teaching time was extended (negotiated for extra pay) and prep time was less.

In one study, Florida teachers were asked to identify from a list of eight possibilities, the reasons for adopting the new schedule (Dow & George, 1998). The following reasons were the most frequently cited:

1. We wished to reduce the number of students each teacher taught daily.
2. We wished to encourage teachers to use different instructional strategies.
3. We wished to provide teachers with more flexible time frames.
4. We wished to improve student behavior in classroom and school.

This was in support of the researcher's study. Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers believed that the number of students taught each year had decreased, that they were more able to use a variety of instructional strategies, and had more flexibility in lesson planning.

The block can be boring for the teacher who has a class that does not respond (Dow & George, 1998). This is in support of the researcher's study, which found that teachers listed disadvantages of the block as the inability of students to focus, varied student ability in the classroom, and student behavior. The real problem in the class not responding may have been the style of teaching. Teachers who continue to lecture as their primary instruction method tend to allow considerable chunks of class time to be used for "hanging out" and homework (Marshak, 1998). This was found in the researcher's study also as teachers indicated that they now gave students more time for homework. Other teachers clearly take the time newly given time and flourish. Instructional strategies and curriculum pacing should be addressed during inservice or block schedule training. Retention of knowledge should also be addressed during inservice, but also discussed in use of appropriate scheduling.

Results for Successful Implementation

In the researcher's study, teachers were undecided on the statement "I feel like I had adequate training in block scheduling before its implementation." Some teachers strongly agreed with the statement, while others strongly disagreed. It was clear from the study that the amount of training and resources varied by school. Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers listed the resources that they found the most helpful. The top five included school visits, speakers, paid inservice, paid summer work, and peer training. The teachers clearly need time and resources for the successful implementation of the block. Teachers will need to make adjustments to the longer periods. The long periods persuade many teachers to find ways to enrich their instruction. Teachers must also re-evaluate their mental modes of learning, curriculum, coverage, and assessment. Effective implementation of the block requires a shift from lecture as a main means

of teaching to a more hands-on, project-orientated approach (Schoenstein, 1995). Many areas of school programs already use project-orientated activities in their classroom, including Family and Consumer Education. Those who have traditionally not used hands on focus will find the shift to be more difficult. When educators in Florida high schools with block schedules were asked about the outcomes, ninety-eight percent said the new schedule encouraged more creative and innovative teaching methods (Dow & George, 1998). In the researcher's study, it was also found that teacher's used new teaching methods successfully and felt good about it.

Teachers strongly agreed that they believe that block scheduling has had a positive impact on student learning in Family and Consumer Education courses. They also strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their current teaching strategies in block scheduling.

To be successful in the block schedule transition, a series of steps must occur. During the first year, it is important to realize that the block scheduling process is an evolutionary process, not a revolutionary process. Queen and Isenhour (1998) developed a three-step process for administrators to follow when a school is ready to examine the idea of block scheduling. The first is to select a design team, a curriculum committee, or group composed of teacher representatives and one administrator. The committee should read current literature and research about block scheduling and discuss these findings. Second, committee members should then visit schools that have been successful and unsuccessful in implementing a block model and investigate why they have been successful or unsuccessful. Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers also listed school visits as the most helpful resource in their transition to block scheduling. After analyzing all the findings, the committee members present these to the full faculty with the recommendation to accept or reject a particular block design. Teachers need ownership in the process and implementation of block scheduling for greater likelihood of success.

Practical staff development is an important component of block scheduling. Jenkins, Queen, and Algozzine (2001) concluded that many U.S. school systems have not provided appropriate in-service training to help practicing teachers transition to the block. Fifty percent of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers who responded to the survey found the resources provided for the transition to block scheduling either very helpful or somewhat helpful. Other teachers commented that they both felt that the training they received oversimplified block scheduling or that it was adequate for them. This again shows the variety of training and resources provided to these teachers.

In Conventry Local Schools (Ohio), the area of training was addressed by, in the first year, providing ten paid inservice days to present teaching methods that would be useful in the block format to the staff members. During the following year, these teachers were given regular inservice training at scheduled staff meetings. After that time, inservice was provided only to those staff members who were new to the district or who were teaching on the block for the first time. Full-staff inservice training was implemented through large-group staff meetings, which provided teachers an avenue for feedback and the opportunity to make modifications in their own teaching strategies (Hess, Wronkovich, & Robinson, 1999). Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers also felt that speakers and inservice time were valuable in their successful transition to block scheduling.

