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The Political Status of Puerto Rico: An International Issue

Abstract

The intention of this paper is to establish why the political status of Puerto Rico is an international issue, rather than a purely internal matter of the United States and provide a possible transition plan that will permit the U.S. and Puerto Rico to make a decision that would modify the status quo. The arguments assert that the political status of Puerto Rico can be resolve if the United States takes a genuine interest by working on a domestic policy to address the situation and finally end the inattentive policy. On the other hand, the main Puerto Rican parties should all agree to work on a local political process in order to come up with a consensus on a formula that expresses the will of the people of Puerto Rico. There has been a tendency to believe that only those Puerto Ricans who support independence consider the status quo an international issue. At the present time the argument asserts that the actual status of Puerto Rico provided a significant change in 1952 from a purely colonial government to certain degree self-government, but 51 years of this formula have not resolve the issue. The island is considered the oldest colony in the world. Regardless of the Puerto Rican preferences for the following options: commonwealth, statehood or independence; the people of Puerto Rico consider this issue a domestic matter that has evolved into an international issue that needs to be resolve in the near future.

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Factors that Influence Students' Motivation to Read

Across Grade Levels

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Abstract:

The purpose of this short term study was to determine the factors that affect students' motivation and how they differ across grade levels. This study focused on three students in grades first, third, and eighth, and the factors that influence their motivation to read. Data was collected through teacher and student interviews, observations, and student questionnaires that assessed students' reading motivation. The findings show that these students not only read for different reasons, but also display different levels of motivation and behaviors during reading activities. Another major finding was that giving students choices and allowing for group discussion motivates students. Teachers can implement certain instructional strategies in order to instill a natural love for reading and encourage reading motivation in students.

Introduction:

Teachers frequently hear comments from their students such as "I hate to read" or "I never read a book" (Edmunds and Bauserman, 2006). Teachers, after parents, are the ones who have the greatest opportunity to influence student's reading habits (McKool and Gespass, 2009). It is important that as teachers we find what motivates students and work to reach all readers. We must restore the love and interest for reading in today's adolescents. Many teachers embrace the same goal for their students and that is for them to *want* to read (Johns & Lenski, 2005).   Incentives can offer one way of doing this. Some might argue whether or not setting up incentive programs for students actually promotes or hinders learning and motivation (Cameron & Pierce, 2002; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 2001). Regardless of the controversy, many teachers and professionals working in schools feel that rewards and incentives ignite students' motivation to read (Cameron, 2004). This study looks into three different classrooms, their approaches to motivating students, and the differences across age levels. In addition, this study looks at what other factors motivate students of varying ages to read.

One task teacher's face is to discover what motivates individual students and work to reach each and every student. By exploring the issue we are able to not only help unmotivated readers develop motivation towards reading but also to foster and to continue the motivation that already exists in engaged readers. This exploration will help teachers better their practice and will help families to foster literacy at home and create more meaningful literacy opportunities.

The findings from this study suggest that students with different reading motivation levels have particular reading behaviors during activities including their level

of involvement and compliance. In addition, students' reasons for reading differ as well as the recognition in which they are given. The student who is highly motivated shown to be intrinsically motivated, while the one who is of average motivation appears to be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to read, and finally the student with low motivation is more extrinsically motivated to read. Rewards and incentives show to help the unmotivated students when used in a particular manner. Instructional strategies that seem to motivate include offering students choices in their reading, collaboration such as literature circles, group discussions, incorporation of technology, and popcorn reading at the younger grades. In order to motivate students to read we need to understand their current levels of motivation, and the current instructional strategies such as choices, collaboration, and technology that aid in motivating students.

Theoretical Framework:

To help attend to the research question, "What factors motivate students of varying age levels to read and do incentives and rewards play a role in motivating?" one must take a look at the different literacy theories. One must first understand what is meant by the term 'literacy' and its definition, and develop an understanding of the ways the different theories apply to student's motivation to read.

Lankshear and Knobel (2007) define literacies as "socially recognized ways of generating, communicating, and negotiating meaningful content through the medium of encoded texts within contexts of participation in Discourses" (p. 85). Larson and Marsh (2005) believe literacy is not a discrete set of skills to be acquired but situated within specific contexts, and that literacy can be acquired through social interactions with the surrounding environment through interaction with other children and with adults,

children begin to understand and engage in literacy. Students learn an ample amount about literacy simply through observation. Later on, they begin to mimic what others say to develop their own language. All of this learning and understanding comes from social interaction. Once in the school setting, most children begin to acquire even more through peer interactions and through modeling done by the teacher.

Similarly to this view, Gee (2001) views literacy as a control of secondary uses of language. Gee sees literacy being acquired through exposure to the material without formal teaching. This is very similar to the view of Larson and Marsh (2005) as exposure ranges from infants up through school exposure. In the classroom, this would mean students are able to explore literature and literacy on their own developing their own conclusions and questions.

Essentially, literacy is a set of skills to be obtained through a combination of learning, social interaction, and acquisition (Gee, 2001; and Larson and Marsh, 2005). Therefore, if teachers are going to help students to be motivated readers we need to be able to allow students to use reading in all the different contexts. This means not limiting students to guided-reading or teacher selected books. In addition, if it is to be a social process, this means allowing students to partner read. Finally, in order to incorporate acquisition, we must seek ways to allow students to discuss things they are reading through methods such as literature circles.

Critical literacy theory plays a key role in motivation as well. Critical literacy is where "learners are positioned as active agents in relation to texts and other social practices" (Larson and Marsh, 2005, p. 85). Within this framework, teachers play the

role of facilitating the development of learners' understandings of the way in which they are positioned in relation to texts and social practices (Larson and Marsh, 2005). Critical literacy is about understanding relationships of power and how that power is demonstrated within texts. Within this framework students use texts to affect change in their world (Larson and Marsh, 2005). For example, if students were to be unsatisfied with the availability of after school programs and they wanted to do something about it, they could research different after school programs and then write a letter to the director of these activities or to the principal directly. When we create authentic opportunities like these we are using what is known as intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation does not motivate students but creates opportunities that can evoke motivation in students (Brandt, 1995). Therefore, these types of students find pleasure in reading and are self-motivated, and should be encouraged and supported to continue to do so.

The opposite of intrinsic is extrinsic motivation, which is when a student is motivated by an incentive or some external reward (Deci, 1971). Extrinsically motivated students are more interested in what they will receive for their efforts than the actual reading itself and should be given opportunities to receive rewards when they have completed a reading task. Teachers who understand both of these types of motivation and work to recognize these different types of students within their classroom can better understand the concept of self-determination, which is strongly connected to the self-determination theory.

Self-determination theory provides that there are three specific psychological needs: relatedness, competency, and autonomy (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991). Relatedness refers to one feeling as though he/she belongs, feeling a connection

with those around him/her. Children raised in families that value reading and where this relatedness exists among family members are going to be more likely to have a natural interest and love for reading (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991).

Competency, another of the psychological needs, is a matter of feeling able to complete or perform a task (Sweet, 1997). When a child feels confident in his or her ability to achieve something he/she is going to feel better about doing that task. If someone feels inadequate, or incompetent, they are not going to want to partake in the activity that makes them feel that way (Sweet, 1997). Therefore, when it comes to reading, in order for a child to be motivated to read, competency plays a major role.

