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Academic Reading Attitudes and Performance as a Function of Gender

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Abstract

Childhood reading levels are important predictors of later childhood academic success. A child's reading ability and reading attitude is a strong indicator of future academic success and lifelong reading (Kush & Watkins, 1996; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). Educational leaders need to foster a climate of reading acceptance at school. To accomplish this, schools need to provide a learning environment filled with reading role models. Schools should maintain large quantities of reading materials that include all student reading levels and interests. Teachers should be given professional development and instructed on how to provide interesting and relevant reading opportunities for their students.

Keywords: Education, Reading, Gender

Introduction

The reading gender gap is a current and persistent issue with a history of panic and controversy (Connell, 1996; Weaver-Hightower, 2003). Female students have long been the gender that has had to fight for equality in education. There has been much light shed on the gaps between females and males in science and math since the feminist movement began. And this light has brought about much change in education and has closed the gaps in science and math. However, the shift of the focus to the struggling female students has caused many males to cry foul.

A movement in the 1960s attempted to shift the focus back to the struggling male student. Many in the United States protested that the use of mostly female teachers was choking out the "boy culture." And boys were being denied their "reading rights" due to the feminine elementary education they were being provided. In Detroit in 1991 a proposal to assign some public schools as boys-only was halted just before it was enacted (Connell, 1996).

Arguments from both sides have been heated throughout the decades. Men have long cited the fact that they experience earlier deaths, higher incarcerations, and higher injury rates as being reasons for being the disadvantaged sex. Women have focused on "eating disorders, depression, self-esteem drops, and even self-mutilation" (Weaver-Hightower, 2003, p. 471) as evidence to being the disadvantaged sex. In education, males have long contended that they experience higher drop-out rates, higher special education populations, and higher discipline levels (Connell, 1996); females have cited that they are "called on less often by teachers, show score and enrollment gaps in math and science, and receive fewer and lower-quality comments from teachers" (Weaver-Hightower, 2003, p. 471). The voices for equality in education have helped in providing focus on gender issues and educational change.

One issue, however, seems resilient to change: male reading attitude and achievement. Females have consistently outperformed males in reading from before kindergarten (McClelland, Morrison, & Holmes, 2000) until graduation. Female children have higher reading levels and far greater learning style scores than boys when they enter schools (McClelland, Morrison, & Holmes, 2000). The reading gap between genders only widens over time. A study by Madhabi Chatterji (2006) at Columbia University found that males were behind females when they entered kindergarten by -0.168 Standard Deviation (SD) units. At the end of first grade, the gap had grown to -0.313 SD units. These numbers were determined after controlling for poverty and ethnicity (Chatterji, 2006).

The gender gap in reading is not only an issue in the United States. The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) conducted gender gap research in 32 countries. The IEA found that females maintained higher performance in all modes of literary samples. The only exceptions to this consistent pattern was in expository tasks in which 28% of countries found boys exceeding the levels of girls, and in workplace literacy tasks in which 56% of countries found boys exceeding the levels of girls (Kerachsky, 2010).

Male reading difficulties, or alienation from reading, could come from many sources of influence. Parental influence has been found to be a key factor in reading motivation. Reading support by parents relates to school interest and competence (Ahmed et al., 2010). As the child sees the parent as the reading role model (Meece, Glienke, & Askew, 2009), the child relates the activity of reading to a positive experience (Cunningham, 2008). Shared reading activities, whether story time or participation in normal routines, provides a foundation for reading development and relevance for the child (Neuman & Gallagher, 1994).

Another factor that relates to reading motivation may come from parents or peers. The way that reading is viewed as a gendered activity could provide some of the strongest influence on the male reader. Research has provided evidence "that both mother's and father's perceptions of their children's abilities influence how children perceived their own abilities, even after controlling for difference in children's achievement" (Meece, Glienke, & Askew, 2009, p. 419). If parents perceive activities with gender stereotypes, then boys will perceive their own abilities in reading with the same gender bias. And peers may be the strongest influence of all in regards to the activity stereotype. This is the group that children spend the most time with each day (Ladd, Herald-Brown, & Kochel, 2009). Students' common responses to interview prompts about reading conflicts included clashes with social goals, friends don't read frequently, and peers are not proficient readers (Guthrie & Coddington, 2009). Peer support of reading, however, has been linked to a higher intrinsic value of reading and a higher self-concept (Ahmed et al., 2010).