The Florida schools reporting great success with longer classes emphasize the hours of inservice training completed in the year prior to implementing the schedule change. Fifty-four percent of respondents agreed teachers still need more help adapting their instructional strategies to the longer classes of the block scheduling models (Dow & George, 1998).

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this chapter was to summarize the research conducted including methodology and major findings. Conclusions were drawn based on the analysis of the data. Recommendations for further research were also addressed.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to describe Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers' attitudes and perceptions regarding block scheduling measured by a survey instrument developed by the researcher.

Objectives

The study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. How many Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers were using some form of block scheduling?
2. What was the level of satisfaction of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers toward block scheduling?
3. What types of resources and training did Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers receive prior to and during block schedule implementation?
4. What were the perceived of advantages and disadvantages of the block schedule for Wisconsin family and consumer science educators?

5. Were the attitudes of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers regarding block scheduling influenced by independent variables of age, sex, years of teaching experience at current school and years of total teaching experience?

Methodology

The survey was sent to two hundred and twenty-five teachers of middle and high school Family and Consumer Education in the state of Wisconsin. A questionnaire was sent via the United States Postal Service to the teachers throughout the state. The list of schools and names of the Family and Consumer Education teachers were obtained through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction computer database. A random sample was made by selecting every third school listed in the database, excluding any elementary schools.

The development of this research project was based on a literature review around attitudes toward block scheduling. Data was gathered around seven subcategories: transition to block scheduling, classroom management, teacher satisfaction, perceived student satisfaction, teaching strategies, teacher-student relationships, and teacher workload.

The researcher, during the applied evaluation in home economics course, developed the four-part research instrument. The four-part research instrument was developed to measure demographics, attitudes of Family and Consumer Education teachers toward block scheduling, the extent of resources available to Family and Consumer Education teachers during implementation of block scheduling, and perceived advantages and disadvantages of block scheduling (see Appendix A).

The demographic items were representative of independent variables which might provide information regarding behavior affecting their attitudes. The independent variables were selected

following a preliminary review of literature. These independent variables included: age, gender, total enrollment of school building, grade levels served at school building, current employment status, number of Family and Consumer Education teachers in school building, number of years in current district, number of years as a Family and Consumer Education teacher, years in block scheduling, and type of alternative scheduling used.

Part two of the survey, questions 1-34, used a Likert type scale. The scale had a range of 1-5 and measured the degree of agreement (1=strongly disagree, 3=undecided, 5=strongly agree). Statements were designed to measure attitudes of Family and Consumer Education teachers toward block scheduling. The seven subcategories included: transition to block scheduling, classroom management, teacher satisfaction, perceived student satisfaction, teaching strategies, teacher-student relationships, and teacher workload. Data were presented by the mean scores and standard deviation on the interval scale of measurement.

Part three included three items to measure the amount of resources used in the transition to block scheduling, the most valuable resource provided, and attitude statements to determine if the resources were adequate. Part four included two open-ended statements to allow participants to indicate the major advantages and disadvantages of block scheduling.

The questionnaire was given to ten Family and Consumer Education teachers in the southeastern Wisconsin area. This pilot study was limited by the small sample size available. After a tabulation of the results, multiple items were revised or removed.

The procedures used to administer the questionnaire began in September 2002. The first letter requesting participation (see Appendix B) and questionnaire were sent during January 2003 to the randomly selected Family and Consumer Education teachers. These teachers were asked to participate in the study. All participants were asked to return their questionnaire in the self-

addressed, stamped envelope. A total of 122 questionnaires, representing 54% were returned. Three weeks after the initial request, in February 2003, a follow-up letter (see Appendix C), questionnaire, and self-addressed stamped envelope were sent to those who had not responded. An additional 32 questionnaires were returned, making a total of 154 respondents. This was a 68% response rate.

Four questionnaires were not used as the respondents failed to complete all the sections of the instrument. Thirty-eight of the 150 questionnaires returned were teachers who had experience with block scheduling.

