Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries Journal Special Issue:
School Library Research and Educational Resources

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Abstract: Since its inception, the International QQML conference has supported researchers whose focus is educational resources and on school libraries, culminating in the acceptance of a special session devoted exclusively to school library research at QQML 2015, Paris. This special issue of the *QQML Journal* includes selected papers related to school library research and related educational resources presented at QQML.

School Library Research

For over two decades, researchers have focused on the effect school libraries, staffed by school library professionals, have had on the academic achievement of students and the curricular needs of faculty and staff. School library research has included both public and private elementary and secondary schools. Much of the current research focuses on 21st century learning that requires students to have new skill sets to prepare them to live and work in an age that is dominated by information. In the 2016 edition of *School Libraries Work!,* leading experts in the field confirm that school libraries staffed by credentialed librarians who collaborate and co-teach, and provide access to technology and large collections, positively affect student learning.

Regional and international conferences and forums, as well as peer-reviewed school library research journals, have clearly demonstrated the impact school libraries have on student learning. The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) recently urged the acknowledgment of the importance of numerous correlational studies that link school libraries and student learning. It was further asserted in their December 2014 White Paper from the AASL National Research Forum that they would seek to develop projects that focus on

a causal relationship between school libraries and student learning; and furthermore, that they would make every effort to cultivate a community of scholars to expand the research base in the field of school librarianship. To that end, AASL publishes a peer-reviewed research journal that can be accessed by the public.

Similarly, the International Association of School Librarians (IASL) promotes research in the field of school librarianship and the integration of its findings into a knowledge base shared with related fields. IASL's policy statement, which was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, deems the school library as essential to the overall development of the individual and the community. Hence, publication and the dissemination of information are encouraged. *School Libraries Worldwide*, IASL's peer-reviewed research journal, provides public access to some articles. Members have access to all.
School libraries, and the library professionals that manage them, enable students to successfully navigate through the plethora of resources and communication avenues that are now available to them. By adapting to these new demands, school libraries have become centerpieces of change and the library professionals who inhabit them have become the change agents necessary to make new ways of learning possible. With the current focus on student learning, school library research provides practitioners and researchers with a platform to share their strategies using rigorous research to solve complex problems, the same type of problems their students will be required to identify and solve in the future.

Papers in this special issue focus on research related to school libraries as well as research on educational resources that may be useful for school librarians. The collections and sites examined in the papers contain educational materials that are available online and may be incorporated into school curricula.

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