Teachers have also been found to create a higher intrinsic value and self-concept with reading (Ahmed et al., 2010) if presented effectively. If reading is gauged solely on how fast a student can read or how many mistakes a student makes, then there is little being done to create a positive reading attitude (Kush & Watkins, 1996). Many researchers have proposed that reading attitude may be linked to the teacher's gender. (Sokal et al., 2009).

Research has suggested that the curriculum itself may provide advantages in reading to females. The elementary classroom environment has been shown to provide more of the needs, interests, skill levels, reading activities, assignments, and interests are more suited for females in the elementary setting (Meece, Glienke, & Askew, 2009)

The availability of reading material of interest, whether at school or at home, has been shown to provide an increase of positive attitudes toward reading (Kush & Watkins, 1996). Boys have been shown to not identify with the literature being taught at school (Smith & Wilhelm, 2004). Males and females have been found to have very different reading interests (Clark, Torsi, & Strong, 2005). Determining a male's reading interest is vital when analyzing and nurturing reading attitude and motivation.

In a study of 15-year-olds in 43 countries, the research provided evidence that children with more books at home scored significantly higher than those with fewer books at home. In addition, gender, reading enjoyment, and number of books at home all had positive effects in almost every country studied (Chui & McBride-Chang, 2006).

A child's reading ability and reading attitude is a strong indicator of future academic success and lifelong reading (Kush & Watkins, 1996; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). There is a strong correlation between a child's reading attitude and their actual reading ability (Cunningham, 2008). The data and analysis from the Cunningham and Stanovich (1997) research provides evidence of early childhood predictors of reading success in adolescence. They found that there is a link between "1st-grade reading-cognitive measures and the 11th-grade outcomes" (p. 942). The first indicator evidenced is the "speed of initial reading acquisition…is at least moderately related to reading comprehension, vocabulary, and general knowledge in Grade 11" (p. 942). It also determined that if a student gets a quick start on reading and the acquisition of reading, then they are more likely to connect to and engage in later reading activities regardless of their 11th grade reading comprehension level. It was also determined that print exposure through the years predicts reading comprehension growth from elementary school and beyond (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). This research evidences a correlation between elementary school reading success and later reading engagement and comprehension. This engagement and comprehension of texts translates to other subject area achievement and possibly the likelihood of dropping out of school (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). All of these factors discussed can be predictors for a child's success in reading achievement and in turn, his or her success in school overall.

Research Questions

The research questions were as follows:

1. Are boys less likely than girls to have a positive reading attitude?

2. Are boys less likely to enjoy academic reading than girls?

3. Does the difference in reading attitude between males and females increase from grades 1 to 6?

4. Will the male students who have low reading attitudes also have low academic performance?

Factors that influence early reading attitudes

Parental effects on early literacy development

Research has evidenced that parental support in reading is strongly related to student competence and school interest (Ahmed et al., 2010). A child's literary development begins at home. Additionally, parents are crucial literacy role models and literacy development in children centers on the parent-child interaction in the activity, not necessarily the reading of the book itself (Meece, Glienke, & Askew, 2009). This development usually takes the form of storybook reading to the children; however, development can also be attained through normal routines at home (Cunningham, 2008), such as paying bills or making grocery lists. These shared experiences with print garners a foundation for reading development and its relevance to the child (Neuman & Gallagher, 1994).

Many parents do not recognize forms of reading other than the common forms, such as a novels or newspapers. However, boys engage more readily with text involving communication or information in an electronic form. Due to boys rejecting the more accepted forms of leisure reading, both parents and teachers label the boys as 'reluctant readers' (Love & Hamston, 2003). Boys form a negative reading attitude if they feel like reading is a compulsory activity. Boys feel more positively engaged with books when the parent is reading with them as opposed to being forced to read alone or to the parent (Lever-Chain, 2008). The attitudes of children toward academics are shown to be more positive with parent engagement with reading and the child prior to beginning school. They also become more positive when parents maintain positive attitudes in reading (Kush & Watkins, 1996).