Lastly, autonomy refers to having a freedom of choice (Sweet, 1997). Theorists Gee (2001) and Larson and Marsh (2005) would agree that children having choice in their learning is very important to their success and reading as well. If students are able to choose things that they want to read they are more likely to place more value on reading.

Research Question:

Literacy is a part of our everyday lives and is necessary in order to be able to not only interact with each other but with the world around us. Given the importance of literacy, the question becomes, "What factors motivate students across grade levels to read and what role might incentives and rewards play in motivating?" Due to the rising number of unmotivated students and in order to meet the needs of all students, educators need to be able to answer these questions (Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006).

Literature Review:

"Over the past 20 years research has demonstrated that students' motivation is a primary concern of many teachers, and numerous classroom teachers acknowledge that motivation is at the root of many of the problems they face in educating children today" (O'Flahavan, Gambrell, Guthrie, Stahl, & Alvermann, 1992; Veenman, 1984). Motivation is something that varies from case to case. Exploring such a topic involves a look at several different aspects of motivation. Motivation is something that is not just born into us; it is constructed (Edmunds and Tancock, 2003). In addition, one must consider the ways in which motivation is different from student to student. There are many factors that influence reading motivation from gender to instructional strategies (including rewards and incentives for reading), grade level, culture, and even parental involvement (Edmunds and Tancock, 2003). All of these factors affect motivation because research has shown that children who demonstrate motivation to read spend more time doing so than children who show a lack of motivation (Edmunds and Tancock, 2003).

Instructional Strategies

Instructional strategies play a large role in students' reading motivation. Being that we understand the significance of motivation, we also must create more insightful instructional strategies to better develop and embrace students' motivation (Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006). Marinak and Gambrell (2008) believe that rewards that are carefully chosen to fit with the task at hand can foster a culture of reading motivation. If it is reading motivation that the teacher is seeking to enhance then offering a reward such as a book is less undermining to the students natural interest to , their intrinsic motivation, than rewards such as candy or toys (Marinak and Gambrell,

2008). Marinak and Gambrell (2008) conducted a study with third grade students to test the effects of the different rewards. They found that students who were given a book as a reward and students who received no reward at all were more motivated to engage in reading than students who received a token reward; a token reward refers to rewards such as toys or candy (Marinak and Gambrell, 2008).

This idea follows many other perceptions that carefully chosen rewards may foster intrinsic motivation which is more likely to foster long term motivation (Marinak and Gambrell, 2008). Cameron and Pierce (1994) found that intrinsic motivation was undermined when a tangible reward was given for students engaging in a particular task. In other words, offering a prize such as a toy for reading a particular number of pages or book would in turn undermine intrinsic motivation, which again is a student's own motivation to do something because they want to, resulting in temporary but not long-term motivation (Marinak and Gambrell, 2008).

On the contrary of hindering or undermining intrinsic motivation, it is said that providing students a choice in their task is a way of enhancing intrinsic motivation and the students' own self-determination (Marinak and Gambrell, 2008). Cordova and Lepper (1996) found that "allowing grade-school children to make even a trivial task choice increased learning and enhanced subsequent interest in the activity" (p. 12). Similarly Finney and Schraw (2003) reported that reading motivation was increased when student choice was given.

In contrast to Marinak and Gambrell (2008), Edmunds and Tancock (2003) evaluated the effects of incentives on reading motivation of fourth-grade students and found something much different. They found that there was no significant difference in

the motivation of students who received incentives versus students who did not

(Edmunds and Tancock, 2003). They did however offer the knowledge that students

having access to books is key to reading motivation (Edmunds and Tancock, 2003).

Further findings from their research contrasted again with previous research in that it

showed that children's reading motivation did not increase as a result of receiving books

as an incentive; however, the study concluded that there were no detrimental effects in

relation to using books as rewards (Edmunds and Tancock, 2003). Current research can

offer some insight for teachers as to what role rewards or incentives may play in their

classroom.

Book clubs have also been evaluated as an instructional and motivational strategy.

Whittingham and Huffman (2009) claim that introducing a book club to middle school

students will help teachers to motivate students. Whittingham and Huffman's (2009)

study looked at the effects of book clubs on students' reading attitudes. Guthrie (2001)

and Wigfiled, Eccles, MacIver, Reuman, and Midgley (1991) would agree with

Whittingham and Huffman (2009) that "interest, competence, and motivation in reading

and language arts decline as adolescents enter middle school (p. 130)," thus creating a

need to address this issue at this level. Whittingham and Huffman (2009) found that

book clubs are beneficial to middle school students and do increase student's attitudes

and motivation towards reading.

Book clubs involve "lively conversations among groups of students and their

peers" (Whittingham and Huffman, 2009, p. 131). Because of this fact, students view the

books clubs as more of a social gathering or social experience as opposed to the

traditional demands of everyday classroom encounters (Whittingham and Huffman,

2009). Reading becomes an extra-curricular activity, an activity, which acts as an

attraction for students. Whittingham and Huffman (2009) proposed that students who

were given a choice to join a book club versus taking the traditional reading class chose

the club and demonstrated a greater interest and level of independent reading. Today

many teachers use a form of this strategy within their own classroom in the form of

literature circles.

Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, and Perencevich (2004) offer specific programs that

can be used in order to increase students' motivation towards reading. Children's

motivation towards not only reading but also other areas is strongly influenced by their

experiences within the classroom (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, and Perencevich, 2004). A

school's or teachers' approach to the curriculum and his/her approach to teaching reading

can affect children's motivation. Integration of content areas is said to have an impact on

motivation because "when curricula are integrated across content areas, it is possible that

children's motivation also may be more integrated across domains" (Wigfield, Guthrie,

Tonks, and Perencevich, 2004, p. 307). This means that if a child has a strong interest

and motivation towards science and a teacher is able to integrate reading and science, that

student may then have that same motivation towards reading because science is involved.

Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, and Perencevich (2004) examined the effects of two

different models of reading instruction, Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI)

and Strategy Instruction (SI). Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction involves connecting

reading and science together in order to encourage the development of reading

comprehension and motivation (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, and Perencevich, 2004).

Strategy Instruction involves teaching various reading strategies, the focus being on

activating background knowledge, student questioning, searching for information, summarizing, organizing, and learning story structure for literary materials (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, and Perencevich, 2004). Teachers were given training for the programs and were able to implement them in order to see the effects on student's motivation. To measure the effects of the programs pre and post assessments were given in addition to a motivation for reading questionnaire (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, and Perencevich, 2004). Instructional programs can affect children's motivation, in turn affecting their achievement (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, and Perencevich, 2004).

The results for this particular study showed that students who were involved in the CORI program increased their intrinsic motivation in terms of challenge, curiosity, self-efficacy, and reading frequency (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, and Perencevich, 2004). An increase in intrinsic motivation is said to have a positive effect on students' long-term motivation. The CORI program fosters intrinsic motivation by engaging students with hands-on science experiments or activities and then connects those activities to interested relevant texts (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, and Perencevich, 2004). Students have choice in the text that they read and they are also allowed to collaborate with other students, all factors shown to increase motivation in children (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, and Perencevich, 2004).