Inferential statistics used were the analysis of variance (ANOVA). A T-test was utilized to determine differences between independent variables of age, gender, total building enrollment, grade levels served at school building, employment status, number of Family and Consumer Education teachers, years of teaching in current district, total years teaching Family and Consumer Education, years teaching in block scheduling, and type of block scheduling used and items in part II. A one way analysis of variance was used on items in part II, part III, and part IV. A Newman-Keuls Multiple Comparison Test was computed for significant ANOVA results. To establish the concurrent validity of the attitude items in Parts II and III, a Pearson Correlation was completed with each of the subcategories of transition to block scheduling, classroom management, teacher satisfaction, perceived student satisfaction, teaching strategies, teacher-student relationships, and teacher workload.

Conclusions

The following questions were answered during the researcher's study on block scheduling:

1. How many Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers were using some form of block scheduling?

Thirty-eight of the 154 respondents to the survey indicated that they used some form of block scheduling. This constituted 41%. Therefore, we can generalize that 41% of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers used some form of block scheduling.

2. What was the level of satisfaction of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers toward block scheduling?

Satisfaction of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers was determined by examining the attitude statements pertaining to teacher satisfaction. These statements were: "I am satisfied with the type of alternative scheduling my school uses," "I am satisfied with block scheduling at my school," "Block scheduling is exciting to teach in," "I prefer block scheduling to the traditional 6-8 period day," "I would like to go back to traditional scheduling," "I feel less stress teaching in block scheduling,"and "I dislike block scheduling." The mean was calculated and found to be 4.199. This means that on average, teachers slightly agreed with these statements. Also, a Pearson Correlation was calculated and it was found to have a Pearson Correlation Coefficient of 4.686. This indicates to the researcher that the greater amount of resources provided to the teacher, the higher the rate of satisfaction.

3. What types of resources and training did Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers receive prior to and during block schedule implementation?

Family and Consumer Education teachers were asked to indicate "what types of block scheduling resources were the most helpful in making the transition to block scheduling." The respondents were asked to select up to three responses. Fourteen respondents answered school visits (45.2%), thirteen chose speakers (34.2%), eleven selected paid in-service (28.9%), ten selected paid summer work (26.3%), and nine chose peer training (23.7%). Seven participants (18.4%) answered either videos or other training. Six respondents (15.8%) selected either books or curriculum guides. Four participants (10.5%) indicated unpaid in-service or college coursework. Three respondents (7.9%) selected internet resources. One respondent (2.6%) answered either DVD, pamphlets, CD-ROM, or unpaid summer work.

4. What were the perceived of advantages and disadvantages of the block schedule for Wisconsin family and consumer science educators?

The biggest advantage identified by Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers as an advantage of block scheduling was the amount of project / laboratory time including the set up and clean up time that is saved. Teachers commented that their students had time to do the hands on portion of the lab while being able to process the activity with a follow up discussion.

The in-depth coverage of subject matter and ability to cover more curriculum were also listed advantages. Teachers felt that there was a greater opportunity to do more advanced study and to cover more material on various subject matters.

Teachers felt less stress under block scheduling. Some attributed this lowered stress to the fact that they had fewer daily preparations. The fewer daily preparations also meant an increased amount of daily prep time.

Student motivation and achievement were also indicated as advantages. Teachers felt that student stress level was lessened and therefore the students were more motivated to achieve. Also, the amount of time for teacher / student interaction increased.

Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers also found disadvantages to block scheduling. Listed as the most common disadvantage was the need for variety in lesson planning. One teacher commented that some students can't focus for 90 minutes and that it just wasn't possible to break the period into three segments. Teachers stated that in discussion type classes, days of lecture did not work. Also, they stated that the switch from lab mode to discussion or written project mode was difficult as well.

Student and teacher absences disadvantages repeatedly listed by teachers. Teachers felt that it was hard for students to make up work after an absence. One replied that if the student missed one day, it was actually like missing two days.

Scheduling was another perceived disadvantage. Within scheduling, teachers felt that fewer classes were offered and that early graduation was a problem. One teacher commented that their school was small and general scheduling was a problem. It created a lot of singleton classes and less flexibility for students in scheduling classes.

5. Were the attitudes of Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers regarding block scheduling influenced by independent variables of age, sex, years of teaching experience at current school and years of total teaching experience?