In a study conducted by the National Literacy Trust in 2005, boys and girls of all school levels were surveyed about who taught them to read. The choices in the survey were mother, father, grandparent, sibling, friend, teacher, librarian, teaching assistant, older boy/girl, younger boy/girl, other adult male, and other adult female. Both boys and girls responded highest to mothers teaching them to read. Boys responded more distantly with their father and then their teacher when being taught how to read (Clark, Torsi, & Strong, 2005). This relationship with reading and the mother could be a factor in why boys relate reading with a feminine activity.

When these same children were asked about who they would prefer as a reading partner between mother, father, grandparent, friends, teacher, teaching assistant, librarian, younger boy/girl, older boy/girl, other adult female, and other adult male, more girls than boys chose their mother and more boys than girls chose their fathers. However, both sexes had higher percentages of choosing their mother over their father. Around 68% of boys and 76% of girls would like to read with their mothers. In comparison, 53% of boys would like to read with their fathers while 48% of girls would prefer their fathers (Clark, Torsi, & Strong, 2005). A qualitative study by Hamston and Love (2005) revealed that when fathers are asked about reading with their sons, their replies are incomplete or unresponsive. This further indicates that more research needs to be done on father/son relationships with reading (Hamston & Love, 2005).

Another factor in a boy's perception of reading being a gendered activity may come from the parental perception of the activity as well. Research has shown that a parent's belief in stereotypes shape the parents' belief in their child's ability (Jacobs & Eccles, 1992). Fathers have shown a greater belief in their son's ability in mastering mathematics as compared with their daughters. According to the research, fathers typically feel as though their daughters need to work harder in mathematics than their sons. "Research has also shown that both mother's and father's perceptions of their children's abilities influence how children perceived their own abilities, even after controlling for difference in children's achievement" (Meece, Glienke, & Askew, 2009, p. 419).

Parental support and involvement in the early learning years also plays a significant role in a child's confidence. In research by Dearing, McCartney, Weiss, Kreider, and Simpkins (2004), it was found that the amount of involvement by the parent during kindergarten directly

influenced the child's confidence with literacy. The support and modeling provided prior to kindergarten is equally important for gaining confidence in the early years of literacy. Girls enter school with stronger reading skills than boys and the literacy gap between genders widens throughout elementary school (Meece, Glienke, & Askew, 2009). The more prior reading experiences boys have, the more engaged and motivated they will be to continue to read (Kush & Watkins, 1996). A lack of early literacy skills has been correlated to dropping out of school (Meece, Glienke, & Askew, 2009).

Peer effects on early literacy development

It can be argued that peers are the most powerful influence on school engagement than any other group, including teachers and parents. And this argument makes sense when the time that a child spends with certain groups is examined (Ladd, Herald-Brown, & Kochel, 2009). A child spends the majority of the day at school around children of the same age. In addition to the time spent at school with peers, today's technology makes it even easier to stay in contact with their school-aged peers. Peer support of reading has been linked to an intrinsic value and a higher self-concept (Ahmed et al., 2010). Peer rejection has been linked to poor attitudes toward school, avoiding school, and lack of performance in school (Ladd, Herald-Brown, & Kochel, 2009). In interviews about reading attitudes, students frequently stated that they had reading conflicts with social goals, friends don't read frequently, and their peers are not proficient readers (Guthrie & Coddington, 2009). The sharing of books and experiences with others fosters a more positive attitude for both boys and girls (Kush & Watkins, 1996).

Many studies have provided evidence to show that boys link reading with activities related to females (Clark, Torsi, & Strong, 2005; Katz & Sokal, 2003). This is important since children are most likely to want to emulate other children of the same age and gender (Ladd, Herald-Brown, & Kochel, 2009). Findings have also shown that the imitation of peer goals, attitudes, and behaviors impact school engagement either positively or negatively. A negative peer attitude toward academics will most likely produce a negative self-attitude toward academics. This attitude will then decrease academic achievement and academic value for the student (Ladd, Herald-Brown, & Kochel, 2009).

