

Impact of School Library Provisions on Academic Achievements in Elementary and Secondary Level : A Review of the Literature

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MAIN TEXT (BODY)

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*Key Factors of School Library Provisions that Affect the Students' Academic Performance in Schools

*A Model of School Library Provisions that Produces Best Results

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Abstract

This paper examines research studies linking academic achievement and school library provisions at primary and secondary level using search online bibliographic databases on primary, secondary materials and abstract as a quickest and most effective way to a comprehensive search on different sources over a span of a year.

These are Key Questions set for a Critical Review of the Literature

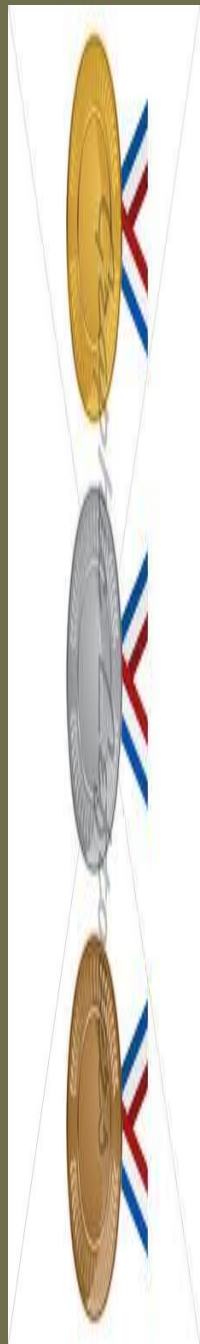
1. What is the link between school library provisions and achievement in schools?
2. What are the key factors of library provisions that affect the Academic performance?
3. What are the roles of the librarian in the school and its resources that makes the library effective?
4. What are the recommendations needed to support the improvement of school libraries?

INTRODUCTION

“School library media centers can contribute to improved student achievement by providing instructional materials aligned to the curriculum; by collaborating with teachers, administrators, and parents; and by extending their hours of operation beyond the school day.”

(Close Up: NCLB—Improving Literacy through School Libraries,” NCLB The Achiever, September 15, 2004, Vol. 3, No 13.)

“As we search for ways to improve the academic achievement of our nation’s children, we must understand the fundamental contribution of school libraries to student learning outcomes, from our perspective,” she continued, “a critical part of the comprehensive and renewed strategy to ensure that students learn to read and are effective users of information and ideas is the requirement that every school have a school library and that school libraries be staffed by highly qualified media specialists.”. (Fitzsimmons, 2007, (p.4).



There was no clear evidence indicating the contribution made to learning by the various models of school library provision, although, flexible scheduling appears to be an important factor in encouraging student to use the library, its services and resources and to be more effective, this requires a full-time qualified librarian managing the resources. The presence of a librarian, the quality and frequency of their instructional input has an impact on learning. School librarians who take a professional and proactive approach to their role within the school can cite evidence of their impact on teaching and learning; and are more able to reflect, self-evaluate and develop the service.

“Learning is a process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do when they want to make sense of the world. It may involve an increase in skills, knowledge, understanding, values and the capacity to reflect. Effective learning leads to change, development and a desire to learn more.” Investing in Children (Library and Information Services Council, 1995) gives UK support for the findings of research from abroad. It provides a summary of the evidence and discussion of the impact of reading on academic achievement and mentions HM Inspectors reports which suggest that “where library provision is poor, pupils’ abilities in information handling and research and study skills are correspondingly under-developed.”(ibid., p.16).

Some evidences shown that there were libraries or librarians' contribution to student attitudes to learning or self-esteem. The review suggests that when there is intervention of the librarian or teacher enhances the effectiveness of the library experience. The implementation of the intervention has the effect of increasing knowledge, understanding and awareness of the issues involved. Impacts on the quality of the resources or teaching can indirectly increase student stimulation and motivation. The review

Lance (1999) research examined quantitative studies examining other aspects of library service provisions ... indicating that professional experience, qualifications and personal attributes are significant in enhancing student learning associated with the library. The willingness and ability to work collaboratively with teachers is a key factor. There is evidence from these American studies that staff development for both teachers and school librarians increases the effect.



METHODOLOGY

The study used search online bibliographic databases on primary, secondary materials and dissertation abstract - as a quickest and most effective way to a comprehensive search on different sources over a span of a year. This critical review brought together the key findings from a range of research reports literature detailing

Literature in the first review has been re-examined to ensure that all significant documents are considered from the perspective of the primary and secondary sector. The review of the literature included in the original annotated extended bibliography.