These findings lead to a final point, which is that situated interest for a specific book may lead to longer-term intrinsic motivation for general reading (Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006). This goes back to the importance of books being made available to children (Edmunds and Tancock, 2003). When students become interested in a particular book, perhaps in a particular series, in a certain situation they

experience situational interest (Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006). It

is the teacher's job to re-create these types of situations for students in order to foster

reading motivation. In a study done by Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich,

(2006) the CORI program was again used. Student's motivation was measured before the

study and again after using the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire, which was used in

many of the previously mentioned studies in order to measure student's levels of

motivation. This self-report questionnaire was "designed to assess different aspects of

children's motivation to read, including intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation"

(Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006, p. 99). The end result showed that

children's changes in situated motivation predicted their changes in general reading

motivation (Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006).

The reason for these changes refers back to the self-determination theory (Ryan &

Deci, 2000). As the students were able to learn through the CORI program about

different topics, their knowledge gave them a sense of competence to choose, read, and

learn from informational books that surrounded their topic of interest (Guthrie, Hoa,

Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006). This demonstrated the importance of

instructional strategies in building on and developing students' motivation towards

reading. The classroom is an important place to build up motivation because as Guthrie

and Humenick (2004) found, "reading motivation is context-sensitive, and intrinsic

motivation is likely to increase when the classroom context is providing support for

children's choices, collaborations, interaction with challenging texts, and hands-on

activities connected to literacy" (p. 110). Furthermore, Guthrie, Wigfield, and

Perencevich (2004) found evidence which proved that numerous classroom practices lead

to greater reading motivation including "…(a) providing choices of books or tasks during reading instruction, (b) affording students' opportunities for collaboration with classmates in reading activities, (c) providing interesting texts for instructional activities, and (d) providing hands-on activities or real-world interactions connected to specific book-reading activities (Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006). However, creating the best possible motivation support is not done effortlessly, and depends on an understanding of how motivation is constructed (Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006).

How Motivation is constructed

If we understand what changes take place in children as they acquire reading motivation, teachers can then design contexts conducive to motivational development (Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006). Children's first experiences with motivation begin before they enter school. Upon entering school many children are excited and eager to learn yet they begin to observe themselves in comparison to their peers (Edmunds and Bauserman, 2006). As a result they become increasingly aware of their performances as well as to instruction that may promote competition and they may become more critical of their abilities (Edmunds and Bauserman, 2006). Motivation towards reading is said to see its greatest decline beginning at first grade through fourth grade because of the above factors (Wigfield et al., 1997).

Edmunds and Bauserman (2006) asked students what they think makes them motivated to read. Based on the students' reactions there were many factors that motivated children to read (Edmunds and Bauserman, 2006). One factor was personal interest, meaning that they seek out books to read based on things that they are interested

in and because of this interest they are motivated to continue to read about these and other things that interest them (Edmunds and Bauserman, 2006). Being able to have choice in what they read played an important role in their motivation as well. In addition, students placed much importance on information that they could gain from a book. They shared that it was exciting for them to be able to share with others new things that they could learn from a book (Edmunds and Bauserman, 2006). It was also motivating to students when others would recommend books to them such as a librarian, teachers, peers, or family members. Based on the findings from the participating students it was recommended for teachers that the following five strategies be used to increase reading motivation: self-selection, attention to characteristics of books, personal interests, access to books, and active involvement of others (Edmunds and Bauserman, 2006).

Responsibility lies with the teacher to be a role model for students and help them continue to value reading and be motivated readers (McKool and Gespass, 2009). Both teachers' personal reading habits and their beliefs about the importance of reading affects the instructional decisions that they make and shows through to the students whose reading habits will then be influenced (McKool and Gespass, 2009). When students begin to lose their motivation towards reading some may look to teachers to restore the love and excitement for reading. Research shows that teachers who value reading and read more than forty-five minutes a day use instructional practices that promote or are associated with intrinsic motivation. In addition, while it was shown that teachers value reading, only half of teachers who were interviewed read for pleasure each and every day (McKool and Gespass, 2009). Teachers need to be excited about reading and motivated

readers if they expect their students to continue to grow and be motivated readers (McKool and Gespass, 2009).

One's ability to read will also affect how motivation is constructed for that individual. Young children who enjoy reading will do it more often and they tend to become more skilled and motivated readers. Similarly, poor readers will often times read less and display a low motivation towards reading (Morgan and Fuchs, 2007). Gotfried (1990) believes that children experiencing task mastery have a higher level of competence and thus will have a greater level of motivation. In other words, when a child feels competent or able to complete a given task he/she is going to have more motivation to do so. If a child feels unable to complete a task he/she is going to lose his/her motivation towards that activity. Morgan, Fuchs, Compton, Cordray, and Fuchs' (2008) study revealed mixed results for a causal relationship between reading failure and lack of motivation. While similar results showed that children with lower reading levels had a lower motivation to read, when increasing the children's reading skills there was not an increase in motivation. Therefore it was concluded that later level of motivation was most predicted by children's earlier levels of motivation (Morgan, Fuchs, Compton, Cordray, Fuchs, 2008). For these individuals motivation is not constructed or maintained as easily as it is for strong readers, thus teachers need to work towards reaching these individuals and make an attempt to increase or restore their motivation. It is evident that we need to understand more about the ways in which children change as they grow in reading motivation (Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, Perencevich, 2006).

Grade Level/Age

      While motivation is something that is constructed over time, children are not born motivated; the question still arises, how does this change occur? (Morgan, Fuchs, Compton, Cordray, Fuchs, 2008). Being able to motivate our students means understanding the ways in which different age levels are motivated. Research shows that students start off motivated and very eager to learn but this motivation towards reading slowly decreases as they get older because of environmental and social factors (Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, Perencevich, 2006).

      A study done with fourth and fifth grade students showed that students can be motivated several ways. Teachers must explicitly dedicate time to read aloud, discuss, and explore books with students in order to expose them to these books of interest and motivate them as readers (Corcoran and Mamalakis, 2009). Corcoran and Mamalakis' (2009) study with fourth and fifth graders found that teachers that read aloud only a few times a week while the students desired for their teacher to read aloud daily. In addition, when asked how often their teachers shared information about a book they had personally read they responded that their teachers did this on a weekly basis. Ninety-six percent of the students wished that their teachers would discuss much more often books they read with the class (Corcoran and Mamalakis, 2009). Finally, these students expressed their need to be able to choose and read books of their choice (Corcoran and Mamalakis, 2009).

      Edwards (2009) found that while students in the seventh grade have some of the same factors with which they can be motivated, the type of text can help to motivate these individuals. This age group showed much interest in the area of graphic novels.

Unfortunately many teachers and even librarians are not knowledgeable about graphic novels and are therefore resistant about letting their students choose them as a book of choice (Edwards, 2009). Reading a graphic novel not only requires the reader to infer and construct meaning based on the given visual representations but it also requires the reader to use the text as well in order to comprehend the story (Edwards, 2009). What is even more appealing about the use of graphic novels is they not only appeal to strong readers but they appeal to those readers who struggle and therefore have a lower motivation (Edwards, 2009). The graphics are the reason these texts appeal to struggling readers as they help them visualize what they are reading. Edwards' (2009) research has shown significant improvement in the following areas for students who read graphic novels: comprehension, vocabulary development, and motivation toward reading.