Bringing it all together: The effects of early reading ability on academic success

Strong readers in elementary schools feel a sense of competency. This competency drives their desire to read. The more that a child reads, the better the reader they become. The poor reader does not connect with reading, will not desire to engage in reading activities, and therefore will not become proficient reader. This has been referred to as the Matthew Effect (Gower, 2010). If the student does not feel a competency in reading, then they will not become skilled enough readers to excel in subject content. Dropping out is associated with lower levels of achievement in reading and numeracy. This association is stronger for boys than it is for girls (House of Representatives, 2002).

Early reading skills build to more proficient and competent reading ability. This ability then translates to competency in other academic areas. Early competency also helps in creating

readers for pleasure. The students who read for pleasure improve their ability at an even greater rate. They are also able to learn about the world and life experiences of others by engaging in external reading - external referring to reading outside of the school. Students are able to relate more to discussions in the classroom and to more of the world outside of the classroom. Others have stated that external readers are able to relate more relevant information to the classroom. In other words, they are able to make greater connections to material being taught based on their prior reading knowledge (Gower, 2010).

Reading self-efficacy is critical to reading achievement. This is the belief that one has in their ability to complete a task successfully. Children will use their past experience with the same or similar task to create self-efficacy (Gower, 2010). This process of assessing reading self-efficacy begins early on for a boy. A boy will begin to develop his reading self-efficacy at home. A boy will experience competency in reading with parental support and exposure. Boys' struggles will be compounded when they begin school without the support for reading at home (Gower, 2010).

Home is also where the child begins to associate stereotyping and value to reading. Parental reading time with children, media's representation of gender roles, and peer interactions in the neighborhood create an awareness of what activities are for boys and which ones are for girls and what activities are valued by family and peers. A study by Stott, Green, and Francis (1983) found that boys enter school with a significantly lower verbal learning style score than the girls. This study also determined that girls entered school with a significantly higher reading level than boys (McClelland, Morrison, & Holmes, 2000).

A child's reading ability and reading attitude are strong indicators of future academic success and lifelong reading (Kush & Watkins, 1996; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). There is a strong correlation between a child's reading attitude and their actual reading ability (Cunningham, 2008). If the student develops a negative reading attitude early on, then it will affect their reading ability early. Research by Cunningham and Stanovich (1997) states that children can recover from low reading levels experienced in the first grade by third or even fifth grade (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). But the later that a child experiences negative reading attitude and competency, then the less likely he or she will recover to build a positive relationship with reading. In addition, the gap in reading between boys and girls widens as they become older (Meece, Glienke, & Askew, 2009). This would indicate that either more boys develop negative attitudes over time or that the reading levels of boys with negative attitudes falls at a much larger rate.

The data and analysis from the Cunningham and Stanovich (1997) research provides evidence of early childhood predictors of reading success in adolescence. They found that there is a link between "1st-grade reading-cognitive measures and the 11th-grade outcomes" (p. 942). The first indicator evidenced is the "speed of initial reading acquisition…is at least moderately related to reading comprehension, vocabulary, and general knowledge in Grade 11" (p. 942). It also determined that if a student gets a quick start on reading and the acquisition of reading, then the student is more likely to connect to and engage in later reading activities regardless of their 11th "grade reading comprehension level. It was also

determined that print exposure through the years predicts reading comprehension growth from elementary school and beyond (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). This research evidences a correlation between elementary school reading success and later reading engagement and comprehension. This engagement and comprehension of texts translates to other subject area achievement and possibly the likelihood of dropping out of school. All of these factors discussed can be predictors for a child's success in reading achievement and in turn, his or her success in school overall.

Methods

Instrumentation

The instrumentation that was used for the quantitative portion of this research was the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS). The ERAS was developed by McKenna and Kear (1990) and is intended for use as a public-domain instrument. The ERAS is a 20-item survey intended for an audience of children ranging from 1st grade to 6th grade. The answer scale uses a four-response pictorial of Garfield the cat imitating the emotions of the responder to the questions. These emotions range from a big smile and excited stance to an angry scowl and tensed posture. The middle responses have Garfield with arms crossed and a slight smile or a slight frown (McKenna & Kear, 1990).