- ✦ at the stage of the first review of literature to the second selection phase, bibliography for many times as well as many items were rejected because they focused principally on the public sector and college or University level;
- ✦ re-examination of the original search strategy to identify further search requirements;
- ✦ analysis of the literature as it relates to the primary and secondary sector;
- ✦ presentation of conclusions drawn from this analysis following the format of the original report, with a particular focus on school library provision at the primary and secondary level;
- ✦ compilation of an annotated bibliography, following sound systematic review practice, had been worked out to extract data and establish the quality of the research from reports to obtained in-depth review.

a number of case analysis of research has been conducted through secondary sources, such as journal articles, reporting on primary research. In these circumstances, it has not always been possible to establish the quality of the research as thoroughly as would be ideal due to lack of detail provided about methodologies and sample sizes of some literature.

 **Research Protocol**

 **The Search Process**

Questions remain pertinent to this second review and were used as a guide to the selection of literature related to the primary context. As the search process for first literature review was inclusive of literature from the primary context, the first stage of the search process for the second literature review was to re-examine the literature originally selected for relevance to the primary sector. This procedure can be broken down as follows:

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- 🌐 a review of the literature included in the original annotated bibliography (20 items)**
- 🌐 a review of the literature included in the original extended bibliography (50 items)**
- 🌐 a review of the literature many items rejected until the final stage of the first review were not principally focusing on the primary and secondary sector (approx. 60)**

Searches were simple and targeted to identify literature relevant to the school library especially the primary and secondary sector, and literature concerning the Schools Library Services ((Williams, Coles, 2001). The Internet searches were conducted through a variety of search engines as such:

- ERIC**
- Social SciSearch**
- Dissertation Abstracts Online**
- British Education Index**
- Education Abstracts**
- Wilson Social Sciences**
- LISA including Current Research in Library and Information Science**
- ISA**
- Library Literature**
- Inside Conferences**

As a result of these combined search activities, items were added to the database for the primary and secondary sector literature review. Also Ph.D. and Ed.D. dissertations are included after the main bibliography.

A. RESEARCH PROTOCOLS

The researcher searched according to a pre-defined format to maintain reliability and rigor. It is necessary to avoid bias either in selecting studies already known to the researcher or selecting literature that reports research in a biased manner. The researcher was following sound systematic review practice, helped to ensure that the search process and inclusion criteria are applied in an objective manner.

B. THE RESEARCH PROCESS

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Searches were simple and targeted to identify literature relevant the primary and secondary sector, and literature concerning the Schools Library Services (relied upon to a greater extent in the primary sector). (Williams, Coles, 2001). The Internet searches were conducted through a variety of search engines and the same selection of databases representing both the education and library sectors that were used for the first review were used.

TERMINOLOGY

School library - an institution or building at which children and young people usually under 19 receive education (English Collins Dictionary, 2008),

Professional Librarian - assumes qualified status; has a degree in Library Science or library & Information Science. (author's definition)

unqualified staff - is a library assistant who does not hold a library science degree.

Library Provisions or School Library Services -

can be use synonymously to library services:

-this is an act of helping, providing, assisting or doing someone a service through the library materials, print, non-print, technology and other regular or non-regular services the library can provide to its clientele.

(researcher's definition)

Primary Education Level - is regarded as reception to K-1 to Grade 6 (age ranges 4 to 12) or elementary grade.

Academic attainment - attainment and learning enrichment in the form of progress in formal education associated with the set curriculum and performance in tests. (DfEE/DCMS, 2001)

LINK BETWEEN SCHOOL LIBRARY PROVISIONS AND ACHIEVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

The Impact of the School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement (Lance, et.al, 1993) reported the analysis of the overall findings applicable to all levels. The key findings showed that:

- *the schools with better funded libraries tend to have students gaining higher average reading test scores after socio-economic conditions have been taken into account;*
- *the size of the library staff and size and variety of the collection are significant characteristics of library provision which contribute to higher reading test scores;*
- *students tend to achieve higher when the librarian spends more time in an instructional role, either by identifying materials for teacher use or collaborating in the planning of resource use.*

It supported the findings from previous studies which indicate a positive relationship between the presence of a school librarian and student academic achievement which cannot be explained entirely by school size, teacher staffing levels and funding.

