

2011

Middle school students' reading motivation for a school summer reading program

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Abstract

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The methodology used for this study was quantitative research. An existing survey, the Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile, was adapted to fit the needs of this study and data was collected. The population was limited to 149 seventh grade students from Urbandale Middle School, in Urbandale, Iowa. Due to a small number of students returning parent permission slips, data was only collected from 20 students. Upon completion of the data analysis, the researcher found that more female than male students rated themselves as readers, students who rated themselves as readers are influenced by friends and families, and that these students rated activities such as book choice, teacher or teacher librarian help with book selection, and access to high interest materials as appealing, but did not rate having books read aloud or having book discussion as appealing.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS' READING MOTIVATION FOR A SCHOOL
SUMMER READING PROGRAM

A Graduate Research Paper
Submitted to the
Division of School Library Studies
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

By
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May 2011

This Research Paper by: Tricia Fleagle

Titled: Middle School Students' Reading Motivation for a School Summer Reading Program

has been approved as meeting the research requirement for the
Degree of Master of Arts.

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Closing school libraries during summer vacation creates a situation where students simply lose access or must look elsewhere for access to informational and educational materials and personal conversations regarding written texts. The purpose of this study was to investigate middle school students' reading habits and motivational reasons, expressed by students, for wanting to attend a school-sponsored summer reading program.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Justification

At the onset of *No Child Left Behind* legislation, Secretary of State Margaret Spellings (2006) stated, “One of the cornerstones of *No Child Left Behind* is teaching children to read. School libraries play a critical role by providing children with books and resources so that they can improve their reading skills and achieve at high levels” (Improving Achievement through School Libraries, 2006, para. 1). Since Iowa’s school curriculum incorporates 21st century skills, administrators, teachers, parents, and students look to teacher librarians to be teachers of information skills and literacy by leading students to appropriate books, modeling reading behavior and strategies, talking about books, offering a wide selection of books, and knowing a reader’s ability (Cart, 2007).

Although Iowa currently requires schools to have a licensed teacher librarian in each district and requires schools to actively teach reading, Iowa was one of four states which declined from 2008 to 2009 in fourth grade reading scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress tests (Associated Press, 2010). With new declines in reading scores, Small and Snyder (2009) point out the need for teacher-librarians and the school library in each district to be accessible to students; “Elementary students in schools with certified school librarians are more likely to have higher English and language arts (ELA) scores than those in schools with noncertified school librarians” (p. 1). As stated in Information Power (AASL & AECT, 1998), learning has to take precedence over all other hindrances like class schedules or library hours within the library. Moreover, Dickinson et al. (2008) states, “When school library media centers are

closed to lower-income children, the differences in access to print resources may have significant implications for children's early literacy development" (para. 9). It is important for the teacher-librarian and school library to be accessible throughout the year to connect students to that one positive experience that can begin to create readers (Kim & Krashen, 2000) or "engage them in conversations that let them know there are riches to be found there, intellectual and emotional journeys worth taking" (Buzzeo, 2007, p. 18).

Although libraries and teacher-librarians dedicate themselves to students and providing resources during the year, many Iowa school libraries close during the summer months. Students' access to reading material is then limited to public libraries, bookstores, or in-home resources depending on household income (Mraz & Rasinski, 2007). For many higher and middle-class students, access to information through books or the computer is readily available with parent or program support to make the needed reading gains. In contrast, lower income students have less access to a computer, choose reading material with less print, and more often lack the guidance to understand and gather the information they read. For instance, Celano and Neuman (2008) found, "book availability for middle-class children was about 12 books per child; in poor neighborhoods, about one book was available for every 355 children" (p. 258). For many of these lower socio-economic students, the school library would provide the much-needed resources and support during the summer to help them grow as readers and eventually increase reading scores.

Due to the lack of resources and explicit teaching of reading during the summer, some studies have suggested "80% of the achievement difference between high-income and low-income students may be attributable to summer reading loss" (Mraz & Rasinski,

2007, p. 785). Not only are low-income students experiencing reading loss, but Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson (2001) discuss students as a whole experiencing something they call the *faucet theory*. They have discovered that equal student opportunities for educational material is turned on during the year creating equitable learning gains, but “when school is not in session during the extended June to August summer recess, the school resource faucet is ‘turned off,’ creating inequalities in educational opportunity and outcomes” (Kim, 2004, p. 169). As a result of the *faucet theory*, middle-class students experience a gain in reading scores over summer vacation and low-income students experience a loss, specifically a three-month discrepancy (Helf, Konrad, & Algozzine, 2008). No matter the socio economic status, time spent reading is still one of the most important factors in creating better reading scores. For Iowa libraries, teacher-librarians, and administrators creating opportunities to access resources throughout the twelve-month calendar, preventing the *faucet theory* effect, and giving students a chance to read might be the best predictors of improved reading scores.

Deficiencies

Within the various studies researched and quoted above, many studies focused on the who, what, why, and effects of educational loss over the summer, but not in relation to a school-sponsored reading program. Other studies concerning school reading programs examined the benefits of reading in relation to summer school programs, but very few considered the benefits of a student-choice summer reading program. Finally, no studies have been found concerning what students would like to see in a school-sponsored reading program.

Significance

This study will contribute to the research by focusing on middle school students' preferences to motivate reading participation within a student-choice summer reading program in Iowa. It is important to consider what motivates students to read within the school boundaries, and how schools can attempt to influence motivation in a positive manner.

Audience

The results of this study may benefit administrators and teacher librarians by considering the impact of a school library on middle school students' habits and attitudes toward reading and developing ways to increase test scores even during summer.

Problem Statement

Closing school libraries during summer vacation creates a situation where students simply lose access or must look elsewhere for access to informational and educational materials and personal conversations regarding written texts.

Purpose Statement

This study investigates middle school students' reading habits and motivation, expressed by students, for wanting to attend a school-sponsored summer reading program.

Hypotheses

1. More female than male students will rate themselves as Readers.
2. Middle school students that rate themselves as readers will be more likely to indicate that their family and friends positively influence their motivation to read.
3. The majority of students will check the following reading options as important to a summer reading program: book groups, teacher read aloud, choosing their own high-interest reading material, being given time to read, and having an enthusiastic educator connect books to their personalities and opinions.

Definitions

Summer Reading Loss – “Decline in children’s reading development that can occur during summer vacation times when children are away from the classroom and not participating in formal literacy programs” (Mraz & Rasinski, 2007, p. 784).

Low-Income Students – Students who qualify and receive free or reduced-price lunch during the traditional school year (Edmonds, O’Donoghue, Spano, & Algozzine, 2009).

Middle-Class Students – Students that do not qualify for free or reduced-price lunch during the traditional school year.

Faucet Theory – The theory which suggests that students make similar learning gains when educational materials are accessible, but when materials are not accessible during the summer months inequalities are created between students (Kim, 2004).

Free Voluntary Reading (FVR) – “Extensive reading, whereby students read independently and there is minimal accountability” (Lu & Gordon, 2008, p. 43).

Free Choice – Students choosing texts based on personal interest (Lu, 2009).

Reading Program – Students read various texts and complete a short writing activity in some format (Lu & Gordon, 2007).

Assumptions

1. Students will know what internally motivates them to read.
2. Students will possess ideas of what they would like to see within a reading program.

Limitations

This research is limited to 30 middle school students in a major city of Iowa. The research will not show results or views outside this Iowa community.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study is to investigate motivating factors which could encourage students to participate in a school sponsored summer library program. The following literature review classifies previous research into three separate, but related categories: the effect of summer vacation on students' reading habits, the benefits of school sponsored summer reading programs, and motivational reading techniques to encourage independent reading. All three areas are important to consider when considering the importance of a school sponsored summer library program.