The first 10 questions relate to recreational reading attitude and the second set of questions relate to academic reading attitude. Each scale will have a total score between 10 and 40 with a total reading attitude score between 40 and 80. The survey took approximately 30 minutes to administer. This time included the distribution of surveys, the reading of the procedures and a thorough reading of each question twice. Cronbach's alpha was used on the ERAS to determine reliability. The coefficients for the full scale ranged from .87 to .89. The range for the academic subscale was .81 to .83. Both the academic and recreational subscales were tested for validity.

Demographics

One demographic question asked if they were library card holders versus those without cards. Cardholders had a mean equal to 30.0 and non-cardholders a mean of 28.9. Another test was given for those with books checked out of the school library versus those without books checked out. Those with books out had a mean of 29.2 and those without a book out had a mean of 27.3. As for the academic subscale, the validity was tested using teacher formed groups of low, mid, and high level reading ability. The mean of the high level readers was 27.7 and the low level readers' mean score was 27.0 (McKenna & Kear, 1990).

ANOVA for recreational reading

A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether recreational reading scores differ among male and female students and among students in different grades.

Table 1 shows the number or participants in each grade level and the total of participants based on gender.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
Gender	1	Male	68
	2	Female	98
Grade	1	Grade1	26
	2	Grade 2	42
	3	Grade 3	38
	4	Grade 4	18
	5	Grade 5	16
	6	Grade 6	26

Table 2 on recreational reading shows the descriptive statistics including the mean, standard deviation for the dependent variable (recreational reading) for each student for each separate group, by gender and by grade level as well as for the total respondents when all groups are combined.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variable: Recreational Reading

Gender	Grade	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Male	Grade1	30.38	6.265	13
	Grade 2	29.29	5.475	17
	Grade 3	26.95	6.100	20
	Grade 4	25.83	7.859	6
	Grade 5	27.60	1.673	5
	Grade 6	26.71	5.936	7
	Total	28.12	5.926	68
Female	Grade1	29.92	4.291	13
	Grade 2	30.60	5.575	25
	Grade 3	31.50	4.902	18
	Grade 4	30.67	5.314	12
	Grade 5	28.64	5.221	11
	Grade 6	25.00	6.110	19
	Total	29.38	5.692	98
Total	Grade1	30.15	5.266	26
	Grade 2	30.07	5.506	42
	Grade 3	29.11	5.954	38
	Grade 4	29.06	6.476	18
	Grade 5	28.31	4.377	16
	Grade 6	25.46	5.995	26
	Total	28.86	5.805	166

The mean score range for males in recreational reading attitude was 25.83-30.38 and the mean score range for the females was 25.00-31.50. The total range of the mean was from 25.46-30.15.

Levene's test of equality of variances was conducted within ANOVA. Using an alpha glevel of .05, the Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met, F(11, 154) = .658, p = .776. Since the P value was greater than .05 it was not statistically significant.

ANOVA results showed no significant interaction between gender and grade F (5,154) = 1.337, p = .251, partial η2 = .042. There was no significant main effect either for gender F (1,154) = 2.662, p = .105, partial η2 = .017 or for grade level F (5, 154) = 1.877, p = .101, partial η2 = .057. The univariate ANOVA table shows there was no interaction effect. No main effect was found either, which indicates that students' recreational reading score does not significantly vary either by gender or by grade or by both together.

ANOVA for academic reading

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether academic reading scores differ among male and female students and among students in different grades.

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics including the mean, standard deviation for the dependent variable (Academic reading) for each student for each separate group, by gender and by grade level as well as for the total respondents when all groups are combined.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Dependent Variable: Academic

Gender	Grade	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Male	Grade1	31.6154	6.14462	13
	Grade 2	28.8235	6.22731	17
	Grade 3	27.4000	6.26099	20
	Grade 4	22.8333	5.26941	6
	Grade 5	27.4000	5.31977	5
	Grade 6	26.8571	5.33631	7
	Total	28.1029	6.22978	68
Female	Grade1	31.3077	4.23054	13
	Grade 2	31.6400	6.46065	25
	Grade 3	31.3333	4.15862	18
	Grade 4	27.6667	5.63001	12
	Grade 5	28.3636	5.92069	11
	Grade 6	23.8421	4.89062	19
	Total	29.1735	6.01549	98
Total	Grade1	31.4615	5.17092	26
	Grade 2	30.5000	6.44394	42
	Grade 3	29.2632	5.66012	38
	Grade 4	26.0556	5.84579	18
	Grade 5	28.0625	5.57935	16
	Grade 6	24.6538	5.09072	26
	Total	28.7349	6.10828	166