There were significant differences found in attitudes towards block scheduling in relation to age. Family and Consumer Education teachers 20-40 years of age and 51 years and older appear to have had more favorable attitudes regarding block scheduling and the ability to make personal connections than those teachers age 41-50 years of age. They also have more favorable attitudes regarding the stress teaching in block scheduling. It was also found that Family and Consumer Education teachers 51 years and older and 41-50 years old believed that block scheduling increased the number of classes taught annually.

The research findings also indicated a significant relationship between years of teaching experience and the attitudes towards block scheduling. Teachers with 11-20 years of experience and those teachers with 21 years or more of experience had more favorable attitudes towards the recommendation that middle school Family and Consumer Education courses were taught in block scheduling format.

In addition, the research findings also indicated a significant relationship between years of teaching in block scheduling and attitudes towards block scheduling. Teachers with 6-13 years of block scheduling experience and 1-3 years of block scheduling experience had more favorable attitudes that block scheduling reduces daily preparations versus those with 4-5 years of experience.

Teachers who indicated that the resources provided during the transition to block scheduling were very helpful, somewhat helpful, or ok had a more favorable attitude towards the transition to block scheduling than the teachers who felt that the resources they received were none or that they felt unequipped.

Teachers who indicated that the resources provided during the transition to block scheduling were very helpful perceived that student satisfaction with block scheduling was the greatest and had the most favorable attitudes towards block scheduling teaching strategies .

Family and consumer sciences education teachers indicated the types of block scheduling resources were the most helpful in making the transition to block scheduling. School visits, speakers, and paid in-service appeared to be the most helpful in the transition while CESA support, other AV material, and audiocassettes appeared to be the least helpful.

The findings also indicated that Wisconsin Family and Consumer Education teachers had clear perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of block scheduling. A comprehensive list was accumulated for those Family and Consumer Education teachers contemplating the move to or from block scheduling.

Recommendations for Further Study

Students and parents need to be asked their opinions of block scheduling. There are numerous studies on teacher and administrator opinions of block scheduling, but more information needs to be gathered on the students who are most impacted by block scheduling. From their experiences, teachers will be better able to teach and administrators will be better able to design supplemental material for faculty.

Vocational areas, such as Agriculture, Technical, and Business Education need to complete studies on block scheduling implementation. These vocational areas can learn from one another as most tends to have common linkage. Further study would only compliment studies such as this.

An additional recommendation is to study those schools who have gone to block scheduling and returned to traditional scheduling. Evaluation could include what the opinions of

the teachers, administrators, parents, and students say about this transition and why block scheduling was not retained in their school.

Educational Implications

Student discipline seems to be an underlying issue in block scheduling. Discipline techniques, tips, and pointers need to be developed for those teaching in the block. What works in a traditional 45 minute period may or may not be adequate for the block period.

Novice teachers may not be adequately trained in teacher training programs to meet the challenges of block scheduling. Colleges and universities are now taking notice of the increased use of block scheduling and are making appropriate adjustments. Many student teachers will be placed in schools where block scheduling is already implemented. Their college and university training can be a valuable asset to a school district making the transition to block scheduling.

Not only novice teachers, but experienced teachers alike, need to be given strategies for proper lesson planning. Expectations that an experienced teacher can make the adjustment without appropriate resources for lesson planning is unfair. Teachers need to be given the time and resources to make the transition, or it is destined to fail. In conjunction with lesson planning, the idea of lesson fillers also needs to be discussed. In the block, more so than traditional scheduling, students will get done at various times. The ability of the teacher to provide quality fillers is pivotal in lesson design. Expectations that students should sit and do nothing while the remainder of the class completes a task does not make the most of the new allotted time frame.

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Appendix A

Family and Consumer Education Teachers Opinions of Block Scheduling
Part I: Demographic Information
Place an X in the blank that BEST represents your response to the question asked.

1. Your Age:
   _____ 20-30 years old
   _____ 31-40 years old
   _____ 41-50 years old
   _____ 51-60 years old
   _____ 61 or older

2. Your Gender:
   _____ Female
   _____ Male

3. The total enrollment at your high school building:
   _____ Less than 100
   _____ 100-250
   _____ 251-500
   _____ 501-750
   _____ 751-1000
   _____ 1001-1250
   _____ 1251-1500
   _____ 1501 or more

4. Grade level(s) of students that your high school building services (please check all that apply):
   _____ 6th
   _____ 7th
   _____ 8th
   _____ 9th
   _____ 10th
   _____ 11th
   _____ 12th

5. Current employment status:
   _____ Full-time teaching
   _____ Part-time teaching; what percent? _____

6. How many family and consumer science teachers are there in your school building?
   _____ I am the only one.
   _____ Beside myself, there is one other.
   _____ Beside myself, there are two or more others.