The findings suggest that graphic novels can improve student's intrinsic motivation, vocabulary, and comprehension ability (Edwards, 2009). After the study was completed students demonstrated through surveys a more positive attitude toward reading and reported having more enjoyment in reading than before the introduction to graphic novels (Edwards, 2009). Motivation depends greatly on an understanding of age/grade level of students in order to provide not only books but also literacy activities that will be appropriate for the particular group of students (Edwards, 2009).

Gender

Research has shown that girls have stronger aptitude beliefs in reading than boys and girls' value reading more than boys (Baker and Wigfield, 1999). Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) also found that in regards to reading motivation gender differences

favored girls in terms of self-efficacy and importance. Boys did, however, show stronger drive towards the competition dimension of motivation (Baker and Wigfield, 1999). It was also shown that girls have more positive views of reading than do boys, thus in a more current study it was expected that girls would be more positive than boys on many dimensions of reading motivation (Baker and Wigfield, 1999). The current study revealed significant differences on all of the dimensions of reading motivation except that of competition and work avoidance (Baker and Wigfield, 1999). Girls did in fact score higher (more positive) than boys in regards to reading motivation (Baker and Wigfield, 1999). Items that were measured were things such as self-efficacy, challenge, curiosity, involvement, importance, recognition, grades, social, and compliance (Baker and Wigfield, 1999).

Culture and Ethnicity

Research on motivation in children from different cultures and ethnic groups is still quite limited (Baker and Wigfield, 1999). The most well known view is that minorities have lower levels of motivation and thus historically have poorer achievement, though that data is not necessarily supported (Baker and Wigfield, 1999). However, studies have shown that African American children express a more positive view of reading and feel confident as readers, more so than white children (Baker and Wigfield, 1999). Baker and Wigfield's (1999) more current study showed that there were significant ethnicity differences on all scales of motivation except for curiosity, social, and work avoidance. In each case it did reveal that African American students had higher motivation overall than did the Caucasian students (Baker and Wigfield, 1999). Unrau and Schlackman (2006) had similar findings.

Thernstrom and Thernstrom (2003) found that culture in fact does matter and is able to explain academic performance differences of Asian, Hispanic, African American, and Caucasian students. Unrau and Schlackman's (2006) study found significant differences in motivation between Hispanic students and Asian students. Their findings revealed that intrinsic motivation is related in a positive way to the reading achievement of Asian middle school students, but not for Hispanic students (Unrau and Schlackman, 2006). Asian students had a higher rating on the different elements of reading motivation than did Hispanic students.

This led to the question of why there was this positive relation between intrinsic motivation and reading achievement for Asian students but not for Hispanic students. Unrau and Schlackman (2006) believe that Asian students may value their schooling more, which would explain this positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and reading achievement in these particular students. If Asian students come from cultural backgrounds that highly values education, it is likely that is from where their perceptions of school come. There is not much explanation behind the difference for Hispanic students. Unrau and Schlackman (2006) refer to Ogbu's (1983) cultural-ecological theory in which Ogbu classifies minorities as voluntary groups, those who immigrated to American willingly to improve their opportunities and/or opportunities for their children, or involuntary groups. Therefore, Unrau and Schlackman (2006) claim that Hispanics fall under the involuntary group and Asians under the voluntary group. Involuntary minorities "…may frame their situation in America as one that is far less promising in social and economic terms and hard work and education may not enable them to achieve their vision of a self-determined future" (Unrau and Schlackman, 2006, p. 98).

An important finding was that some learning communities support different

cultures and ethnicities better than others (Unrau and Schlackman, 2006). For example,

"low-achieving Latino students are often invisible in some school cultures and learning

communities, but in others they receive ample support through programs like

Advancement Via Individual Determination" (Unrau and Schlackman, 2006, p. 98). The

sociocultural processes within some of the different programs offered in particular

schools could promote positive experiences and enhance student's engagement with

reading (Unrau and Schlackman, 2006). Much research still needs to be conducted in

regards to reading motivation and its correlation with culture and ethnicity (Unrau and

Schlackman, 2006).

Parental Involvement

Finally, there is much research that shows a relationship between parental

involvement and student motivation and achievement (Coleman and McNeese, 2009;

Rogers, Theule, Ryan, Adams, & Keating, 2009; Martin, Marsh, McInerney, Green &

Dowson, 2007). Martin et al. (2007) and Rogers et al. (2009) found that when it comes

to student motivation and achievement, parental involvement is positively associated and

influences differences in both areas. "Parental involvement seems to influence

achievement through the mediational role of the child's academic competence…"

(Rogers et al., 2009, p.45). Therefore, Rogers et al. (2009) argue that this relationship

between the two is indirect, yet there is a relationship and parental influence on things

such as helping with homework, managing the learning environment at home, and

encouraging and supporting students' struggles and successes in their education.

While Rogers et al. (2009) explains parental involvement in terms of academics, Martin et al. (2007) concludes, "…relative to the academic domain, parents' influence on the nonacademic domain (e.g. general self-esteem) is prominent" (p.119). Thus, these findings conclude that it is not so much an academic correlation that exists between the two, but that more parents have an effect on their child's self-esteem. This finding concurs with Edmunds and Bauserman (2006) who stated that children first develop their motivation through their own self-perception and self-esteem that parents create at home before they enter school. Martin et al. (2007) support this idea that developing students' self-esteem will in turn help to increase their confidence as learners in an academic setting as well is in nonacademic settings, which is likely to create an increase in their motivation.

Opposing this research, Coleman and McNeese (2009) found that there is a negative relationship between parental involvement and student motivation. This reported negative relationship is based on research conducted at the fifth grade level at an age when children are seeking to be more independent from their parents (Coleman and McNeese, 2009). Stewart's (2008) similar research did not find a positive relationship between the two. Stewart (2008) did assert that while the research did not confirm a positive relationship it "…does not necessarily negate the importance of parents' involvement in their children's school activities" (p.198). Therefore, while there has been research that showed a negative correlation between the two, parents should not take this as an indicator that they should not be involved in their child's education, since more research has shown the positive impact of parental involvement. All of the factors

mentioned are important to take into consideration when analyzing students' reading motivation.

Methods:

This study took place at two schools in Western New York, an elementary school that accommodates kindergarten through sixth grade and a middle school which accommodates grades five through eight. The elementary school consists of approximately one thousand ten students, with an average class size of 21 students with approximately seven classrooms per grade level. Approximately 5% of students are Caucasian, 63% are African American, and 31% are Hispanic or Latino. Approximately 82% of the students are eligible for free or reduced lunches. The average attendance rate for students in this school is 94%. The research at this school was conducted in both a first grade classroom and a fourth grade classroom. The first grade classroom wass made up of fifteen boys and eight girls for a total of twenty-two students. There were nineteen African American students in the classroom, two Hispanic students, and one Caucasian student.