Lance reported a second study in the state of Colorado (Lance, et.al, 2000a) the findings of the study on the in-depth analysis on the aspect of library provision. The study built upon previous findings to examine more closely the librarian and teacher collaboration in order to gain greater understanding about the activities which enhance performance. The services provided by the librarian throughout the school were examined and the relationship between standard of service and student performance. The study showed that the most significant aspects for the elementary student performance were the total number of library staff hours, the number of print volumes per student, periodical subscriptions ,and the total library expenditure per student presence of networked computers linking the library resources, licensed databases and Internet access with classrooms to

The study shown, that the more the librarian showed leadership involvement in school meetings and demonstrated professional activities, the higher the level of collaboration had a direct and positive impact. Lance, et.al (2000c) findings concluded that:

- ***with increases in school librarian staff hours and support staff hours;***
- ***when computers are networked to enable access beyond the library to the state library catalogue, licensed databases and the Internet;***
- ***when information literacy is part of an integrated approach with the school librarian dedicating time to cooperative teaching of information literacy with teachers, providing independent instruction, providing in-service training to teachers, serving on standards and curriculum committees and managing information technology. Indirectly, school library staffing was found to effect academic achievement by increasing library expenditure, ensuring the collection is large and varied, providing increased information technology access and enabling a more integrated approach to information literacy***

Factors of School Library's Provisions that Affects the Students' Academic Performance in Schools

2.A. RESOURCES

2.B. LIBRARIAN AND FACULTY COLLABORATION

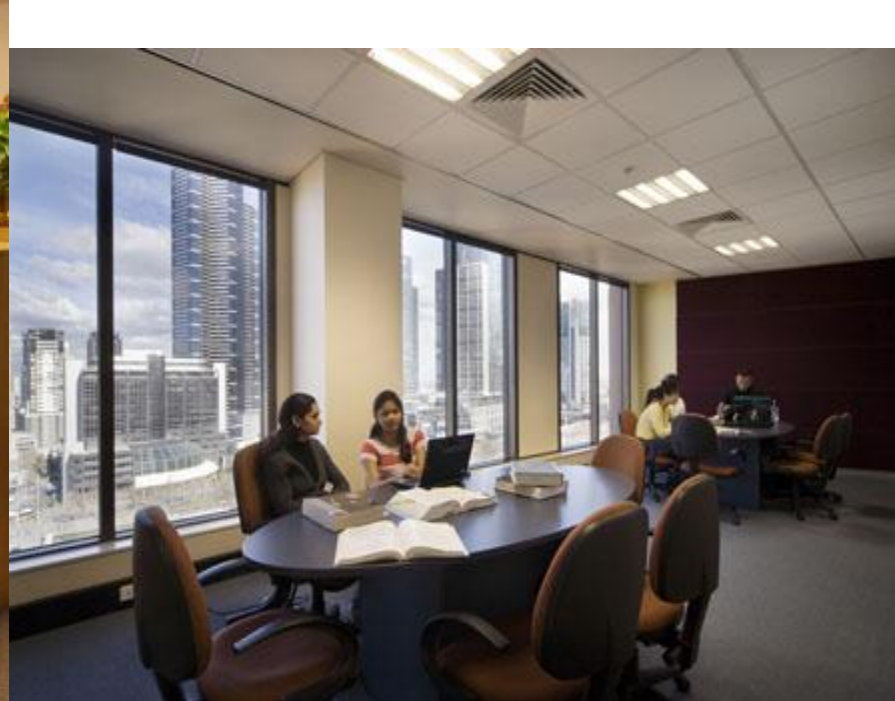
2.C. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