7. Number of years teaching in your current school district:
   _____ Less than one
   _____ 1-5 years
   _____ 6-10 years
   _____ 11-15 years
   _____ 16-20 years
   _____ 21-25 years
   _____ 26-30 years
   _____ 31-35 years
   _____ 36 or more years

8. Total number of years you have been a teacher of family and consumer education:
   _____ Less than one
   _____ 1-5 years
   _____ 6-10 years
   _____ 11-15 years
   _____ 16-20 years
   _____ 21-25 years
   _____ 26-30 years
   _____ 31-35 years
   _____ 36 or more years

9. How many years have you taught block scheduling? _____ years
   _____ I have not taught using block scheduling.

STOP. Please return the first page of this survey only. Thank you.

10. What type of alternative scheduling does your school building currently use?
    _____ 4 x 4 block - How many minutes per block? _____
    _____ Alternative Day or A-B Block - How many minutes per block? _____
    _____ Combined Block - please describe _____
    _____ Other - please describe _____

Part II:
For each of the following statements, please indicate the extent to which you agree by selecting a number from 1 to 5, and place it in the space provided next to each statement.

Please consider each of statements carefully. There are no RIGHT answers, only your personal opinions.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Undecided	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

1. Block scheduling reduces my daily preparations. _____
2. I am able to make personal connections and work one on one with my students in block scheduling. _____
3. Block scheduling increases my workload. _____
4. Block scheduling reduces discipline incidents I have in my classroom. _____
5. Block scheduling increases the number of classes that I teach annually. _____
6. Block scheduling has increased my class sizes. _____
7. Block scheduling improves my student attendance. _____
8. I feel like I had adequate training in block scheduling before its implementation. _____
9. My students receive more homework in block scheduling. _____
10. I am satisfied with the type of alternative scheduling my school uses. _____
11. Block scheduling is better for lab courses like foods, clothing construction, and housing. _____
12. Block scheduling makes it harder for students to complete makeup work. _____
13. I had difficulty making the transition to block scheduling. _____

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Slightly Disagree	3 Undecided	4 Slightly Agree	5 Strongly Agree

14. I am satisfied with block scheduling at my school. _____

15. Students are more frequently bored in block scheduling. _____

16. Block scheduling is exciting to teach in. _____

17. Substitute teachers in my area have more problems with block scheduled courses. _____

18. I do not like to use substitute teachers in block scheduling. _____

19. My instruction has improved as a result of block scheduling. _____

20. I prefer block scheduling to the traditional 6-8 period day. _____

21. Block scheduling has improved the quality of my relationships with students. _____

22. Block scheduling has resulted in decreased enrollment in family and consumer education. _____

23. I would like to go back to traditional scheduling. _____

24. Students dislike block scheduling. _____

25. It is difficult to teach non-laboratory classes such as family relationships, child development and consumer economics using block scheduling. _____

26. I feel less stress teaching in block scheduling. _____

27. I recommend that middle school family and consumer education courses are taught in block scheduling format. _____

28. I dislike block scheduling. _____

29. I give my students a short break half way through my block scheduled classes. _____

30. Most students have adjusted to block scheduling. _____

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Undecided	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

31. I am satisfied with my current teaching strategies in block scheduling. _____

32. Even though I teach in block scheduling, I could use more instructional time. _____

33. Block scheduling has a negative impact on student learning in family and consumer education courses. _____

34. I feel that I do not cover as much course content in block scheduled courses as I would in a traditionally scheduled semester long course. _____

Part III: Resources

1. Did you feel that the block scheduling resources provided to you were adequate in your transition to block scheduling?
   _____ Yes, very helpful.
   _____ Yes, somewhat helpful.
   _____ Impartial, they were okay, but not what I wanted.
   _____ No, I was not very well equipped with resources.
   _____ No, I received no resources.