The second school was a middle school located in a suburb of a city in Western New York. This school consists of approximately five hundred and sixty students, with an average class size of 18 students. Approximately 95% of the students in this location are Caucasian, and there are 14% of students that are eligible for free or reduced lunch. The average attendance rate for this school is 97%. Research in this building was conducted in an eighth grade English classroom made up of ten boys and eight girls, for a total of eighteen students. There were seventeen Caucasian students in the class and one

Hispanic student. For the purpose of this study all participants have been given

pseudonyms in order to protect their identity.

Participants

Both classroom teachers in the elementary school have their teaching certification

in grades one through six. Mrs. Saba, a first grade teacher, has been teaching for eleven

years. Mr. Hilliard, a fourth grade teacher, has been teaching for seven years. Mrs. Saba

has been teaching at this particular elementary school for five of those years while Mr.

Hilliard has been teaching there for three years. In the middle school the English teacher,

Mr. Murphy, has been teaching for 19 years, 15 in this particular district.

The focus was on a first grade female student, Dora, from Mrs. Saba's class, a

fourth grade male student, Joey, from Mr. Hilliard's class, and an eighth grade student,

Emily, from Mr. Murphy's class. Dora has a high level of reading motivation, while Joey

has an average level of reading motivation. Mr. Murphy's student Emily has a low level

of reading motivation. The classroom teachers determined the students' motivation

levels through a combination of classroom behaviors, observations, and survey's done at

several points throughout the school year.

Dora is a seven-year-old Hispanic female who is highly motivated to read and is

currently reading at grade level. Dora's teacher explains that she enjoys reading

whenever she can and even will ask to read to the teacher during her free time. Mrs. Saba

also mentioned Dora's interest in reading to learn about new things. She will come in

with an experience from home such as a deer that had a baby in the field behind her

house and she will want to find books on deer and their babies. While she finds it

interesting to learn new information from books she also enjoys other genres as well including fantasy.

Joey is an eight-year-old African American male who demonstrates average reading motivation and is currently reading on grade level. Mr. Hilliard describes Joey as an overall good student. Joey completes his work and consistently turns in homework. Joey shows a high interest in primarily non-fiction books about animals so he will often seek out the same type of books. At this time Joey is performing at an average level in all subject areas.

Finally, Emily is a 13-year-old Caucasian female who reads below level and shows little to no reading motivation. She struggles in English Language Arts and receives Academic Intervention services for this subject area. Emily is an extremely outgoing individual who is very involved with her social life and involves herself in cheerleading and other school events. At times, it can be difficult to get Emily to focus. Mr. Murphy mentioned that Emily has attendance issues as well. She has been known to travel out of state for cheerleading competitions and miss school for this purpose.

Researcher Stance

In all classrooms I took on the role of an observer. My focus was primarily on my own data collection. I observed the elementary students in their guided reading groups, and recorded field notes. In addition to observing, I also acted as an interviewer with the three teachers and three students.

I am currently a graduate student at St. John Fisher College where I am working toward obtaining a Master's Degree in Reading and Literacy Education, birth through

grade six. I also hold a Bachelor's degree in Childhood and Special Education grades

first through sixth with a minor in Educational Technology.

Method

I asked each of the participating teachers to recommend a student from each of

their classrooms whom I could observe and interview. The three students who were

recommended had varying levels of motivation; when referring to motivation I am

referring to "…the individual's personal goals, values, and beliefs with regard to the

topics, processes, and outcomes of reading" (Guthrie and Wigfield, 2000, p. 405). Dora

was extremely motivated to read while Joey demonstrated average reading motivation; in

the third study Emily showed very little motivation to read.

Once the teachers provided me with the recommendations I got the permission

slips ready to go home with those students. I visited the classrooms to explain my

research to the teachers as well as to meet the students and distribute the permission

letters. When I got the letters back with parental consent I began my observations. I

observed in all three classrooms at different times for a total of five days. I visited Mrs.

Saba's classroom during their Reading block from 8:30 until 10:00. I observed in Mr.

Hilliard's classroom during their Reader's Workshop from 10:30 until 11:30. Later in the

day I observed in Mr. Murphy's classroom during English period from 1:00 until 1:50.

During these times I was able to observe the students during many different literacy

activities such as guided reading, centers, read aloud, independent reading, and whole-

group reading. Twice I observed the two elementary students in their guided reading

groups, which met for approximately twenty minutes. Dora was in the yellow group (on

level), and Joey was in the blue group (on-level). While observing their guided-reading

sessions I took field notes of the instructional strategies used by both teachers in addition to the student's behaviors during the reading time.

After I observed the students, I asked each student to complete a questionnaire that assessed their attitudes toward reading and their reading motivation (Appendix A). When students had filed out the questionnaires I held a follow-up interview with each student and asked about responses to their questionnaire and had them elaborate on their responses which provided me with additional information; I also took final field notes.

In addition to interviewing the three students, I also interviewed the teachers. I asked them about the different instructional strategies that they use during teaching reading/English. In addition, I asked how they view the three students' reading motivation levels and attitudes toward reading, and what they believe they are able to do within their classrooms to help promote reading motivation among these students. During questions, I mentioned reading incentives and rewards to seek information on how these are a part of each of the classrooms. Finally, I asked about any specific strategies that these teachers use to increase intrinsic motivation in their class of students.

Ensuring Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability

Four aspects characterize the validity of qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Mills, 2007). It is important that when conducting research one takes into account these aspects (Mills, 2007). First, credibility is "…the researcher's ability to take into account the complexities that present themselves in a study and to deal with patterns that are not easily explained" (Mills, 2007, p.85). One way in which credibility was ensured in my research study was the use of a critical colleague. My critical colleague acted as my way of peer debriefing in which I reflected

on my research process and she was able to give me additional insights into my study. In addition, I used triangulation in my study. Triangulation is simply collecting multiple sources of data rather than just a single source (Mills, 2007). During my data collection I used observation, field notes, interviews, and questionnaire responses.

In addition to credibility, transferability was also present in my study. Transferability "…refers to qualitative researchers' beliefs that everything they study is context bound…" and that statements cannot be made general or be applied to a large group of people (Mills, 2007, p.86). To ensure transferability, I collected detailed data, which described my observations and interviews so that comparisons can be made to other contexts. In addition, my detailed description will allow others to be able to picture the setting of the study.

Dependability, the third criteria to ensure validity, relates to the stability of the data (Mills, 2007). The methods of my study overlapped; I used various methods so that the weakness of one method may be outdone by the strength of another method (Mills, 2007). In addition to this my critical colleague continually examined my data collection and analysis and provided feedback as well as suggestions for improvements/changes (Mills, 2007). For example, my colleague suggested two different lines on my reading questionnaire that was given to the students I worked with. The addition of these lines provided me even further insight into the sought out data.

The final characteristic present in my study was confirmability of the data, or "the neutrality or objectivity of the data that has been collected" (Mills, 2007, p. 105). Some strategies for confirmability are to practice triangulation and practice reflexivity (Mills, 2007). I used triangulation by collecting data using multiple sources. In addition, I was

able to keep a notebook of not only my classroom observations but of my own reflections throughout the research process, which is an example of reflexivity (Mills, 2007).

