## Type of library influence (classroom, central and both) on reading habits of students in the fourth grade / Iris Rachamim

## ABSTRACT

One of the objectives of the elementary school is to develop reading skills and reading for pleasure among students. This can be achieved by opening and running central libraries at school. Another objective is to develop classroom libraries in order to expose students to a large variety of books.

The object of this research was to check if there were differences in reading habits of students with access to classroom libraries, central libraries or both (classroom and central). To examine this objective the following research question was asked and hypotheses determined:

## Research Question:

Will students with access to both libraries (classroom and central) read more than students who have access to classroom or central library only?

Research Hypotheses:

- 1. Students who have access to both libraries (classroom and central) will spend more time reading books at home, in comparison to those who have access to other kinds of libraries at their schools.
- 2. Students who have access to both libraries (classroom and central) will have more reading books at home, in comparison to those who have access to other kinds of libraries at their schools.
- 3. Students who have access to both libraries (classroom and central) will visit their central library more often in comparison to other students who have access to other kinds of libraries at their schools.
- 4. Students with access to a classroom library will read more compared to students who have access to central library only.
- 5. A large number of students with access to a classroom library at their school will be enrolled in a public library, compared to those who have other kinds of libraries at their school.

The research population included 301 students in the fourth grade from four different schools in the Tel-Aviv district. They filled out a questionnaire, which was handed out by the researcher in the last third of the 1995-1996 school year.

The research population included students who had participated in the classroom library project from first to third grade and had access to a central library at their school, students who had participated in the classroom library project in grades 1 to 3 but did not have access to a central library at school, and students who did not participate in the class project but had access to the central library.

After checking the reading features certain differences were found between the groups regarding the books chosen, factors determining the choice, impression of the book and type of genre.

After checking reading habits, marked differences were found between the groups, in the following areas:

- 1. Frequency of books checked out.
- 2. Number of reading books owned by the students.
- 3. Number of books checked out from the library.
- 4. Number of visits to the central library in a week's time.
- 5. Number of hours devoted to reading per day.

Remarkable differences in the frequency of reading were found between the three groups who had participated in the study. A strong relationship was also found between the number of books owned by the students and their reading frequency. No significant difference was found between the students' enrolment in public library and the quantity of books they have at home. No remarkable differences were found between the three groups examined, concerning the number of hours devoted to reading per day and the number of books owned by the students at home.

An important finding in the research was the enrolment in a public library. A larger number of students who have a classroom library at their school are enrolled in a public library.

It would safe to assume that this finding originates from the fact that a classroom library does not meet the reading needs of students because of the low number of books available, the poor variety and absence of new books. When a central school library is not available, students turn to a public library.

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