2. What types of block scheduling resources were the MOST helpful in making the transition to block scheduling? (Please select up to 3)

_____ Speakers	_____ Books	_____ Paid Inservice
_____ DVD	_____ CD-ROM	_____ Audiocassette
_____ Pamphlets	_____ Videos	_____ College Coursework
_____ Unpaid In-service	_____ Internet Resources	_____ Curriculum Guides
_____ CESA Support	_____ Peer Training	_____ School Visits
_____ Paid Summer Work	_____ Unpaid Summer Work	

   _____ No resources were provided
   _____ Other AV Material (please describe)_____
   _____ Other Training (please describe)_____

3. What one resource was MOST valuable to you? (please describe-title, name of speaker?)

_____

Part IV: Main Perceptions of Block Scheduling. Please complete the following sentences with as much information as you can provide.

1. As a family and consumer science education teacher, I see the major advantages in using block scheduling are …

2. As a family and consumer sciences education teacher, I see the major disadvantages in using block scheduling is …

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix B

Dear Fellow Family and Consumer Sciences Educator,

My name is Jenny Wehmeier and I am a pursuing a Master of Science Degree at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. I also serve as a family and consumer sciences educator at Big Foot Union High School in Walworth, Wisconsin.

Today, I am asking you to assist me in obtaining information on my research topic of block scheduling. Whether or not your school currently uses block scheduling, has in the past, or will in the future, I am asking for your participation in the attached survey.

When completed, please return the survey in the enclosed postage paid envelope by Wednesday, February 19, 2003. I thank you in advance for your participation in this study.

Regards,

Jenny Wehmeier, CFCS

By completing the survey, you understand that you are giving your informed consent as a participating volunteer in this study. You understand the basic nature of the study and agree that any potential risks are small. You also understand the potential benefits that might be realized from the successful completion of this study. You are aware that the information is being sought in a specific manner so that only minimal identifiers are necessary and so that confidentiality is guaranteed. You realize that you have the right to refuse to participate and that your right to withdraw from participation at any time during the study will be respected with no coercion or prejudice.

NOTE: Questions or concerns about the research study should be addressed to Jenny Wehmeier, researcher, at 262-723-8529 or the research advisor, Dr. Karen Zimmerman at 715-232-2530. Questions about the rights of research subjects can be addressed to Sue Foxwell, Human Protections Administrator, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, 11 Harvey Hall, Menomonie, WI 54751, phone (715) 232-1126.

Appendix C

Dear Fellow Family and Consumer Sciences Educator,

My name is Jenny Wehmeier and I am a pursuing a Master of Science Degree at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. I also serve as a family and consumer sciences educator at Big Foot Union High School in Walworth, Wisconsin.

Recently, you were sent a questionnaire regarding block scheduling. I am hoping that you will be able to complete the questionnaire and mail it to me by March 24, 2003, so that my research may include your school.

I am asking you to assist me in obtaining information on my research topic of block scheduling. Whether or not your school currently uses block scheduling, has in the past, or will in the future, I am asking for your participation in the attached survey.

When completed, please return the survey in the enclosed postage paid envelope by Monday, March 24, 2003. I thank you in advance for your participation in this study.

Regards,

Jenny Wehmeier, CFCS

Appendix D

Respondents were asked the open ended question "what one resource was the most valuable to you?" Listed below are the verbatim responses received on the survey.

- Area teachers in a panel format from a school that already gone to block scheduling and contacts I made through Wisconsin Family and Consumer Educators.
- Our teacher visited block scheduled schools and described it to the rest of the faculty.
- School visits –see classes in action
- Experience
- Actually trying it on a limited basis before we actually changed.
- Using the materials and resources given us
- The resource from the block scheduling seminar
- Inservice time-it was just presented too simplistic
- School visits and talking to peers
- Teaching in the block
- Speaker
- Visiting other schools and talking to teachers, sharing curriculum, and courses offered…
- My own organization of materials-being prepared! This came from peers and summer or year long planning.
- We did an all school block trial run for two days in the spring before we implemented the block-it was a great learning experience.
- Peer training-other teachers in my department who had already been teaching under a block schedule when I started-helped me the most.

Appendix E

Respondents were asked to complete the open ended statement "as a Family and Consumer Education teacher, I see the major advantages in using block scheduling are..." The following are the responses received from the these teachers.