Informed Consent

Before I began my research I talked with all of the teachers about what I wanted to do within the classroom. Each teacher signed the consent form provided and showed much interest in my study. I gave each of them a written description of the purpose of my study as well as ensuring confidentiality by allowing participants to choose a pseudonym to be used in my analysis. Each of the teachers involved notified classroom parents that I would be in the room to do research so that they could call if they had any questions.

Next, I went into the classrooms and met with the three students with whom I would be potentially working and attained assent from those students. I gave the teachers the parent consent letters and they were sent home that night. The letters all came back giving consent to work with their child. The parents were given my email so that I could answer any questions if they were to arise. In addition, parents were assured that their child would be anonymous and that a pseudonym would be given to each participant in the study.

Data Collection

Each time I visited the classrooms I wrote any observations made as well as what I accomplished that day in my notebook. Therefore, the first two forms of data collection that I used were observation and field notes. I made sure to be very detailed in my descriptions using in depth notes/observations as this would better help with data analysis.

In addition, I interviewed each of the participants with whom I worked, at the beginning to just get to know them, and also at the end to get more detailed information regarding things that I observed and/or questions I had about the responses to the questionnaire. These interviews provided me with helpful information and allowed further insight into the data I was seeking. Finally, I used questionnaires not only for the teacher to obtain information about teaching strategies but for the students as well in regards to their levels of motivation toward reading.

In order to analyze my data I used a Mills (2007) Triangulation Matrix. I created research sub questions and then used each of my data sources to answer those sub questions. Within this analysis I was able to find recurring themes. The themes that emerged were the following: recognition, compliance, involvement, and reasons for reading which involved intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. My data was then organized under these four themes, which allowed me to keep track of the evidence I included in my findings.

Findings and Discussion:

The data analysis revealed themes and factors that indicated a correlation between student motivation and student behavior. These behaviors were noted during reading activities as well as in observation and interviews. The themes included recognition, compliance, involvement, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivational reasons for reading.

Recognition

Recognition was the first theme that emerged. Recognition is defined by Baker and Wigfield (1999) as "…the pleasure in receiving a tangible form of recognition for success in reading" (p. 455). In other words, recognition is student's enjoyment in

receiving some form of tangible reward for their reading. Such rewards include things such as toys or food. Recognition emerged as an area of focus in observations, and also in interviews and student questionnaires, although there were variations among the three students and classrooms.

In Dora's first grade classroom there is much focus on recognition. Not only did Dora mention on her questionnaire that she really liked to receive rewards such as toys when she accomplished her reading goals, she also states in her interview that this is something that happens within her classroom. In my interview with Mrs. Saba I asked what form of recognition students receive for their reading accomplishments. Mrs. Saba said "…students' can pick toys from the prize box when they either move up a reading level, complete a reading goal, or each time they read five books." In addition, she mentioned how having this form of recognition for the students seems to aid in motivation. Students showed increased reading motivation with these forms of recognition, and responded well to verbal recognition. The students seemed very eager to receive the teacher's praise and one student even said quietly, "Yes!" when the teacher told her she could tell she had been reading at home. This was also demonstrated in Dora's questionnaire when she claimed she likes to hear the teacher say she reads well. In her interview she said, "…when my teacher tells me I read very good I feel happy and a little proud." Dora also expressed that it is important to her to see her name on a list of good readers. In this classroom Dora and other students demonstrated in my observations that they enjoy popcorn reading. The teacher claimed in the interview that "…the reason I believe it is so popular is they get recognition from classmates as well as myself, it really builds their self-esteem."

Recognition seemed to play a significant role in Joey's classroom as well. In Joey's classroom there is what is called a "25 Book Campaign" and each time students complete 25 books they are rewarded within the classroom as well as fro the librarian. Students' receive a new book from the librarian and their names are announced on the morning announcements. Within the classroom students are given a homework pass. During an interview with Joey I asked if this impacts his desire to read and he said, "…well, when you're at a harder reading level it takes longer to finish books so it seems like it takes forever to get to 25 books and really it's not a big deal to me to get a pencil or a homework pass, I don't know, if there were better prizes I would probably try harder." When it comes to verbal recognition Joey claimed on the questionnaire that he does not care to get recognition from the teacher, it doesn't matter to him to hear that he reads well.

Mr. Hilliard expressed in an interview that students really seem to respond to recognition when it involves something tangible. He said, "…I'm always giving my students verbal praise, though it doesn't seem noticed by them, when I mention computer time or a reward such as candy, food, or a toy, students seem to try harder." On the contrary he said "…while students will sometimes try harder by offering an incentive or reward I've come to find that students also try to cheat their way to the prize such as pretending they read something they did not." Mr. Hilliard mentioned that he likes to try and have a balance in his classroom, offering some rewards, but also simply holding students accountable for their reading with no reward except a job well done.

This seems to be successful during my observations in this room. During independent reading I noticed the majority of students engaged in reading. Mr. Hilliard

made a point of stopping by and talking to the ones who were not engaged in reading, asking about their book selections and other factors that could be effecting their enjoyment of the book. Mr. Hilliard also reads during this time to model his own enjoyment of reading. When this independent reading time is done he often shares with his class what he read about, shares predictions, and any connections he has made either to himself, other texts, or the world. The students seem to really enjoy this; Joey even raised his hand and asked, "Can I read that book when you're done Mr. Hilliard?"

Mr. Hilliard also has a bulletin board titled "Reading is 'cool'." When I asked him about this he said it is a whole class goal for reading; when the students complete a book they get to decorate an ice cream cone including the title of the book, author, and their name. Their ice cream cone then goes on the bulletin to be displayed; when the class finishes a total of 50 books they have an ice cream party in recognition of their achievement.

Emily noted on her questionnaire that she liked to get rewards when she accomplished a reading goal. In our interview I asked Emily if this was something that happened in class or even at home, as I did not notice anything during my observations, and she laughed and said, "…No way! We don't get anything for reading; we just have to do it*."* Emily expressed in both the interview and on her questionnaire that it's not important to her to hear her teacher said that she read well. She claimed, "I just read so that I can get a good grade, that is my recognition."

During my interview with Mr. Murphy I asked if he offered any form of recognition for students for reading accomplishments and he said that's not really something they do in intermediate grades. He claimed that students are getting ready to

be independent and active parts of society and they need to learn to be responsible for things and not always expect they are going to get something in return for doing it. I asked him if he thought the lack of recognition or reward played a part in the lower levels of motivation in intermediate students and he said "…as students get older they become more and more independent and have more options of things to do with their free time, reading doesn't hold the excitement it does when they are younger." In addition to that, he mentioned that if one thing serves as a motivation for intermediate students it is to obtain a good grade. This correlated with Emily's questionnaire response in which she claimed to read so that she can get a good grade and also that finishing every reading assignment is very important to her.

Compliance

Another theme that emerged in data analysis is compliance. Wigfield and Baker (1999) define compliance as "…reading to meet the expectations of others." Compliance can also refer to one's cooperation. The degrees to which the students demonstrated compliance during reading instruction differed. Not only did it differ between classrooms but also between activities within the classrooms as well.

