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Title. Reading for enjoyment correlates with students' reading frequency and reading outcomes on standardised tests.

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Topic.

International studies consistently highlight the influence of positive attitudes towards reading on various measures of reading achievement (Clark 2011; Lupo et al. 2017; Mullis et al. 2012; OECD 2010; Petscher 2010). Indeed, PISA (2010) findings demonstrate that children who enjoy reading perform better than those who do not across all Organisation for Economic Development (OECD) countries. Reading for enjoyment, however, has decreased over time. Furthermore, boys in general are less likely than girls to have positive attitudes and read for enjoyment (Clark 2012; Logan et al. 2009; McKenna et al. 2012; Millard 1997; OECD 2010), with children from lower socioeconomic (SES) backgrounds reading less than their more affluent counterparts (Krashen et al. 2012).

Objective.

This paper examines the significance of reading enjoyment for increased reading frequency and reading outcomes for Year 3 (n=318) students at school (n=14). Drawing on a broader cross-sectional study that sought to identify similarities and differences in students' attitudes towards reading it highlights a slice of the data to address one **research question**:

Is there a statistical correlation between Year 3 student's attitudes towards reading, self-reported reading frequency, National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) reading outcomes and the SES location of the school?

Theoretical framework.

As reading is a social practice (Street 1995), and not simply a system of decoding words or deciphering combinations of letters, readers need a purpose for reading that is embodied in social relationships. As such, students are active in what they do, and literacy practices need to be purposeful and embedded in broader social goals and cultural practices (Barton and Hamilton 2000). Reading for pleasure pedagogies can foster learner engagement (Cremin 2011; Cremin et al., 2014) with authentic everyday reading practices developing skills over

time to facilitate ‘cumulative learning’ (Freebody et al. 2008; Maton 2009). Reluctance to read, on the other hand, impacts upon outcomes as students’ attitudes affect reading ability due to lack of engagement and practice (McKenna et al. 1995; Sainsbury and Schagen 2004). As students have increasingly less exposure to text, the gap between skilled and unskilled readers is compounded (Cunningham and Stanovich 1997).

Methods.

The paper draws on survey data collected from a cohort of Year 3 (n=318) students who were attending a range of schools (n=14) in Australia. The data reported includes students’ print-based survey responses to three questions that asked them to rate their level of enjoyment for: i) reading story books (fiction); ii) reading books about facts (non-fiction); and, iii) reading comics and magazines. Additional sections were confidentially completed including school demographic information, class teacher indicated reading levels and student NAPLAN reading results.

Survey data was then coded and entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). As the survey had previously been validated (Author 2018), analysis included running frequencies, chi-square tests and Pearson’s correlation (Field, 2015).

Conclusions.

Findings illustrate how enjoyment for reading and reading frequency correlate with students’ reading results on standardise testing and significantly, how gender and SES background show a strong association with such outcomes. Analysis of the findings draw on literacy as a social practice (Street 1995) in disadvantaged locates (Comber 2012) and reading for pleasure pedagogies (Hempel-Jorgensen 2018) to understand results and implications for teaching practices. New insights into the role of gender and SES on reading enjoyment are discussed with attention to the ways standardised testing may work against opportunities for teachers to facilitate reading for pleasure pedagogies.

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