- In foods lab, much lower stress.
- In assistant child care teacher, students had enough time for visiting child care centers.
- Doing community field trips
- Adding service projects to current curriculum
- Gaining set up and clean up time
- Less students to prepare grades for and less parent conferences
- Time to do more advance things
- Students are really motivated
- I'm not as physically exhausted.
- No need for study halls.
- Less need for space to store student projects with three classes versus seven classes.
- Not as hard on equipment because there is time to show students how to use properly.
- Schedule makes it fairly easy to share staff at middle and high school.
- Easier to share department among cooperating teachers.
- Longer passing time
- Beneficial in foods lab, preschool for child development and sewing classes
- Time structure for lab classes
- I can cover more material in all classes

- Full block at the middle school was hard. We kept block scheduling for eighth graders in encore areas because it helps get them ready for block in high school. The block set up works well. The students still wanted more time in FACE so now we have added sixth graders for a 43 minute class every other day.
- Less preps
- Get lots more accomplished in a 90 minute block
- Housekeeping and attendance etc. is at a minimum
- Time to work with my students one on one
- I like that it forces teachers to get away from lecture/notes and be more creative with assignments.
- I like the time available to do different things
- More time for the hands on lab and projects
- Students have time to complete their homework, use computer lab or library
- Better use of lab time-instruction, set up, prep, eval, and clean up
- Sewing and home interiors longer work time less tear down time
- Child care-longer time for child visits
- More focus by students
- Less stress, more time to understand topics, more creative teaching methods, in class activities (less homework), more time for discussion.
- Love it overall!
- Getting to know the students
- Can complete lab work and discuss

- Time to start major projects and help students
- Quality work can be done with computer based projects
- Having time to finish labs, have discussion about good and bad
- Longer periods of time to utilize lab experiences.
- Also, more time for discussion and projects.
- I would never go back to the 6-8 period day.
- Students gain more practical experience.
- Less stress to finish labs
- More time to work on projects
- Students do not have to quit as soon as they get started
- Length of time allows for better lab times
- Variety of material and activities needed
- Better attendance, test scores, and behaviors
- It has been a wonderful adventure and learning experience.
- Lab situations and in depth discussion time
- When using block scheduling, students were less stressed and more prepared for class.
- Students liked having fewer classes to manage in one day.
- I liked the flexibility for lab classes.
- Adequate time for labs. We are not rushed.
- Time in class for activities and class work.
- Uninterrupted learning
- Time for projects

- Providing students with time to do lab and project work.
- Class discussions are better due to the extra time available.
- Be more thorough, go more in depth on the subject matter
- Project completion rate is higher
- Students become very involved in the lab work.
- When labs or construction is necessary, having extra time to explain, prepare and perform makes some classes easier to cover.
- More efficient use of time.
- Better time frame for projects or lab work.
- More one on one instruction time
- Less preps per day-can concentrate on a few classes at a time and do a better job
- 90 minute prep time for grocery shopping
- Increase in student enrollment in FCE courses
- Not prepping for four or more classes a day
- Time to get into real depth on a topic
- Intense student effort in lab experiences and hands on projects, don't feel rushed
- Time for multiple topics, approaches, methods, experiences, activities in one block.
- Out of school volunteering and observations can occur during class time
- Hands on courses are designed for this type of scheduling
- Plenty of time for homework to be completed and projects to be done.
- Our students take 32 credits-no study halls. There is time for FACE courses.
- We get the top notch as well as the lower notch students.

- We went from one teacher to three.
- Allowing students to spend uninterrupted time on projects as soon as the basics are presented. The ability to follow a process through during a class, rather than cutting off, cleaning up and stepping in the middle.
- Ability to have students complete more advanced hands on projects. They can really go in depth when not being asked to clean up every few minutes.
- The longer classes are good for labs in food and clothing classes as well as when we work on projects for interior design.
- We finally get to complete labs in foods and clothing. It is great for project based classes.
- Complete projects and enough time to help all students.
- Student relationships
- Lab classes-completion of projects/products
- I have my food service class blocked and it is awesome for labs and our mock café we have three times in the semester.
- I get to know my students better.
- I was able to be more prepared to teach subject matter because there were less preps- most preps in one quarter are three. So, not spread as thin as when I had five preps each day.
- More time for labs
- Less disruption with transition time (less time spent setting up/ taking down after labs)
- More time to get in-depth on subjects
- Fewer classes to prepare for in each term

- 90 minutes prep time per day means I actually feel prepared each day.
- Enough lab time plus follow up discussion is a #1 plus.
- The ability to meet the needs of various student populations; ESL; special needs; gifted and talented and regular students with real life skills
- Allow more elaborate instruction and lab time

Appendix F

Respondents were asked to complete the open-ended statement "as a Family and Consumer Education teacher, I see the major disadvantages in using block scheduling are..." Listed below are the responses received.