Summer Vacation's Effect

Many studies have shed light on the impact summer vacation has on students' reading skills, especially minority and low-income students. Celano and Neuman (2008) researched the impact summer vacation had on increasing the knowledge gap between rich and poor children. Knowing that students, no matter the economical status, access public library materials, the researchers considered the way in which students of different economical classes use information resources. Within four different public libraries that serve both middle and low-income communities, almost 22,000 children were served with services ranging from book check-out to computer use to adult support in using and accessing library resources. The study used informal observations and interviews to gather data and time on-task behavior with a resource (Celano & Neuman, 2008).

During library observations between the months of June and August, 118 low-income children used the library at a more frequent pace and spent 2,529 total minutes using library materials, where 91 middle-income children spent 2,376 total minutes using

library resources such as magazines or computers (Celano & Neuman, 2008). As a result, low-income students used their library resources just as much if not more than middle-income children to help increase or sustain their knowledge over the summer.

However, use of materials by low-income students was not as effective as use by middle-income children. During observation at the four different libraries, low-income children chose material that provided less information and contained fewer words than middle-class children. Also, they only spent a total of 393 minutes reading within the library confines as compared to the 779 total minutes middle-class children concentrated on reading. Within the realm of adolescents, low-income students read only 15% of the time and middle-income students read 33% of their library time, which exposed them to fewer words and fewer texts. In regard to computer use, 84% of all library use by low-income children ages preschool through 16 was spent on the computer for entertainment purposes like games or social networking sites (Celano & Neuman, 2008). In comparison, middle-income children used only 28% of the entire library time on the computer.

Having adult support within the library to help focus, navigate resources, and expose children to print was the most common barrier for low-income children and the most helpful for middle-class children. Many low-income children came with friends or siblings who spent little time focusing on the child or struggled themselves in reading or using the library materials beneficially. Overall, low-income students received less than three minutes with an adult in connection to books and less than one minute with an adult on computers (Celano & Neuman, 2008). Instead, the children were observed struggling with books and computer programs on their own and finally giving up. Observations then

showed middle-income children spending up to seven minutes with an adult reading a book or 15 minutes playing educational programs or games on the computers with an adult assisting.

Overall, Celano & Neuman (2008) found that children's use of materials over the summer months without proper supervision can lead to the growing knowledge gap between low-income and middle-income students. With similar access to educational resources at a library, children need to be guided in how to access and use library resources to their benefit to make sure they can limit or decrease the growth in the knowledge achievement gap.

This study showed the effect summer vacation has on students using reading and library materials from different backgrounds and home environments. To offer guidance in closing the achievement gap, student benefits during a summer reading program need to be considered.

Summer Reading Programs

Across the nation, students have access to public library summer reading programs, which encourage students to spend time reading during the summer. Kim (2007) examined the effects a voluntary summer reading intervention program can have on reading achievement the coming year. The participants included 331 multi-ethnic and multi-economical students in grades 1-5. According to Kim (2007), "I examined the effects of a voluntary reading intervention during summer vacation when children are less likely to read on their own relative to the school year when they receive formal reading instruction and are engaged in various forms of reading practice in their classrooms" (p.

506). The purpose was to decide if a summer reading program with two groups, a control and treatment group, would improve students' reading scores for the following year.

During the study, 52 students moved during the summer, 138 students comprised the treatment group, and 141 students completed the control group. To help collect data, students completed a pretest of the SAT10 that charted their total reading, ERAS that measured attitude toward reading, and a reading interest survey. For a posttest, students were asked to complete a survey created by Kim to chart their reading behaviors over the summer months. After the data was collected, the students were sent 10 books matching their reading interests to read over the summer vacation. In comparison, the treatment group received the books with reading postcards from the teacher throughout the summer and a letter to a parent explaining the program, and the control group received the books, parent letter, and postcards after they had returned to school.

The results showed the treatment group read more during the summer and participated more in reading activities than their counterpart. Besides reading more, students were also exposed to various book choices they might not have picked up in the summer without adult or friend guidance. Yet, the treatment group did no better on a reading achievement test than the control group. In conclusion, Kim (2007) found that providing materials helped encourage students to read more during the summer months, but that students need more direct reading guidance during the summer to increase reading scores.

As Kim (2007) discovered direct access and encouragement garner more reading, a similar study by Lu and Gordon (2008) concentrated on how an Internet-based school summer reading program for high school students could encourage reading. The research

study resulted when Barnstable High School (BHS) decided to contradict the mold of a traditional high school summer reading program, where students choose three to four books from a grade level list of classics and write a written report to show their understanding. Instead, BHS decided to implement a web-based, free choice summer reading program. Within the program, students chose books to read from 12 annotated, themed lists and chose literature projects from 40 different options. In addition to free choice, the new summer program also resulted in a change from paper to the Internet. Once online, students had access to all the lists with colorful graphics, but in addition, the pages replicated popular bookstore sites with book cover images and annotations to catch students' attention and link them to other sources of reading opportunity.

As the new program began, Lu and Gordon (2008) focused on studying two questions. The two questions considered the benefits from this program and more importantly the effect of free choice on students' reading.

The study comprised 288 students and eleven English teachers with three different ability groups of readers. After receiving questionnaires, 283 student responses were eligible, and 11 English teachers were interviewed with regard to perception and effectiveness of the new reading program (Lu & Gordon, 2008). The results were attained using quantitative methods in the student survey and qualitative methods when interviewing teachers.

During the following school year, students reported reading 922 books or three books per person during the summer (Lu & Gordon, 2008). On average, females read more than boys, and the higher the grade level the more books were read. Also, 56% of the students perceived the new lists as an improvement with more variety of choice.

However, the low-achieving readers reported being overwhelmed by the number of lists and choices and not having enough materials related to personal interests.

Finally, teachers saw mixed results with more projects being turned in, but not all showing the same quality of effort. All teachers did not agree on permitting students to choose from such a wide range of literature choices, and they raised the concern of low-readers' attitudes toward the program. Ultimately, they did agree that giving choices could in the future create more independent and creative thinkers of their high school students.

Even with teacher concerns, students reported they read more this summer than the last and "commented that this summer reading experience was different and fun because of the variety of books and project choices and that they felt more enthusiastic about summer reading because they found the books they chose interesting" (Lu & Gordon, 2008, pp. 50-51). Lu and Gordon discovered that giving most students more choice resulted in students enjoying reading and taking advantage of a summer reading program.

Building on the previous study, Gordon and Lu (2008) wanted to determine whether standardized reading tests could or could not fully measure low-achieving students' personal connections and experiences with reading a book. The study focused on low-achieving students' participation and behavior within the Barnstable High School summer reading program. Of the 70 students, only 41% reported participating in the summer reading program. They attempted to discover the answers to questions regarding behaviors, selection, attitude, and perceptions toward reading for low-achieving students who refused or mildly participated in the summer reading program.

To assess the low-achieving students, Gordon and Lu (2008) randomly chose seven homogeneously grouped, low-achieving English classes, which encompassed students from grades 9-12. Each student comprised a focus group that responded to discussions and surveys with both closed and open-ended questions. Overall, the questions focused on reading behavior, summer reading habits, reading achievement, and using alternate media by reading.

From the data, Gordon and Lu (2008) discovered that low-achieving students actually read, on average, one more book than the previous summer and actively engaged in book discussions. Not only did they participate, but animatedly discussed their books and personal connections to the material. The students also showed through their discussions the power of self-selection and the need for realistic book choices in helping to guide behavior and making personal connections during reading.

Besides reading more books, students also reported often reading alternative media like magazines or newspaper articles. Although they did not consider it a form of reading, many low-achieving students demonstrated reading daily in a more non-traditional format. The low-achieving students show that they are not always struggling readers, but need to be motivated in a more personal way to connect to literature and enjoy the experience of reading.