The mean range in academic reading was 22.83-31.62 for males and 23.84-31.64 for females. The mean total range was from 24.65 - 31.46. The ANOVA found that m ales maintained a higher academic reading attitude in grades one and six while females held a higher reading attitude in grades two through five.

Levene's test of equality of variances was conducted within ANOVA. Using an alpha level of .05,the Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met, $F(11, 154) = .791$, $p = .649$.

Main effect result revealed that the s' academic reading score was significantly different among students in different grades, $F(5,154) = 4.642$, $p = .001$, partial $\eta 2 = .131$. Calculated effect size for grade level indicates a medium proportion of variance in academic score is accounted for by differences in grade levels. Bonferroni's post-hoc was conducted to determine which grade student groups were significantly different in academic reading scores. Results revealed academic reading scores of sixth grade students to be significantly different from all other grades except for fourth grade and fifth grade. Sixth grade student academic reading scores are significantly lower (24.65 ± 5.09, $p < 0.01$) than that of students in first grade (31.46 ± 5.17), second grade (30.50 ± 6.44) and third grade (29.26 ± 5.66). In addition, results also reveal that the academic reading scores of fourth grade students (26.05 ± 5.84, $p < 0.01$) are significantly lower from the academic reading scores of students in first grade (31.46 ± 5.17).

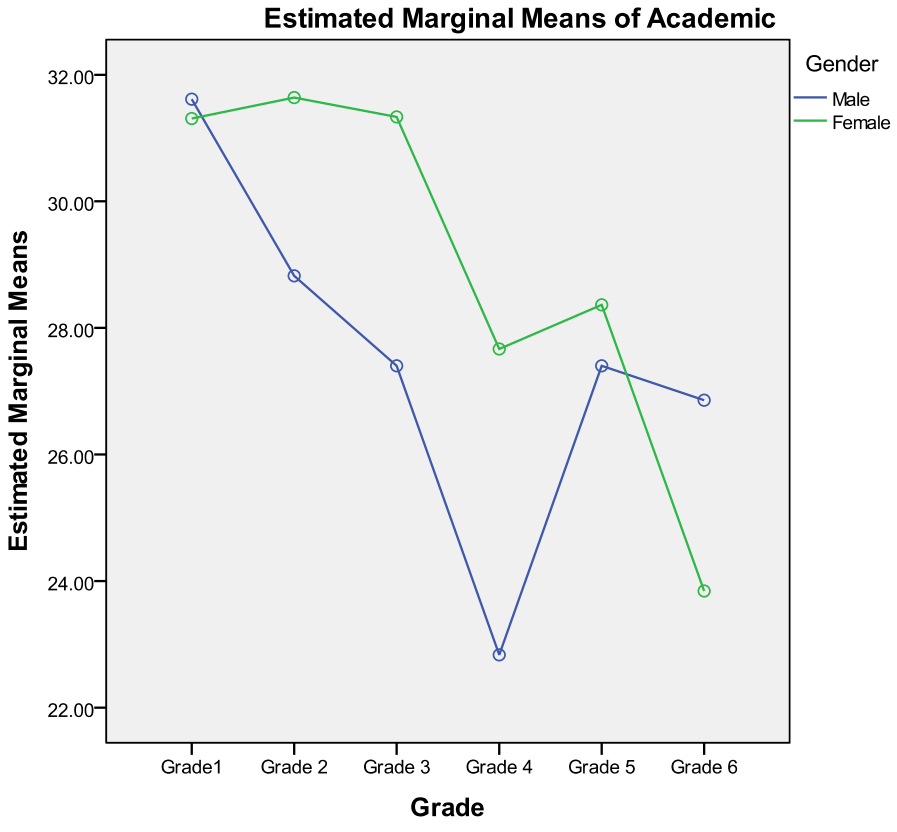

Figure 1. Academic Marginal Means by Grade and Gender

ANOVA for total reading

A two way ANOVA was conducted to determine if total reading scores differ among male and female students and among students in different grades.