- There is none.
- Hard for kids to make up work
- We cover less content.
- Some kids can't focus for 90 minutes and it just isn't always possible to break the period into three segments
- Students will sign up for classes with one teacher. We will see them all day long and then may not see them for three or four semesters.
- Students graduate early.
- We teach three classes daily and have one full 93 minutes for preparation.
- Days of lecture, need to vary activity and be organized
- Days for subs are long
- We had middle school within the high school. Do not advise for middle school setting.
- I know teachers that would like to go back to traditional hours. I liked it for FACE.
- Some classes (family living, child care, etc.) the 90 minutes is too long. This is mostly in discussion type classes.
- When your school is small you have a number of scheduling problems.
- Some students finish up before others. What do we give the students who are done to work on?

- There are none! I really like it! The atmosphere is more relaxed and organized with less class transitions in a day, 3-4 classes per day rather than 7-8.
- If they miss one day it's actually two days. That can be tough but it is only three classes, not six.
- If you have a poor blend of students 92 minutes can be a lot.
- Can't think of any, it has been very positive for us at our school.
- Scheduling class time for most effective use
- Sometimes prep work increases.
- Can be problematic for special education students
- You should have students move during the hour-so discipline is essential!
- Need fillers when labs end early
- Keeping kids engaged in projects
- When students don't have projects, it is a long period and alternatives are needed
- Having students nine weeks it is difficult to develop relationships
- Missing a day is twice the work for students
- Subs can't always do what was planned, more lost time
- Learning what is the most important content to teach
- Teaching time is extended (we negotiated for extra pay) and prep time is less
- We heard at an inservice that good teachers become better and bad teachers become worse when introduced to the block.
- When students are absent-there were students who could quickly fall behind

- The day goes by very quickly. I'm always busy trying to keep ahead of the work- grading papers, etc.
- Some students can't fit classes into their schedule.
- Block scheduling, as we do it, provides students with a semester of English for the year. then no English for the next eight months. English needs to be integrated in the entire curriculum somehow so kids use what they know. It is not being done-it is very difficult to do!
- Actually I have not felt any disadvantages yet! It is thoroughly enjoyable! It works so well for teachers and students.
- The amount of information in some areas seems to be too much at once. Would be easier to break over several days.
- Less flexibility for students in scheduling classes
- Not as many different courses offered per year.
- Fewer courses can be offered.
- Without hands on projects the time can be deadly to students.
- In the math and foreign language sequence of courses, maybe band and having it required all year
- Helps to be opposite physical education or some other required course
- If you just get a class to "gel" when it's at the end of quarter (semester). They leave before you can go to the next level of learning and challenging. If you have the same students for a year or at least two quarters, you have the time to build the relationships.
- To new teachers, with no reputation among students, it's more challenging to achieve a clear set of expectations with every quarter bringing three new classes.

- We teach courses for nine weeks. By the end of the quarter, we are just beginning to really know our students and understand their needs. We have to give so much information daily without enough time to reteach the next day. Less time overall in a nine week block quarter compared to our previous semester schedule.
- Our school is small so general scheduling is a problem (lots of singleton classes).
- When someone is absent so much.
- I don't feel the pressure of getting through a lesson as I do in my other classes.
- You must learn to vary activities so students don't get bored.
- 90 minutes is more time than necessary for a lab. It is difficult for students to switch from lab mode to discussion or written project mode. I would like more research done on a 70 minute trimester schedule.
- We lost approximately 2-3 weeks of instructional time per class by going to the block.
- I do not get to know my students well in nine weeks.
- I feel like I am constantly filling out a progress report or a report card.
- Students in academic areas like math and science may have a long transition between levels of classes.
- I do not have a FHA-HERO chapter but the FFA advisor said block scheduling kills clubs. You only see the active students for nine weeks and then they are gone.
- The process of student failure with high absenteeism as a major contributing factor.