2.D. SERVICES

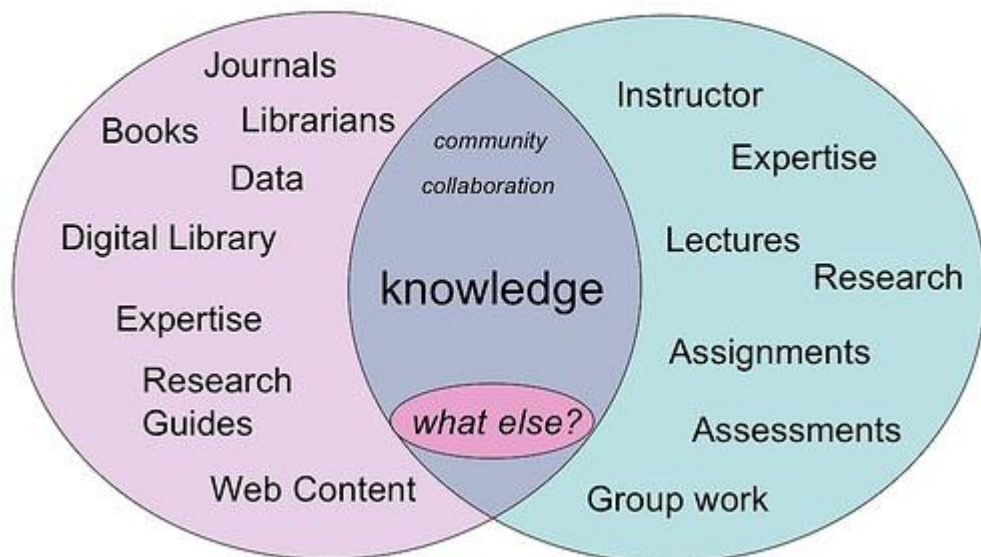
2.D.1. READING LITERACY

2.D.3. INFORMATION LITERACY

**2.D.4. LIBRARY EXTENSION HOURS OR FLEXIBLE
SCHEDULE**



Library + LMS = Knowledge!



RESOURCES

- ☀ ***The use of resources are to be taken seriously in primary education to be managed and delivered effectively (Gwatney, 2001)***
- ☀ ***That schools be provided with adequate resources to provide up-to-date print and non-print materials in all school library/media centers (NCLIS, 2007)***
- ☀ **Effective library provision in elementary schools (Massachusetts) was dependent on:**
 - **hours of service;**
 - **strong library collections;**
 - **high library expenditures per pupil;**
 - **library instruction and high student use;**
 - **alignment of the library collection with the curriculum; and**
 - **robust staffing, including full-time librarian and assistance.**



TEACHER • LIBRARIAN
collaboration



LIBRARIAN AND FACULTY COLLABORATION

- Library Power project emphasized that teachers and librarians should work together (Webb & Doll, 1999) and school principals be partly responsible for increased collaboration within their school, particularly with library activities, such as collection development, and inter-disciplinary projects.**
- The role of the library and librarian is promoting positive self-concepts and broader aspects of learning attitudes.**
- Opportunities for collaboration or teamwork with teacher and librarian resulted in greater and more appropriate use of resources influenced greater learning opportunities.**

QUALIFIED LIBRARIAN



QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

- - Librarian qualities are important, especially the ability to be proactive, take on a training role and this presumably requires a degree of confidence in library, information and literacy management and instruction skills. (Vell, 2001)
- - impact of the school library on learning (Williams & Wallace) considers the professional expertise of the person in charge of primary library provision, in relation to student learning.
- - The importance of the presence of a professional librarian, library staffing levels, and collaboration between librarian and teaching staff has already been highlighted in relation to the impact of the library on students academic attainment in the USA, UK and elsewhere .

the qualifications of the staff managing the library at all educational levels has an indirect impact on student learning. There is strong qualitative evidence that the experience and personal qualities and attributes of the librarian are also important in influencing the learning environment.

Qualified librarians helped to ensure increased use of resources and greater integration of information literacy. Librarian qualities are important, especially the ability to be proactive and takes on a training role gives a degree of confidence in library, information and literacy management and instruction skills. (Callison (1999))