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics including the mean, standard deviation for the dependent variable (Total reading) for each student for each separate group, by gender and by grade level as well as for the total respondents when all groups are combined. The mean range in total reading attitude was 48.67-62.00 for males and 48.84-62.83 for females. The mean total range was from 50.12-61.62. The total reading attitude of both sexes decreased from 1st grade to 6th grade.

Levene's test of equality of variances was conducted within ANOVA. Using an alpha level of .05, the Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met, $F(11, 154) = .916$, $p = .527$.

Main effect result revealed that students' total reading score was significantly different among students in different grades, $F(5,154) = 3.541$, $p = .005$, partial $\eta 2 = .103$. Calculated effect size for grade level indicates a medium proportion of variance in total reading score is accounted for by differences in grade levels. Bonferroni's post-hoc was conducted to determine which grade student groups were significantly different in academic reading scores. Results revealed academic reading scores of sixth grade students are (50.11 ± 9.47, $p < 0.01$) significantly different from that of the students in first grade, second grade, and third grade. Sixth grade students have lower total reading scores (50.11 ± 9.47, $p < 0.01$) than that of students in first grade (61.61 ± 9.77), second grade (60.57 ± 11.16) and third grade (58.36 ± 10.92). No statistically significant difference was found between the other grades.

Conclusion

Based on the provided analysis, gender does not appear to be a factor in reading attitude vs skill. The analysis also does not support both gender and grade being a factor in reading attitude. Although further research may be warranted, this analysis does not provide support for the idea that reading attitudes are shaped by gender. The analysis does, however, find significance between overall reading attitude and grade level. This revelation in the research would be an area for further research.

Reading attitudes among children are complex and instrumental part of education. School systems and principals are tasked every year to bring about higher reading achievement scores in their schools. Instructional leaders are left to analyze the current curriculum and find ways to increase reading attitudes. The argument here is that there are multiple factors both at home and at school that influence reading development. This is a battle that has to be fought on multiple fronts in order to make improvements.

Educational leaders need to foster a climate of reading acceptance at school. Some ways to accomplish this is to provide a learning environment filled with reading role models. Posters depicting popular students, parents, community members reading books should be placed in schools. Communications with the student body should contain references to reading.

Schools should include opportunities for students to participate in clubs or activities that provide a positive reading climate. Schools should maintain large quantities of reading materials that include all student reading levels and interests. Teachers should be given professional development and instructed on how to provide interesting and relevant reading opportunities for their students. Texts that were traditionally explored in English classes could be reevaluated for relevance and interest. This should be done on both the local and the State levels.

Parents need to be educated on the benefits of reading as well. Parents are able to educate their children about reading well before they enter school, whether it be from modeling or reading aloud to their children. Parents need to understand the importance of reading in all academic areas. Schools should attempt to build more community conscience about reading. Schools should also take the opportunity to educate the community on the benefits of reading. These reading initiatives can be gained with school outreach. School libraries can open doors to parents who need reading or technology resources but cannot afford them. School leaders can coordinate opportunities for community leaders and school personnel to appear in low socioeconomic areas to promote reading.

Future research

Based on a review of the literature, the researcher found that there are many facets to reading attitude. In combination, many of these factors could compound to create strong reading attitudes. Gender alone does not appear to play a role, but multiple other factors such as the perception of reading by peers, parents, or role models could impact a child's reading attitude. A series of one-way multivariate analysis of variance may be able to provide more insight into the impact of multiple factors. Factors to analyze could consist of parent, peer, and teacher perceptions of reading, availability of reading resources, academic curriculum, level and amount of reading in the environment, and availability of reading interests.

This study could be replicated to incorporate a larger sample size. A replication of this study could also use multiple academic settings, such as urban and suburban, or high poverty and affluent schools. With multiple factors influencing reading attitude, a replication using multiple variables would produce more beneficial results.

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