Both Kim (2007) and Lu and Gordon (2008) agreed that summer reading programs increase students' participation and exposure to reading materials during the summer. Although the end results were mixed, students gained more direct opportunity to practice their reading craft with adult guidance than experiencing the summer months by themselves.

Reading Motivation

As students and schools are increasingly pressured to read proficiently on standardized tests and within the workforce, understanding what motivates students to become better, more proficient readers will become increasingly important within school. When assessing the loss of student reading motivation, educators notice students losing interest with reading and falling behind on curriculum and expectations (Kelley & Decker, 2009) To offer new connections to the study of student motivation, results focused on the effect student motivation has on standardized tests, but more specifically differences in reading motivation between grades and connecting a decline in student achievement with a loss of reading motivation (Kelley & Decker, 2009).

Within the study, participants lived in Central Florida and attended a suburban middle school with grades 6, 7, and 8. 1080 students completed the Motivation to Read Profile, which shows a reader's self-concept and view towards the value of reading. They also completed conversational interviews and another survey assessing their at-home reading behavior. After reviewing the data, Kelley and Decker (2009) found a large difference in motivation to read between grades and genders. The data showed females possess a higher inclination toward reading motivation, and each grade scored higher than their ladder.

Besides documenting the differences between students, the data connected reading motivation to students' self-concepts and value placed on reading. Females had a higher reading self-concept and tended to share their reading experiences more often than their male counterparts, which increases their openness to reading motivation and effectiveness within reading. Data also revealed that as students increased in grade, their

value for reading decreased. More students in eighth grade reported “‘never’ or ‘almost never’” reading outside of school as compared to sixth and seventh grade students (Kelley & Decker, 2009, p. 476). Although direct comparisons of student motivational scores and standardized tests scores were not completed, the decline of at-home reading in the higher grades correlated to the higher number of students scoring less than proficient on the standardized state assessment. As researchers use data to explain a connection between reading motivation and results on standardized tests, educators need to consider the loss of reading achievement and interest within the higher middle school grades to begin to encourage readers across all levels.

When students begin elementary school, reading is a major subject practiced and encouraged by teachers. Many elementary students possess an enthusiastic view, but by adolescence, students view reading as a burdensome task. In turn, adolescents stop practicing reading with enthusiasm and determination, and more students leave school with basic levels of understanding and comprehension (Strommen & Mates, 2004). Strommen and Mates focused on behaviors or beliefs that created a love for reading in older children and teens.

To acquire research participants, a ten-page questionnaire was administered to sixth graders and ninth graders in a suburban middle school in the northeast United States. Within the questionnaire, a literacy index was included to identify student reading levels and to help separate students into readers and non-readers. The 12 readers considered reading an enjoyable recreational activity both in and outside of school, while the 139 non-readers did not love reading. After being identified, nine readers and 12

random non-readers completed interviews that focused on their reading behavior (Strommen & Mates, 2004).

According to the one-on-one interviews, non-readers did not consider reading important to their families and lacked support, while readers viewed reading as pleasurable from observing family members and engaging in book conversations with both their family and friends. For example, a student said, “I read books and then tell her [her mother], and she reads my books. She tells me stories of her books and I read hers. So we go back and forth. Sometimes I share stories with my friends” (Strommen & Mates, 2004, p. 190). According to the research, being active in a reading community and having parental support encouraged them to become a reader and continue to enjoy the process.

Another important difference between readers and non-readers was their view of reading. Readers were intrinsically motivated to read by viewing reading as a way to activate their imagination and increase their understanding. On the other hand, non-readers were extrinsically motivated to read by viewing reading as a purposeful way to increase their reading or vocabulary skills. In not being intrinsically motivated, non-readers became bogged down in the details and length of time it took to read a book.

Readers showed the love of reading begins in the home and then is fostered through interactions and school. Although it is not easy to change perceptions, teachers and schools need to understand the creation of a reader and the thinking behind the negative perceptions to ultimately combat and change students’ reading attitudes.

Choice is one of the driving forces which signify an end to childhood and a journey into adulthood. While many students would love to choose their educational

course, Mercurio (2005) found that choice is most often deprived from students within school, especially in relation to the books they read. Within many students, the lack of choice can create negative experiences from not knowing how to choose an appropriate book to not believing a book can be interesting (Mercurio, 2005). To combat negative student reactions, a suburban Connecticut middle school focused on creating a reading class that attempted to create lifelong readers by allowing self-selection of reading materials.

The purposes of Mercurio's (2005) study was to first document students' reactions and engagement to the program, and then observe the impact self-selection can have on students' enjoyment of reading. The study used methodological triangulation of surveys, interviews, and field notes as the qualitative method of data collection and then focused on nine student's opinions and ideas in regard to reading motivation.

Participants in this study were 108 seventh grade students who attended a ninety minute block reading class in addition to a language arts block three times a week. Within the ninety minutes, students chose a free reading book to read for one third of the period and then participated in mini-lessons, discussions, or projects for the rest of the period (Mercurio, 2005). Besides reading, students completed weekly discussion journals between themselves and the teacher discussing issues within the book, asking questions, or reflecting on topics and personal feelings.

Student responses reinforced positive themes across the self-selection reading program of engaging in self-reflection, learning how to choose a book, and naturally using literary elements while understanding reading (Mercurio, 2005). More importantly, students found they could really enjoy a good book and spend more time reading than the

required amount. When allowing students to choose their reading material and providing reading opportunities, students took an interest in reading by sharing books with friends, participating in reading time outside of school, and finally showed a positive shift in reading attitudes from negative to neutral and neutral to positive. By allowing students to actively read and choose students became involved in the reading process and learned to become active members of a quality reading community.

In addition to understanding student reading motivation, knowing “how to increase students’ motivation to read has long been a priority in what teachers want to know” (Pitcher, Albright, & DeLaney, 2007, p. 378). Reading motivation is a primary way to entice a student to read and want to keep reading, even after leaving school. However, many school activities or practices discourage student reading motivation due to a lack of consideration of what motivates adolescents to read (Pitcher et al., 2007).

In their study, Pitcher et al. (2007) assessed adolescents’ motivation to read by considering student addressed motivational reading factors and found ways to implement them into secondary classrooms. The study incorporated eight different school sites that spanned all regions of the United States and the Caribbean. Overall, 384 adolescents grades 6-12 completed the Adapted Motivation to Read Profile (AMRP) survey and 100 students were separately interviewed during the study. Within the results, the students’ own words were most often used to emphasize the validity of results.

As the study implemented both qualitative and quantitative analysis, the researchers changed the AMRP from an elementary reader approach to a more teen friendly approach that encompassed 20 open-ended questions concerning reading attitude, behavior, experiences, and motivations. These questions were asked in an

interview format and all answers were subject to follow-up questions for more detail or depth of understanding. Also, a 20-question survey was administered to all the students to understand their self-concept as a reader.

The results showed that students often read in different ways and formats throughout the school day and at home. They might not always understand their participating in the act of reading, but it is readily apparent from the results that the act of reading is not a separate entity from life tasks. Likewise, the students showed an appreciation for a multi-faceted reading approach within school that incorporated literature circles to silent sustained reading to reading newspapers and magazines (Pitcher et al., 2007). The students expressed enthusiasm for the discussions that ensued during literature circles and enjoyed recommending interesting material read during silent sustained reading to friends and family members.

Moreover, students also addressed the need for teachers to show enthusiasm for reading and books. It was not enough for them to have assigned reading, but they wanted teachers to recommend books and authors that they thought each individual student might enjoy (Pitcher et al., 2007). In their eyes, teachers needed to take an active role in being an active member of their reading community that models positive reading behavior and comprehension strategies, discusses book ideas, and helps select engaging material for whole class read time. Overall, students' motivations were increasingly differentiated, but each student knew what motivational tactics worked and was willing to cooperate when used within the classroom.