LIBRARY SERVICES Integrated Approach to Information Literacy



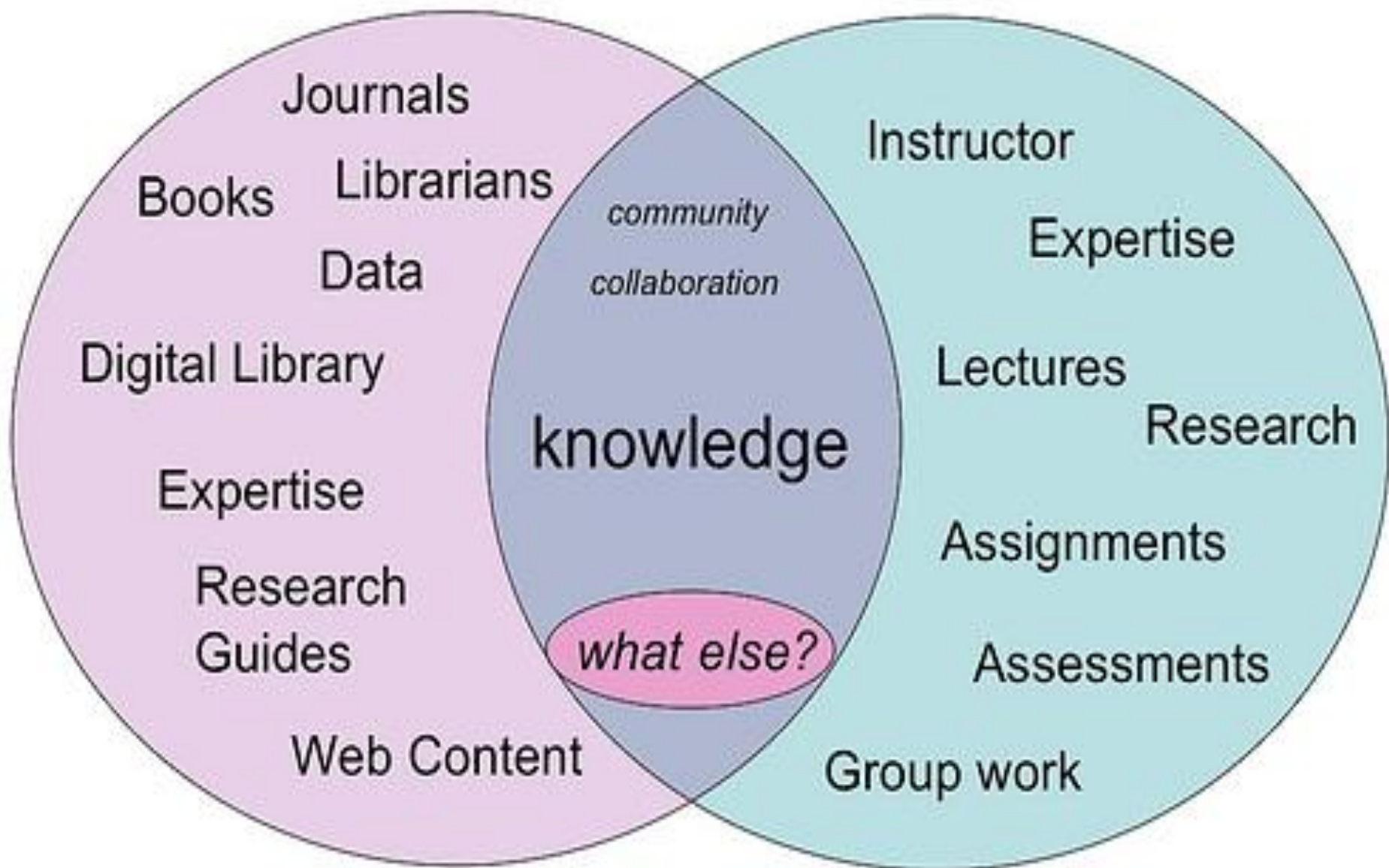
LIBRARY SERVICES:TEACHING STRATEGIES



DIFFERENT LIBRARY SERVICES



Library + LMS = Knowledge!



SUFFICIENT FUNDING



- ▶ It was identified that one of the important elements to enhance learning is the combination of funding, use of full-time librarians with appropriate support staff, **flexible scheduling** and **professional development in collaborative planning and teaching strategies**, and **devised integrated approach to information literacy** (Callison, 1999).
- ▶ The **importance of the library collection** in providing teaching and learning opportunities in the primary school library. **An important aspect is the need for sustained funding to enable continuous upgrading and enable the development of collections as use of the service increases and priorities in resources change to match school development** (Hopkins, 1999)
- ▶ **Professional qualifications, experience and personal attributes of library staff working in school library services** or other personnel with responsibility for primary library provision is likely having similar qualities as those identified for teachers with responsibility i.e. **flexibility; energy; a sharing and facilitating mindset; competence; persistence; awareness of national trends and best practice; sense of humor; enthusiasm; ability to deal with different kinds of people; inquisitive; risk-taking; and comfortable with change.** (McGregor's research ,1999).

FINANCE / FUNDING

- School library program that is adequately staffed, resourced, and **funded** can lead to higher academic achievement regardless of the socio-economic or educational levels of the community (Scholastic, p.10, 2006)
- Poor budget allocations, had a striking difference in the quality of school libraries around schools. Most children in poor areas had mediocre to poor academic achievement having no libraries, no librarian on site, and the libraries were often closed, compared to those in middle-class schools. School library funds were designated as discretionary to be used for computers if the instructional leader chose to do so. Thus, many of these schools in poor areas had no libraries, but computer labs, often empty of anything but the technology itself."

