

# **The existence of a school library and the children's advancement in reading in elementary schools / Iris Ziner**

## **Abstract**

"It is impossible that there were days in our childhood which we had not lived in entirety, although we imagined they had passed without living them. as the days we spent with a favorite book" (Frost. 2003). These are the words that Marcel Frost opens his essay about reading. In Frost's opinion reading literature is an experience which designs the reader's personality and reunites the reader with himself and with eternity. The reader carries the reading experience within throughout his life. Reading books is one of the experiences that accompany us through life and inspires feelings and memories of our most hidden places. Reading means to think about characters and events which affect our behavior and lives, even if they are not the fruits of the writer's imagination. We may think of these characters as if we really met them or experienced them.

Reading a book means cuddling up with a blanket and a good book. Reading means treating books with love and respect more than any other object in our possession. Reading means being a part of a culture. In an era where communications and media design our children's conception of reality, an era in which computers and internet constitute the connection of our children with the world, we, the people of education must create the opportunities for kids to encounter books and maintain the culture of reading books. It is our job as educators, teachers and librarians as one to stimulate, to arouse curiosity and will among pupils to "sink" between the pages of the books. This way they will discover the hidden treasures in the book, experience new worlds, as a mean of finding their own world and discover their own feelings.

The school library is the most appropriate place to encourage and nurture reading among children and by this to advance their reading and raise their achievements. A way to achieve these goals is by operating libraries within the elementary schools, this way there will be a raise in the children's exposure to books and reading them especially to those whom don't have the opportunity or ability to reach public libraries.

The purpose of this research was to check the connection between a school library and the advancement of children's' reading process in the elementary school. Meaning does the existence of a school library invite more reading opportunities and influence language, vocabulary and school achievements in general.

The main question of the research was: is there a connection between the existence of a school library and the advancement of children's' reading process in the elementary school.

The assumptions of the research:

1. Children in schools with libraries will devote more time to read book when compared to children with no library in their school.
2. Children in school with libraries will show more affection to reading when compared to children with no library in their school.
3. Children in schools with libraries will read more genres when compared to children with no library in their school.

4. Children in schools with libraries will be found reading books when compared to children with no library in their school.
5. Children in schools with libraries will express improvement in language and vocabulary when compared to children with no library in their school.
6. Children in schools with libraries will know a greater number of authors, writers and books when compared to children with no library in their school.

The population of subjects included 351 children from 4th and 5th grade in six different elementary schools in the central district. The children filled a questionnaire which was passed by the researcher and her assistant during the months of May and June 2009.

The method of research used is quantitative which presents data gathered through questionnaires. The questionnaires were passed in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades in 6 elementary schools, three schools that have a school library (experiment group), three schools that don't have a school library (control group).

The experiment group included 187 pupils with a school library; the control group included 164 pupils with no school library.

The results of the research whether there is a connection between a school library and the advancement of children's' reading process in the elementary school. The results partially confirmed the assumptions of the research. When checking the connection between reading frequency, time dedicated for reading during the day, the affection to reading, reading different genres, finding a barrowed book, reading a book now and the influence on vocabulary and language and the existence of a library, there were slight differences but not a clarified difference. There was a clarified difference between the group\ knowledge of the number of writers and books.

In order to further examine the findings they were divided into four groups. The dividing included the combining of a public and a school library. This category reaffirmed the assumptions and found clear differences in most of the assumptions. further examination between the different group ages of the 4'h and 5'h grade shows a difference between the two groups, but with no influence of the school library, the last comparisment was between boys and girls which also found that in the assumptions there are clear differences between the boys and the girls, but with no connection to the existence of a school library.

Although the findings do not absolutely reinforce the research's assumptions it is Very Clear that a school library plays an important role and can be used as a powerful tool to encourage a child's affinity to a book as a source of knowledge and enjoyment. That is way awareness for building school libraries should be arisen, an opinion should be given to the importance of a school library and to show that it's purpose is similar to the school's purpose in Which it is in- The teachers, parents and the library staff also play an important role in exposing the child to an educational environment rich in language, an environment that it's center has a library that is abundant with books of different genres and levels.

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