Comparable to Pitcher et al. (2007), Ivy and Broaddus (2001) were also curious about what motivated middle school students to read, especially when unclear messages

and various teaching techniques were used in reading classrooms across the United States. Their purpose was to understand reading motivations of middle school students in relation to important reading instruction and comparison of classrooms and students across the United States. Over 1700 sixth grade students from an urban and rural area completed a survey of closed and open-ended questions. After the results were tallied, 31 students then engaged in follow-up interviews for deeper understanding (Ivy & Broaddus, 2001). To review and record the students' answers, researchers used individual content analysis.

The results reviewed what students valued, what motivated them, and how the different classrooms compared. According to students, having free reading time and teachers reading aloud during class were the most enjoyable activities. Within those times, students described the importance of being able to choose high-interest material and practicing the act of reading for enjoyment by themselves or watching and listening to a teacher. Within the time teachers read aloud, the teacher considered the students' interests and displayed enthusiasm for reading to help encourage students to enjoy the reading time and to be encouraged within their own books.

Finally, Ivy and Broaddus (2001) found that middle school reading classrooms were similar in many aspects from not providing students interesting reading material to giving students free reading time. The results showed classroom libraries had trouble encouraging students through selection and also had trouble making free reading time a continuous priority during class. Considering these results, Ivy and Broaddus (2001) illustrated adolescents' motivation to read, even though reading classes may be holding students back from being totally engaged.

Since Ivy and Broaddus (2001) found classrooms as a deterrent to reading motivation, school libraries can also provide a positive classroom to encourage and motivate students to read. Small, Shanahan, and Stasak (2010) focused on student achievement and motivation influenced by New York's school libraries. Qualitative research of focus groups and interviews within 10 various sized schools discussed the libraries' effects with school personnel, parents, and students. Also, two other schools were selected through ethnographic research methods to be observed and documented within a 10-week process (Small et al., 2010).

The findings indicated that school librarians had an impact on student learning by methods like helping students find classroom materials or influencing students understanding of quality information sources found on the Internet. Besides information skills, librarians impacted students' reading motivation by providing book reviews by fellow students, assisting students in choosing reading material, and providing a positive environment committed to fostering an appreciation for literature and information skills. A student commented saying, "[My librarian] always introduces me to great books because she knows about me and she knows what I like. She recommends good books for me and then I get lots of reading practice. That makes me a good reader" (Small et al., 2010, p. 7). Besides classroom teachers, librarians have the opportunity to influence students' reading skills and motivations by creating a positive environment and offering their assistance to all students throughout the day.

Summary

Past studies inform conclusions concerning summer reading programs, students' academic growth during the summer, and reading motivation to challenge old ideas and

provide examples for new ideas within the education field. For example, when considering summer education Celano and Neuman (2008) concluded students from lower-income households have a much lower success rate in continuing or sustaining academic growth over the summer months. These students lack the resources available to middle-income students and the supervision to guide them in understanding materials or benefits that promote academic achievement. In accordance, Kim (2008) studied a high school summer reading program and found that reading occurred more with access to materials, but the students needed more direct reading guidance to help increase student reading scores.

Additional research related to non-traditional summer reading programs and student reading motivation focused on students' reactions and produced results toward the act of reading. The results from these studies showed students enjoyed picking their own reading material and were more interested in a reading program when they had ownership to make decisions for themselves. Besides ownership, the studies also concluded that students were looking for high-interest reading material they could connect to and peers around them that encouraged the act or wanted to encourage the act of reading.

Reading motivation is a complicated idea with many variables both librarians and teachers need to consider when encouraging students to read. The ideas found in this literature review will be used in the development of a reading interest survey to guide school libraries' possible summer reading programs.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

During summer break, many school libraries close their doors and force students to lose direct access to informational and educational resources and book discussions. Instead of experiencing comfortable, well-known settings, students must search elsewhere for access to materials and personal book discussions with friends and adults. This study quantitatively investigated middle school students' reading habits and motivational reasons for wanting to attend a school library sponsored summer reading program.

Hypotheses

1. More female than male students will rate themselves as readers.
2. Middle school students that rate themselves as readers will be more likely to indicate that their family and friends positively influence their motivation to read.
3. The majority of students will check the following reading options as important to a summer reading program: book groups, teacher read aloud, choosing their own high-interest reading material, being given time to read, and having an enthusiastic educator connect books to their personalities and opinions.

Research Design

This study utilized the survey methodology to gather a large number of middle school student responses. Particularly, the study used a teacher administered paper survey of closed-ended questions that seventh grade students would be able to finish in ten minutes or less. The 24 questions included students' responses regarding their current reading habits and motivational thoughts and ideas in relation to reading. The study

employed survey methodology due to time constraints within the classroom and student attention level, especially for non-readers. Also, the method allowed for a greater number of responses across different levels of readers and students (Creswell, 2008). This is especially important when surveying students' attitudes toward a summer reading program.

Justification

Since the research took place in a regular language arts classroom in seventh grade, students' intelligence and maturity levels greatly varied to include students receiving services in special education to English Language Learners (ELL) to Talented and Gifted (TAG) students. To account for all the various differences in ability and reading levels, the survey methodology is the most appropriate to garner quick reliable results from a large, diverse population. Also, the closed ended questions within the survey were designed to minimize difficulty and response time for all seventh grade students. Finally, the survey methodology required the least amount of time from the classroom schedule. It is the least intrusive for the language arts teacher and allows for the least amount of interruptions and chance for off-task behavior.

Within two other studies considering student motivation to read, Kelley and Decker (2009) and Pitcher et al. (2007) surveyed middle school students and specifically focused on student perceptions and motivations to read. Similarly, this research study focused on reading motivation, but more importantly concentrated on motivating tactics students would like to experience in a reading program. By focusing on a specific population of seventh grade students, the survey methodology displayed a larger sample population's trends within a certain grade in regards to reading and reading

programming. Before this study, little to no quantitative research focused on middle school students' motivations for wanting to attend a school library summer reading program. Rather, much of the research summarized in the review of literature focused mainly on student reading motivation. This research study is beneficial in helping school librarians, teachers, and administrators guide reading activities and create a summer reading program appealing to middle school students and to serve as one technique to help fight summer achievement loss across the student population. Moreover, the survey methodology allowed the researcher to gather numerical data on the sample population and turn it into a quick reference tool for librarians and teachers to help gauge student thinking and classroom activities.

Population

The research population was limited to a sample of seventh grade language arts students within Urbandale Middle School in Urbandale, Iowa. The survey was given to participating students in three separate language arts block classes that comprise a total of 149 seventh grades students; 20 of these students participated, including 8 females and 12 males. These three blocks of classes comprised proportionally more English Language Learners (ELL) than other seventh grade blocks due to a school scheduling and personnel constraint that requires ELL students to be grouped in classes to accommodate the ESL teacher's schedule in co-teaching in these students' classrooms. Special Education students, Talented and Gifted students, and non-identified students were also included in this survey sample.

Data Collection

The Reading Motivation Survey (Appendix A) was adapted from the Motivation to Read Profile by Kelley and Decker (2009), which was originally adapted from the Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile created by Gambrell et al. (1996). The questions correlated with the research questions and hypotheses and supported this research's problem and purpose. Several of the questions were directly from the previous Motivation to Read Profile and several were new to the profile based on motivations discussed in previous research in the review of literature for this study.