EFFECTS OF LESS BUDGET

SURVEYSTAT

How is your library coping with staff cuts?

78% Absorbing workload/
Cross-training of personnel

41% Introducing self-service
options such as self-check

36% Recruiting volunteers/
Expanding volunteer
programs

16% Hiring more
paraprofessionals
rather than MLSs

13% Outsourcing former
professional tasks such
as cataloging

21% Other (hiring part-time
employees, reduced hours/
services)

SOURCE: LJ BUDGET SURVEY 2012

The worst impact of the budget cuts has been on the overall employee morale of the organization. With continued decreased funding resulting in a reduction in available service hours, the number of staff continues to decline. This increases the workload of the existing staff and forces us to use materials funding in order to hire temporary staff to meet workload demand. The use of materials funding to pay temporary workers results in a **decline** in the quality of service, collection and translates into a **decline in customer satisfaction**. (LJ Budget, 2012).

READING LITERACY



Reading literacy is particularly significant in the primary years and therefore it is important to ensure that the provision of **reading material is sufficient to encourage a high level of reading activity**. This research is increasingly important when considered alongside the evidence from previously reported studies in which the **quality and quantity of the collections were identified as significant factors in schools where students achieve academically**.



EXTENDED LIBRARY HOURS



EXTENDED HOURS

- In middle/junior high schools, late primary and early secondary in the UK, the instructional input was shown that the library staff, extended hours of operation, collection size and collaboration with teachers (planning and staff development) were significant to having impact in academic achievement.
- Information Power (AASL, 1988, 1998) indicates in their findings the importance of flexible scheduling, i.e. whether the library operates a system allowing student access on a need basis, as opposed to fixed scheduling, in establishing a culture for using resources as the need arises, improves learning..

READING LITERACY

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CONCLUSIONS

- ✘A triumvirate building leadership team comprised of the library media specialist, the principal, and key teacher-leaders made an effective team for forging change;**
- ✘High quality site-based staff development and a strong staff development role for the library media specialist were essential for change;**
- ✘The staffing of a well-developed elementary & secondary library media program with one full-time library media specialist assisted by one full-time library clerk may not be adequate to sustain the roles and responsibilities incumbent in the program.**
- ✘The need for collaboration between the teaching and library professions; standards and how they can be used to enhance the service and teaching and learning**

Conclusions :

Review of literature has demonstrated that there is evidence to support the view that :

- Library provision can contribute to academic achievement, particularly in reading literacy, in primary and secondary students level;
- The contribution to learning is dependent upon quantity and quality of collections and access to further resources and support from out with the school environment;
- Librarians who are qualified, experienced, proactive and confident in managerial, collaborative and instructional aspects enable student learning opportunities;

- ▶ Enabling resource use at the point of need (flexible scheduling) and integration into the curriculum is an important service for promoting learning, however it is found to require whole school support for effective implementation;
- ▶ School library provision is dependent upon clear guidelines and standards, staff development training and support from a regional authority that has links to both library and educational departments;

- ▶ The need for collaboration between the teaching and library professions;
- ▶ Standards and how they can be used to enhance the service and teaching and learning. Staff development is one of the most significant methods of introducing and establishing a culture that recognizes the association between reading and information literacy and library provision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That research should be conducted to :

- Establish the extent of the existence of different models of library provision in primary schools.
- Review Information Literacy Strategy in relation to the use and management of library collections, selection of resources by teachers, and how such issues impact on learning.
- Consider the needs, insuring pre-service training and professional development training of both teachers and librarians addresses the need for greater understanding of their professional contributions to learning in school libraries.

- Identifying and piloting process and outcome standards appropriate for use in primary school library provision.

- Priority should be given to identifying appropriate models for:
 - A. training for teachers in library management and resource integration within the curriculum;
 - B. training in curricular issues and resource integration for librarians working in Schools Library Services and volunteers working in school libraries;
 - C. ensuring that all primary schools have the support of a Schools Library Service;
 - D. establishing close relations between Schools Library Services and education departments.

- Continue the research once the above measures have been put in place, using longitudinal study of impact of primary library provision on learning, based on the implementation of appropriate standards.
- Compare academic performance of the students in Primary and Secondary & even College level with library provisions and those without in SDA (Seventh Day Adventist) educational institutions in the Philippines.
- Find out the extent of Library Information Technology (IT) services in the Colleges or Universities to their studies/learning or research

THANK YOU