For instance, during reading instruction in Emily's classroom I observed the students being more compliant when they were given a choice in their reading. In addition, I noticed more compliance when students were able to work in groups. During an interview with Emily I asked her about this and she stated that "…we read to meet the teacher's expectations, of course, but when we are given some choice or are able to work together we definitely work harder and put more into what we're doing." On Emily's questionnaire she noted that she reads because she has to. When I asked her about this

response she said she reads because of not only her teachers but because her parents expect her to get good grades. In my observations Emily seemed to demonstrate very compliant behavior; while she didn't always seem to be enjoying herself or to be invested in what she was doing, she was compliant. Joey demonstrated similar levels of compliance but also showed non-compliance at times. During reading instruction I observed Joey at his literacy center discussing what he was going to do that weekend rather than partner reading. This indicated his lower level of involvement in reading activities as well as non-compliance.

In the interview with Dora she explained how she "…really likes to hear my teacher say I read well and also it makes my parents happy and I want to do good so that they are happy." During classroom observations, Dora was always compliant. Dora consistently followed directions and did what was asked of her. In addition, during a read aloud Dora listened attentively and sat quietly.

 Involvement

Involvement is another theme that emerged. Involvement can be defined as "…the enjoyment experienced from reading certain kinds of literary or informational texts…" (Baker and Wigfield, 1999, p.455). More specifically, involvement refers to levels of intrinsic motivation, as the level in which students are involved in their reading tasks correlates with their levels of intrinsic motivation (Baker and Wigfield, 1999).

Joey demonstrated little involvement in reading. On his questionnaire he responded that he does not enjoy reading during his free time. In addition, he expressed that he does not like to talk to his friends and family about things he is reading. During

the interview with Joey he stated that reading is something he doesn't really like to do

unless he has to or there is nothing else at all to do.

Mr. Hilliard gave insight into his interpretations of involvement during our

interview. He claimed that support from home plays an important role in students' levels

of involvement. He holds an open house at the beginning of each year and provides

parents with resources in which they can work with their child on reading at home. In

addition, he allows parents to come into the classroom regularly to read with students or

have students read to them. Parents can also come in and sign books out to take home.

Mr. Hilliard claims that he allows parents to sign out books rather than students because

they are more likely to be returned. He has noticed that his higher level, more motivated

readers in the classroom have parents who come in and sign out books and volunteer to

read with students. "I understand parents have work schedules and it is tough to come in

to the classroom during the day, so I offer to help families locate the nearest library and

get library cards, as well as stay after school on Wednesdays so that parents can come in

later after school hours and sign out books." According to Mr. Hilliard, if reading and

literacy are a part of home lives as well as classroom lives, students will tend to be more

motivated and successful readers. He made sure to note that while this is a trend he

noticed, "…it is surely not the only factor involved with students' motivation to read."

Dora demonstrated greater levels of involvement than the other participants. On

her questionnaire Dora claimed that she enjoys reading during her free time. In addition,

she claimed that she reads because it is something that she likes to do. During

observations Dora seemed very eager to work at center during workshop time. Dora

continuously participated during reading lessons and even tried to keep her peers on task

with things such as, "*Shhh*" when they were talking during a story. When I asked Mrs.

Saba about Dora's involvement, she claimed that Dora is a very involved reader; she will

even ask to read with the teacher during free time or pick out a book and read on her own.

For show and tell Dora brought in something she made in Reading Adventure Land at

Strong Museum of Play. She is very knowledgeable about books and different genres

due to "…exposure to literacy events at home in addition to in the classroom."

Emily did not demonstrate great levels of involvement. On her questionnaire she

claimed to only read because she has to and that she does not enjoy reading during her

free time. She claimed to read about hobbies and interests to learn more about them.

Emily stated, "…I guess I don't mind reading when I get to pick what I'm reading about,

like gymnastics or cheerleading or something, but I would still rather be doing something

else." Her questionnaire also showed that reading is not something she likes to do.

During my observations I noticed that Emily seemed more involved when she worked

and discussed with peers. When she worked independently she seemed more dis-

engaged; she would ask to use the bathroom, doodle, and rush through her assignments.

Reasons for Reading

The final theme involves the purposes or reasons children have for reading. The

dimensions in this theme "comprise several constructs from the motivation field,

including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, achievement goal orientations, and

achievement values" (Baker and Wigfield, 1999, p. 455). Again, intrinsic motivation

refers to one's own curiosity and interest in an activity rather than for extrinsic reasons

such as a reward or grade or incentive (Baker and Wigfield, 1999). Much information

was gathered in the data pertaining to students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivations to read, more specifically, their reasons for reading.

As an example, on Emily's questionnaire, she responded with a 4 (a lot like me) to the prompt "I read because I have to." When I asked Emily about this she said that if she didn't have to read for school or because her parents have her at home she probably wouldn't read. In addition, on her questionnaire she chose 4 (a lot like me) in response to "I read so I can get a good grade." I asked her to elaborate on this and she responded that she reads and does the best she can in English so that she gets a good grade because when she brings home a good report card and good grades she gets rewarded from her parents usually with shopping or something. Based on Emily's questionnaire it would seem that she is extrinsically motivated to read.

On the contrary, Dora gave herself a 1 (strongly disagree) on the questionnaire to the prompt "I read because I have to." She told me, "I don't read just because I have to, like my teacher and my mom don't have to make me read, I just really like to read." Based on this response, it seems that she reads simply because it is something she wants to do, which is an intrinsic reason for reading rather than extrinsic reason. While Dora had shown she was intrinsically motivated, she demonstrated signs of extrinsic motivation as well. Dora gave herself a 4 (a lot like me) for the prompt "I like to get rewards such as a toy when I accomplish a reading goal." She said sometimes she will get a new book from her parents or a sticker from the teacher and she likes that but that is not the only reason she reads. It appears that her reading for pleasure over powers the extrinsically motivated reasons for reading.

Joey seemed to fall in the middle of the two other students. While he showed some signs of intrinsic motivation, he also demonstrated signs of extrinsic motivation. On his questionnaire he rated the statement "I read because I have to" a 3 (a little like me). When I asked him what he meant by that he said his teachers and parents make him read when he otherwise would not. In response to "I like to get rewards such as a toy when I accomplish a reading goal*"* Joey said this is a little like him. He said that when they reach 25 books in their '25 Book Campaign' they can get prizes. Joey said that the statement "I read because it is something I like to do" was 2 (a little different from me). The preceding answers indicate that Joey is extrinsically motivated to read. However, Joey expressed that reading about his hobbies and interests to learn more about them is a lot like him. More specifically, he said "…when there is something I am really interested in like fishing I like to find books that are about that so I can learn more about it; I also like to read realistic books about animals or sports, things like that." These statements and responses demonstrate Joey's intrinsic motivation.