To ensure the questions were clear and concise, this survey was reviewed by another seventh grade Language Arts teacher and ESL teacher to ensure that any vocabulary or questions that could be a hindrance were removed or rewritten. Also, a sample survey was given to a seventh grade student not affiliated with any students from Urbandale Middle School in order to estimate the survey time requirement. The survey took this student no more than 10 minutes to complete. The survey required students to circle the answer that best fits their habits and perceptions toward reading, thus eliminating any problems with the skill of handwriting. This survey was administered to all students in three language arts blocks as a regular part of this researcher's work. This researcher is a language arts teacher at Urbandale Middle School, however no students in this researcher's classes completed the survey. All students in the other language arts teacher's sections were invited to participate using the consent forms approved by the University of Northern Iowa Institutional Research Board. Although each survey required the student's name in order to correlate usable surveys with students with permission forms, the survey results were kept in a locked cabinet that only the researcher had access

to and were shredded after the study.

Survey questions one through eight gathered information on the participant and his or her reading behaviors and perceptions. Questions three through eight especially focused on their experiences in regards to reading and what their reading behaviors were outside of school. These questions related to Kelley and Decker's (2009) and Pitcher et al.'s (2007) findings that students' past experiences and thinking affect their enthusiasm toward the act of reading. The results also helped determine the validity of hypothesis number one by allowing the researcher to compare the results of males to females. Understanding the type of reader may help educators begin to decipher students' thoughts and feelings toward reading and those negative feelings educators might need to combat in order to create positive feelings and perceptions.

In addition to reader habits, questions 9 through 17 asked students about their motivation to read. These questions attempted to explain why students internally decide to read or not read and how reading is portrayed within friendships and family. It seems especially important to understand reading in regards to relationships, since Pitcher et al. (2007) found that readers had a supportive reading environment with book discussions, read time, and purposeful library visits. On the other hand, data showed non-readers lacked a supportive climate of family and friends that encouraged the act of reading throughout their life. These questions related to hypothesis number two in helping to understand internal motivations students possess.

Finally, the last seven questions were related to hypothesis number three. They were designed to gather data on what students saw as positive methods to motivate their reading. These questions were comprised from data gathered from past studies listed in

the review of literature, especially from Pitcher et al.'s (2007) findings discussing what students want from educators to help in their motivation to read. Through these questions, students will show what methods could encourage them to read and, at times, how often those methods should be employed within a reading program. Although these results were not solely applicable to a school library summer reading program, a teacher librarian could use the data to design a student-guided program that encourages non-required reading during the summer.

Procedures

Data collection began with the creation and testing of the Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile survey. Once the survey was approved and "Protecting Human Research Participants" was completed, the next step was gaining approval from the Human Participants Review Committee to be able to use human subjects. To do this, the researcher gathered the appropriate letter of approval from the coordinating school principal and completed the standard application required by the University of Northern Iowa's Human Participants Review Committee. Both of these documents were also submitted with a parent permission form, a student permission form, and a cover letter introducing the researcher to students and parents.

After receiving approval from the Human Participants Review Committee to conduct the survey on human participants, the researcher sent home directly a cover letter and parent permission form to 149 Urbandale households that included a seventh grade student in Mrs. Nelson and Mr. McConnell's language arts classroom. The student was then to return the parent permission form to one of the teachers and in return, sign a consent form giving their permission to take the survey. In the two week time period

parents and students had to return the form, an announcement was given each day to each section of language arts by Mr. McConnell (see Appendix B). By the permission slip return date, only 22 permission slips had been gathered from 149 students. Once the permission forms were gathered and signed by both parent and student, Mrs. Nelson, 7th grade language arts teacher, distributed copies of the survey to students during their daily choice time.

Before distributing the surveys, a short script (Appendix C) was provided by the researcher and read by Mrs. Nelson explaining the purpose of the survey and the data the researcher was trying to gather in the area of reading habits and motivation. The script was written so seventh grade students would understand their rights in regards to consenting to the survey and also why they were being asked to complete this multiple choice survey as easily as possible. Before consenting to the survey, students were informed that they could stop taking the survey at any time, but to also be as honest and thoughtful in their response as possible. For the students that participated, they were asked to complete the survey immediately after it was distributed. No surveys were taken outside the classroom to be returned at a later date. Of the 22 participants with parent permission, 20 students completed the survey and were considered usable data for this research project.

Once the students were finished, Mrs. Nelson and Mr. McConnell gathered the surveys with the Informed Assent form from the students and separated them into pairs based on each student. Data from the surveys were then entered into a spreadsheet by the researcher. The data was then sorted and analyzed by gender and total participation. Finally, the researcher will store the completed surveys with the participants' responses

for an additional three years after the research study is completed.

Data Analysis

All data were analyzed according to the main categories identified in the review of literature including summer reading loss, summer reading programs, and reading motivation. The data were also organized by the hypotheses. Besides basing the information on past research, all data were displayed in frequency tables for each question or section of survey questions. Once the surveys were collected and information tallied, comparisons were made between genders.

Data to help understand students' reading behaviors was based on questions two through eight and compiled into a table charting the frequencies of answers. Those answers were then inputted into a comparison table between the different genders.

Data analysis for questions 9-17 correlated to hypothesis 2 and was compiled by determining the frequency of students' answers and then ranking the frequency from highest to lowest. Finally, hypothesis 3 was addressed in questions 18 through 24 on the adapted Motivation to Read Profile. Within the data analysis, the answers were placed into a rank order based on the frequency students said those activities or opportunities were important to them. The rank order then showed the highest to lowest importance in regards to reading motivation activities within a school program.

CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS
Hypothesis One

More female than male students will rate themselves as Readers.

The Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile asked seventh grade participants three questions related to this hypothesis: (a) reading books is something I like to do, (b) do you read outside of school, and (c) during the summer, I like to read. The following table displays female and male perspectives toward these questions separately with a breakdown of the percentage of responses based on gender.

Table 1

Hypothesis 1 Data

	Female n=8	Male n=12	Total n=20
Question 1: Reading a book is something I like to do.			
Often	5(62.5%)	3(25%)	8(40%)
Sometimes	3(37.5%)	8(66.6%)	11(55%)
Not very Often	0(0%)	1(8.3%)	1(5%)
Never	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Question 2: Do you read outside of school?			
I do this a lot	5(62.5%)	1(8.3%)	6(30%)
I do this some of the time	3(37.5%)	10(83.3%)	13(65%)
I almost never do this	0(0%)	1(8.3%)	1(5%)
I never do this	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Question 3: During the summer, I like to read.			
Often	3(37.5%)	2(16.6%)	5(25%)
Sometimes	5(62.5%)	7(58.3%)	12(60%)
Not very often	0(0%)	2(16.6%)	2(10%)
Never	0(0%)	1(8.3%)	1(5%)

Table 1 shows that 5 females and 3 males viewed reading as something they like to do often. A higher frequency of male responses (8) showed reading was only enjoyed

sometimes compared to the lower frequency of 3 responses from females. Further, 1 male said he reads a lot outside of school, whereas 5 females said they read a lot outside of school. Finally, as support of the hypothesis, 3 males said summer reading happened rarely or never, as compared to 8 females that said summer reading happened often or sometimes.

Table 1 shows both male and female students viewed themselves as some form of reader. Due to the small discrepancy between females and males as readers, hypothesis 1 is rejected based on the data collected.

Hypothesis Two

Middle school students that rate themselves as readers will be more likely to indicate that their family and friends positively influence their motivation to read.

In determining which students considered themselves Readers, the three questions from hypothesis 1 were analyzed first. The students' answers then split them into two groups of Readers and Reluctant Readers. If a student answered never or not very often to any of the three questions regarding reading habits from hypothesis 1, he or she was then placed in the Reluctant Reader group. Once separated, the reader group comprised 16 students, 8 males and 8 females, and the Reluctant Reader group comprised 4 males. To analyze hypothesis 2, answers to five questions concerning individual perceptions, friend perceptions, and family perceptions toward reading were all considered. Within past research, Strommen & Mates (2004) showed that students who consider themselves Readers are often encouraged by positive reading influences from both friends and family. In this study, the results are mixed in regards to whether Readers and Reluctant Readers are influenced by outside perceptions of friends and family.

Table 2

Hypothesis 2 Data

	Female n=8	Male n=12	Reader n=16 (8 female, 8 male)	Reluctant Reader n=4 male	Total n=20
Question 1: I worry about what other kids think about my reading					
Every day	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Almost every day	0(0%)	1(12.5%)	1(6.2%)	0(0%)	2(5%)
Once in a while	2(25%)	4(33.3%)	4(25%)	2(50%)	6(30%)
Never	6(75%)	7(58.3%)	11(68%)	2(50%)	13(65%)
Question 2: I share good books I've read with friends					
I do this a lot	1(12.5%)	5(41.6%)	4(25%)	2(50%)	6(30%)
I do this some of the time	5(62.5%)	5(41.6%)	8(50%)	2(50%)	10(50%)
I almost never do this	1(12.5%)	2(16.6%)	3(18.7%)	0(0%)	3(15%)
I never do this	1(12.5%)	0(0%)	1(6.2%)	0(0%)	1(5%)
Question 3: My best friends think reading is _____.					
Cool	1(12.5%)	2(16.6%)	1(6.2%)	0(0%)	3(15%)
Fun	3(37.5%)	0(0%)	5(31.2%)	0(0%)	3(15%)
Okay to do	4(50%)	9(75%)	10(62.5%)	3(75%)	13(65%)
Not any fun	0(0%)	1(8.3%)	0(0%)	1(25%)	1(5%)
Question 4: The members of my family read _____.					
Often	3(37.5%)	6(50%)	7(43.7%)	2(50%)	9(45%)
Sometimes	4(50%)	4(33.3%)	7(43.7%)	1(25%)	8(40%)
Not very often	1(12.5%)	2(16.6%)	2(12.5%)	1(25%)	3(15%)
Never	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Question 5: I discuss books with my family _____.					
Often	1(12.5%)	1(8.3%)	2(12.5%)	0(0%)	2(10%)
Sometimes	4(50%)	5(41.6%)	7(43.75%)	2(50%)	9(45%)
Not very often	1(12.5%)	5(41.6%)	4(25%)	2(50%)	6(30%)
Never	2(25%)	1(8.3%)	3(18.75%)	0(0%)	3(15%)

Table 2 shows how middle school students viewed the reading influences of their friends and family. Question 1 in this section asked, "I worry about what other kids think about my reading." Only 1 student of the 20 respondents admitted to having a little concern about what other kids think. None of the 8 females and only 1 of the 12 males answered that they worry about what other kids think every day or almost every day. One

of the 16 students who identified themselves as Readers said he worried what other kids think almost every day. None of the 4 Reluctant Readers said they worried almost every day or every day. Most females (6 out of 8) said they never worried what other kids think of their reading, and 2 said they worried once in a while. Most males (7 out of 12) said they never worried, and 4 said they worried once in awhile. Likewise, most of the Readers (11 of 16) said they never worried, and 4 said once in awhile. Of the 4 Reluctant Readers, 2 said never and 2 said once in awhile

Question 2 in this section asked, "I share good books I've read with friends." Only 6 students of the 20 respondents said they often share books with friends and 10 said they share good books with friends some of the time. Only 1 female and 5 of the 12 males answered that they share books often, and 5 females and 5 males said they share books with friends some of the time. Most of the Readers (12 out of 16) said they share good books some of the time or a lot with friends. All of the 4 Reluctant Readers said they share good books some of the time or a lot with friends. Only 1 female said she never shares good books with friends, and 1 said she almost never shares books with friends. None of the 12 males said they never share good books with their friends, and 2 said they almost never share good books with friends. Likewise, only 1 of the 16 Readers said he or she never shares good books with friends, and 3 said they almost never share good books with friends. Finally, none of the Reluctant Readers said they never or almost never share good books with friends.

Question 3 in this section asked, "My best friends think reading is ____." Three of the 20 respondents admitted to having best friends that think reading is cool, and another 3 admitted to having best friends that think reading is fun. Only 1 female admitted to

having a best friend that thinks reading is cool, and 3 said they had best friends that think reading is fun. Comparatively, few boys (2 out of 12) said they had best friends that think reading is cool, and none had best friends that think reading is fun. Of the Readers, few (1 out of 16) had best friends that think reading is cool, and only 5 of the 16 said they had best friends that think reading is fun. Of the Reluctant Readers, none had best friends that think reading is cool or fun. Half of the females (4 out of 8) had best friends that think reading is okay to do, and no females had best friends that think reading is not any fun. Likewise, most males (9 out of 12) had best friends that think reading is okay to do, and only 1 male had best friends that think reading is not any fun.

In Table 2, Question 4 asked students, "The members of my family read ____." Nine of the 20 respondents said their family members read often, while 8 of the respondents said their family respondents read sometimes. Half of the females (4 of 8) said that members of their family read sometimes, and 3 said that family members read often. Similarly, most males (6 out of 12) said that family members read often, and 4 said that family members read sometimes. Seven of the Readers said that family members read often, and 7 others said that family members read sometimes. Most of the Reluctant Readers (2 out of 4) said that family members read often, and 1 said that family members read sometimes. Only 1 female said that she has family members that read not very often, and 2 of the 12 males said the same. Finally, only 2 Readers said that they have family members that read not very often, and only 1 Reluctant Reader said that he had family members that do not read often. Of all the participants, none said that they had family members that never read.

In Table 2, Question 5 in this section asks, "I discuss books with my family ____."

Only three students of the 20 respondents said they never discuss books with their family. Also, 3 of the 8 females and 6 of the 12 males answered that they never to not very often discuss books with their family. Many Readers (7 out of 16) said they never to not very often discuss books with their family. None of the 4 Reluctant Readers said they never discuss books with their families, and 4 said they discuss books with their family not very often. Most females (4 out of 8) said they sometimes discuss books with their family, and 1 said they often discuss books with their family. Similarly, 5 males said they sometimes discuss books with their family, and 1 said she often discusses books with her family. Likewise, most of the Readers (7 out of 16) said they sometimes discuss books with their family, and 2 said often. Of the 4 Reluctant Readers, 2 said sometimes and 2 said often.

The data from Table 2 indicate little disparity between Readers and Reluctant Readers in relation to reading influences by friends and family. Thus Hypothesis 2 is rejected.

Hypothesis Three

The majority of students will check the following reading options as important to a summer reading program: book groups, teacher read aloud, choosing their own high-interest reading material, being given time to read, and having an enthusiastic educator connect books to their personalities and opinions.