Implications:

The research and findings suggest several implications for me as a teacher. First, it is evident that there are many factors that motivate students to read. Whether a student is intrinsically or extrinsically motivated plays a key role in understanding what motivates them. Data from my research presented the differences in what motivates the students at different age levels and depending on their current level of motivation. Previously conducted research has shown that as students progress in school their level of motivation goes down. The data from my study confirmed this theory as Dora had a high level of motivation, Joey had an average level of motivation, and Emily had a low level

of motivation. What motivated these students varied as did their ages and levels of

motivation. While the first grade student, Dora, was very much still intrinsically

motivated to read and enjoyed reading; the fourth grade student, Joey, showed signs of

both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and the eighth grade student, Emily, was

extrinsically motivated. The key is to understand what factors motivate the students who

read primarily for an external reward or incentive, and also what motivates those students

who have an inherent desire to read and read because it brings them joy or pleasure.

First, the data from Dora's classroom showed that motivating students at this age

level requires allowing them choice and offering positive reinforcement and recognition.

Dora was identified as "highly motivated" and being intrinsically motivated to read. As

Dora's teacher explained in her interview, with such a student it is important to foster this

natural love for reading and to do so one must offer the student chances to share his/her

love for reading, such as reading to the class or sharing about a book he/she is reading.

Classroom observations also showed that giving students praise and positive

reinforcement for their reading achievements and or everyday reading habits fosters their

intrinsic motivation. In the student questionnaire it was evident that students like to hear

that they are doing a good job and that they are becoming a good reader. In addition, as a

teacher, it is important to share my own love and enthusiasm toward reading. To do this I

could share with students what I am reading at home as well as what the story is about.

When sharing my reading it is also important to model for the students how to make

connections between what we are reading and our own lives and/or other texts we have

read. Self-determination theory states that if students are surrounded by a sense of

relatedness and can clearly see that reading is valued as an everyday activity, then they

are more likely going to develop a strong interest in reading (Sweet, 1997). This strategy works even for students who are not intrinsically motivated to read.

With less motivated students, things such as rewards and incentives have shown to play an important role in motivating these students. Data showed that less motivated students are more extrinsically motivated to read than motivated students. Therefore, allowing students to set a reading goal for themselves and giving some form of recognition when this goal has been reached will encourage students to engage more in reading. On the student questionnaire, the student with low motivation said that being offered a reward would be something she would like and it would motivate her more to read. Some rewards have been shown to work better than others in fostering intrinsic motivation. Research showed that offering a reward such as a book fosters intrinsic motivation rather than offering a reward such as candy or a toy. Within the fourth grade classroom, students are given a new book each time they read 25 books; the classroom teacher stated that when this program was implemented the faculty saw a great rise in student's motivation to read and an increase in the number of books that students were reading.

Other motivational strategies that were shown to increase motivation during reading are group discussions and collaborations. In each of the classrooms that were observed students showed more engaged behaviors when they were allowed to collaborate and work with their peers. One student even commented during an interview that he/she is more engaged and works more efficiently when able to work with peers. Fullerton (2001), and Lapp and Fisher (2009) suggested that collaboration and socialization among students is essential in increasing students' reading motivation, as

students levels of enthusiasm and involvement in classroom activities greatly increased.

Allowing students to collaborate with one another helps them to learn from each other as

well. Hearing others' perspectives and ways of thinking broadens and deepens their

thinking. Sociocultural-historical theory also supports this idea and maintains that social

interaction among students is key and students' literacy skills are formed by such

experiences (Larson and Marsh, 2005). It is critical that I, as well as other teachers,

understand how much can be learned and acquired through students' collaboration with

peers.

Allowing students' choice in not only their reading but their reading activities is

important as well. In one classroom, when the same routine was followed for reading

each day, students seemed more disengaged and less motivated to read. In another

classroom where students were given choice in their reading and reading activities, they

seemed more eager to read and enthusiastic toward the reading activities. One way of

allowing choice is presenting students with projects and allowing them to choose how

they will show what they know, for example creating a brochure or a poster, performing a

reenactment or a song, writing a poem or a re-telling, creating a new book jacket for the

story.

Having time set aside in the day for independent reading is important as this is a

time when most often students are given a choice in what they read. Allowing students

access to different types of literature at this time is important as well. A well-rounded

library would include magazines, graphic novels, traditional novels, series books, digital

novels, and comics. Giving students these different choices has been shown to increase

their motivation to read. In addition, they are more likely to share their reading

experiences when they are sharing about a piece of literature that they chose.

Finally, considering all of the implications of my research, I am left with a few

unanswered questions. First, the literature showed how student's confidence is often

times lowered when they become more aware of themselves in relation to their

classmates. This lowered level of confidence is a factor that often times leads to lower

levels of motivation. How can we as teachers build readers' confidence? In addition, is

it evident from the research and literature that student's home literacies and literacy

experiences play a key role in their motivation as well. What are some additional ways in

which we can bridge the gap between school and home literacies/experiences?

Conclusion:

Students having a motivation to read is key to becoming a successful reader. The

factors that motivate students vary depending on the age level and other factors. As

teachers it is our job to work to foster the love of reading and intrinsic motivation over

time in order for our students to be successful. Students who have the desire to read more

often become or continue to be better readers than students who are not motivated to read

(Guthrie et al., 1999). Teachers must understand what motivates students at different

ages and do so within their classrooms. Incorporating instructional strategies that have

been shown to motivate students is where teachers can begin. Using interesting texts,

incorporating more hands-on activities, giving students specific goals to work toward,

offering rewards/incentives in particular situations, allowing students choices and more

control over their learning, and allowing students to participate and work in groups have

all been shown to aid in motivating students. Teachers must also offer students a

nurturing and supportive environment in which they can thrive. Without such an environment, instructional approaches are limited. It is a combination of instructional strategies and supportive, knowledgeable teachers that will help in motivating and instilling the love for learning in students.

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Appendix A: Student Questionnaire

Motivation Toward Reading Questionnaire

<u>Name</u>:
<u>Grade</u>:
<u>Date</u>:

<u>Directions:</u> I am interested in learning more about you as a reader. The sentences in this questionnaire describe how some students feel about reading. Read each sentence and decide whether it describes a person who is like you or different from you. There are no right or wrong answers.

The numbers each stand for the following:

Very different from me	A little different from me	A little like me	A lot like me
1	2	3	4

1. I like hard, challenging books.

    1   2   3   4

2. I am a good reader.

    1   2   3   4

3. I read because I have to.

    1   2   3   4

4. I do as little schoolwork as possible in reading.

    1   2   3   4

5. I like to get rewards such as a toy when I accomplish a reading goal.

    1   2   3   4

6. I read to learn new information about topics that interest me.

    1   2   3   4

7. Out of all the subjects in school, I am the best at reading.

    1   2   3   4

8. I like hearing the teacher say I read well.

    1   2   3   4

9. I often read to my brother, sister, friend, or relative.

    1   2   3   4

10. I enjoy reading during my free time.

    1   2   3   4

11. I read about my hobbies and interests to learn more about them.

    1   2   3   4

12. I read so that I can get a good grade.

    1   2   3   4

13. I like to talk to my friends and family about things I am reading.

    1   2   3   4

14. Finishing every reading assignment on time is very important to me.

    1   2   3   4

15. It is important to me to see my name on a list of good readers.

    1   2   3   4

16. If a book is interesting, I don't care how hard it is to read.

    1   2   3   4

17. I read because it is something that I like to do.

    1   2   3   4

18. I read because I know I will get a reward from my teacher or parents.

    1   2   3   4