Table 3

Hypothesis 3 Data

	Female n=8	Male n=12	Reader n=16 (8 female, 8 male)	Reluctant Reader n=4 male	Total n=20
Question 1: Within a summer reading program, I would like my teacher/teacher librarian to read books out loud.					
Often	0(0%)	1(8.3%)	0(0%)	1(25%)	1(5%)
Sometimes	4(50%)	4(33.3%)	7(43.7%)	1(25%)	8(40%)
Not very often	1(12.5%)	4(33.3%)	4(25%)	1(25%)	5(25%)
Never	3(37.5%)	3(25%)	5(31.3%)	1(25%)	6(30%)
Question 2: Within a summer reading program, I would like to participate in a book discussion group.					
Often	0(0%)	4(33.3%)	2(12.5%)	2(50%)	4(20%)
Sometimes	4(50%)	0(0%)	4(25%)	0(0%)	4(20%)
Not very often	1(12.5%)	5(41.6%)	5(31.25%)	1(25%)	6(30%)
Never	3(37.5%)	3(25%)	5(31.25%)	1(25%)	6(30%)
Question 3: Within a summer reading program, choice is very important in regards to reading.					
Often	8(100%)	9(75%)	14(87.5%)	3(75%)	17(85%)
Sometimes	0(0%)	3(25%)	2(12.5%)	1(25%)	3(15%)
Not very often	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Never	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Question 4: Within a summer reading program, access to high-interest reading materials is _____.					
Very important	6(75%)	8(66.6%)	11(68.7%)	3(75%)	14(70%)
Important	2(25%)	3(25%)	4(25%)	1(25%)	5(25%)
Not very important	0(0%)	1(8.3%)	1(12.5%)	0(0%)	1(5%)
Not important	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Question 5: Within a summer reading program, time to read during the day is _____.					
Very important	5(62.5%)	2(16.6%)	6(37.5%)	1(25%)	7(35%)
Important	2(25%)	6(50%)	7(43.7%)	1(25%)	8(40%)
Not very important	0(0%)	3(25%)	2(12.5%)	1(25%)	3(15%)
Not important	1(12.5%)	1(8.3%)	1(6.2%)	1(25%)	2(10%)
Question 6: Within a summer reading program, having an enthusiastic teacher or teacher librarian to personally help me choose a book in the library is _____.					
Very important	4(50%)	4(33.3%)	4(25%)	4(100%)	8(40%)
Important	4(50%)	8(66.6%)	12(75%)	0(0%)	12(60%)
Not very important	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Not important	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

Students were asked how often they would want to have the following reading motivators: books read out loud, book discussion groups, choice, access to high-interest materials, time to read, and access to an enthusiastic teacher or teacher librarian to help choose books. Table 3 shows, 11 of 20 participants said they would never or not very often want a teacher or teacher librarian to read books out loud, as compared to 9 participants who said they would often or sometimes want it. No females and 1 male often want it, and 4 females and 4 males said they sometimes want it. Of the 16 Readers, most (7 of 16) want to have books read out loud sometimes, and none want to have books read out loud often. Only 1 of the 4 Reluctant Readers said he wants books read out loud often, and 1 wants it sometimes. Only 1 female does not want it very often, and 3 never want books read out loud. Likewise, 4 males said they do not want books read out loud very often, and 3 never want it. Similarly, 9 of the 16 Readers do not want a book read out loud very often or never, while 2 of the 4 Reluctant Readers want the same.

Question 2 in this section asked, "Within a summer reading program, I would like to participate in a book discussion group." Only 8 students of the 20 respondents answered that they often or sometimes wanting to participate in a book discussion group. Only 4 of the 8 females said they want to sometimes participate in a book discussion group, and only 4 of the 12 males answered that they often want to participate in a book discussion group. Few Readers (2 out of 16) and half of the Reluctant Readers (2 out of 4) said they would often want to participate in a book discussion group. A larger number of females (3 out of 8) said they would never like to participate in a book discussion group, and one said they would like it not very often. Most males (5 out of 12) said they would like it not very often, and three said they would never like it. Likewise, most of the

Readers (5 of 16) said they would never like to participate, and 5 said not very often. Of the 4 Reluctant Readers, 1 said never and 1 said not very often.

Question 3 in this section asked, "Within a summer reading program, choice is very important in regards to reading." Of the 20 participants, 17 students said choice is often important. Only 3 of the 20 respondents stated that choice is sometimes important. All eight females and all 12 males answered that choice is often or sometimes very important. Most of the students who identified themselves as Readers (14 out of 16) said choice is often very important to a summer reading program, and 2 said choice in regards to reading is sometimes very important. Most of the Reluctant Readers (3 out of 4) said choice in regards to reading is often very important to a summer reading program, and 1 said it is sometimes very important.

Question 4 in this section asked, "Within a summer reading program, access to high-interest reading material is ____." Of the 20 respondents, 19 said that access to high-interest reading material is very important or important. All females and 11 of the 12 males said that they believe access to high-interest material is very important or important. Most of the females (6 out of 8) said access was very important, and 2 said that access is important. Most males (8 out of 12) said access to high-interest material is very important, and 3 said it is important. Most of the students who identified themselves as Readers (11 out of 16) said access is very important, and 4 said access is important. Most of the Reluctant Readers (3 out of 4) said access is very important, and 1 said access is important. On the contrary, no females thought access was not important or not very important, but 1 of the 12 males thought it was not very important. Likewise, no Reluctant Readers thought access was not important or not very important, but 1 Reader

thought it was not very important.

Question 5 in this section asked, "Within a summer reading program, time to read during the day is ____." Fifteen of the 20 respondents stated that time to read is very important or important to a summer reading program. Most of the females (5 out of 8) said it is very important, while 2 said it is important to have the time. At the same time, only 2 of the 12 males said time to read is very important, and 6 said it is important. Most of the students who identified themselves as Readers (7 out of 16) said time to read was important to a summer reading program, and another 6 students said it was very important. Only 2 of the 4 Reluctant Readers said time to read is very important or important to a summer reading program. Only 1 female said time to read is not important to a summer program, and 4 out of the 12 males said it is also not very important or not important. Likewise, only 3 of the 16 Readers said time to read during the day is not very important or not important. Of the 4 Reluctant Readers, 1 said not very important and 1 said not important.

Question 6 in this section asked, "Within a summer reading program, having an enthusiastic teacher or teacher librarian to personally help me choose a book in the library is ____." Eight of the 20 respondents said having an enthusiastic teacher or teacher librarian help choose books is very important. Of the females, 4 said it is very important, and 4 said it is important for a summer reading program. Of the males, 4 said it is very important, and 8 said it is important to a summer reading program. Four of the 16 students who identified themselves as Readers said they think it is very important to have an enthusiastic teacher or teacher librarian help choose books, and 12 of the 16 thought it is important. All 4 of the Reluctant Readers said it is very important to a summer reading

program to have a teacher or teacher librarian help them choose books.

While it is not reasonable to expect participants to all agree on the importance of various reading motivators, it is reasonable to infer from their responses that they do have an opinion on what would be beneficial to them in a summer reading program.

Hypothesis 3 is rejected based on the data collected, because two of the six reading motivation tactics were not perceived to be important by students. The data instead show students feel strongly about being able to choose reading materials and having help in picking out reading material by an enthusiastic individual.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Summary

As schools close in the summer, students lack direct access to informational and educational resources. They also lose direct access to actively participating with those resources through discussions or activities led by a familiar educator. Instead, students have to look elsewhere for materials and time to discuss readings in possibly unfamiliar settings. This study investigates middle school students' reading habits and motivation, expressed by students, for wanting to attend a school-sponsored summer reading program.

This research study used the survey methodology. Parent permission and student permission were sought to ensure complete compliance with the information obtained and used within the results of this study. Students completed an Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile, a 24 question multiple choice survey, to gather information concerning their gender, reading habits outside of school, friends and family reading influences, and what methods students saw as the most motivational for a summer reading program. The student population was limited to 149 seventh grade students, not under the direction of the researcher as a teacher. Data was collected from 20 students who had returned parent and student signed permission slips during the spring semester of 2011.

Hypothesis 1 states more female than male students would rate themselves as Readers. From the gathered data, hypothesis 1 was rejected. Within the data, there was too small a discrepancy between females and males to support the hypothesis. In regards

to females, all said they like reading often or sometimes. Comparatively, 11 of the 12 males also said they like reading often or sometimes. Finally, all of the females said they read a lot or sometimes outside of school, and 11 of the 12 males also said they read a lot or sometimes outside of school.

Hypothesis 2 states that middle school students who rate themselves as readers will be more likely to indicate that their family and friends positively influence their motivation to read. After reviewing the data, hypothesis 2 was rejected. Within the data, there was a very small discrepancy between Readers and Reluctant Readers concerning the influence of family and friends. In regard to Readers, 11 out of 16 students do not consider others perceptions of their reading and 10 have best friends that think reading is okay. Comparatively, 2 of the 4 Reluctant Readers cared once in a while to other's perceptions and 2 of the 4 did not care. Finally, 14 of the 16 Readers marked they have family members that often to sometimes read in the home, while 3 of the 4 Reluctant Readers have family members that do the same.

Hypothesis 3 states the majority of students will check the following reading options as important to a summer reading program: book groups, teacher read aloud, choosing their own high-interest reading material, being given time to read, and having an enthusiastic educator connect books to their personalities and opinions. Hypothesis 3 was rejected based on the data collected from multiple questions. The data indicated that the majority of students found only four of the six reading options as important to a summer reading program. The students did not rank having books read out loud or having book discussion groups as activities they would find appealing in a summer reading program. Instead, they would rather have choice, an enthusiastic teacher or teacher

librarian helping them choose materials, and access to high interest materials. The data showed students obviously know what they want for options within a summer library program.

Conclusions

Hypothesis One

After analyzing the data and reviewing current, corresponding literatures, several conclusions emerged in regard to schools and summer library programs. First, schools, like Urbandale, need to consider the reading differences between male and female readers. Within the data, males more often marked being worried of their peer's perceptions of their reading than their female counterparts, but then recommended books more often to their friends. From the data, teacher librarians and teachers need to consider how they can encourage females to recommend books as often to their peers as boys, but also, how they can take the act of book recommendation and encourage more males to read in middle school. The data show more males are listening to each other in helping to choose a book, which encouraged could produce a larger male community of readers. In producing an array of book recommendations from both boys and girls, students could discover what their fellow peers are reading at all levels, possibly follow the crowd that fits them, and then worry less about how their peers perceive them due to recommendations from them.

Hypothesis Two

In regards to providing a positive reading environment and cultivating positive reading influences by friends and family, the work must start early in a child's life. Celano & Neuman (2008) found that low-income children did not know how to use

library materials in a way middle-income children seemed to, but they also found that an adult more often accompanied middle-income children than lower-income children.

Consequently, middle-income children tend to come to school or back from summer break with a greater knowledge base or more meaningful experiences in regards to reading. Schools need to take into consideration their students' experiences with reading when away from familiar educators. Providing more opportunity to collaborate with the public library before school ends for the summer may be one way of supplying students with positive adult or friend reading influences during the summer or weekends.

Becoming familiar with the surroundings and the adults at the public library may lead to more students using the facility in a way to gain greater knowledge with more guidance.

In addition to forming a relationship with the public library, schools and teacher librarians should consider opening their doors during the summer to help encourage those positive reading relationships. In opening the doors, students could be given an opportunity to gather materials from a familiar place and have discussions with people they know. Also, students could possibly bring a parent or be escorted by a parent and build a positive reading relationship by helping the student choose books or witness a book discussion between the teacher librarian and student. By including students and possibly parents in the school atmosphere during the summer, teacher librarians are encouraging a community of readers to flourish and form all types of relationships that revolve around reading.

Finally, the data showed that students are not as readily influenced by peers or are as willing to admit their inclination to being influenced by peers. There were very few differences in data between females and males, or Readers and Reluctant Readers. Even

though this data puts into question the validity of the question, schools and teacher librarians cannot discount the importance of peers on reading influences. Additionally, this finding may have been influenced by the small sample of only 20 participants with permission to participate out of the population of 149 identified for this quantitative study. In spite of this, teacher librarians need to encourage a community of readers that helps students foster reading within their groups of friends and begins to lessen the individual pressure of friends' perceptions and friends' actions. More research needs to be done on this issue of friends' influence on reading and individual perceptions.

Hypothesis Three

In addition to increasing reading relationships, it is the recommendation of the researcher to ask students their opinion in regard to reading motivation and ideas. It is also important to listen and use those ideas generated within the confines of a reading program. The data analysis showed that students knew what they would want to see in a reading program to encourage their reading, and some of the results could be surprising to an adult and an educator. It was surprising to see that the majority of students would not want a discussion group, but it was not surprising that they wanted choice. In many cases, it is the recommendation that school reading programs and school reading within the library become student centered and encourage readers with high-interest material, the ability to choose their own reading material, and time to just read. Most importantly, though, schools and libraries need to offer students an enthusiastic individual that exudes a passion for reading and knowledge for literature to help students choose the right book.

Recommendations for Further Studies

Based on the literature reviewed and the data collected, this researcher recommends that a quantitative study be undertaken with a larger population within this grade. It is further recommended that this study be replicated with students from multiple grades to compare data and provide more opinions to help design a program. Also, it is recommended that this quantitative study be completed with two separate groups: low-income and middle to high income students. By basing the study on income levels, disparity between students' thinking and resources based on their income could help alert schools to the need for a summer school library reading program.

Finally, the researcher recommends a case study similar to the study conducted by Lu & Gordon (2008) be conducted in a school library with a summer reading program, while other schools without programs are participating in other quantitative studies regarding summer reading programs. By observing the program and interviewing the participants, the researcher could track changes in perceptions regarding personal reading and continually compare them to the perceptions of schools not supplying the summer reading program.

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APPENDIX A**SURVEY****Adolescent Motivation to Read Profile**

Directions: Please read each sentence and answer options. Choose the answer that best matches you and your thinking.

1. I am a:
Female
Male

2. Reading a book is something I like to do.
Often.
Sometimes.
Not very often.
Never.

3. When I am reading by myself, I understand _____.
Almost everything I read.
Some of what I have read.
Almost none of what I have read.
None of what I have read.

4. I think reading is _____.
A cool way to spend time.
An interesting way to spend time.
An okay way to spend time.
A boring way to spend time.

5. Do you read outside of school?

I do this a lot.

I do this some of the time.

I almost never do this.

I never do this.

6. During the summer, I like to read _____.

Often.

Sometimes.

Not very often.

Never.

7. During the summer, I have access to a library and informational materials

_____.

Often.

Sometimes.

Not very often.

Never.

8. How often do you use a library during the summer?

Often.

Sometimes.

Not very often.

Never.

9. I worry about what other kids think about my reading _____.

Every day.

Almost every day.

Once in a while.

Never.

10. I share good books I've read with friends.

I do this a lot.

I do this some of the time.

I almost never do this.

I never do this.

11. My best friends think reading is _____.

Cool.

Fun.

Okay to do.

Not any fun.

12. Reading stimulates my imagination.

Often.

Sometimes.

Not very often.

Never.

13. Reading provides new information or understanding.

Often.

Sometimes.

Not very often.

Never.

14. When I read, I _____.

Always remember the information

Rarely forget the information.

Sometimes forget the information.

Always forget the information.

15. The members of my family read _____.
- Often.
 - Sometimes.
 - Not very often.
 - Never.
16. I discuss books with my family _____.
- Often.
 - Sometimes.
 - Not very often.
 - Never.
17. People who read a lot are _____.
- Very interesting.
 - Interesting.
 - Not very interesting.
 - Boring.
18. I think libraries are _____.
- A great place to spend time.
 - An interesting place to spend time.
 - An okay place to spend time.
 - A boring place to spend time.
19. Within a summer reading program, I would like my teacher/librarian to read books out loud _____.
- Often.
 - Sometimes.
 - Not very often.
 - Never.

20. Within a summer reading program, I would like to participate in a book discussion group _____.
- Often.
 - Sometimes.
 - Not very often.
 - Never.
21. Within a summer reading program, choice is very important in regards to reading.
- Often.
 - Sometimes.
 - Not very often.
 - Never.
22. Within a summer reading program, access to high-interest reading materials is ____.
- Very important.
 - Important.
 - Not very important.
 - Not important.
23. Within a summer reading program, time to read during the day is _____.
- Very important.
 - Important.
 - Not very important.
 - Not important.
24. Within a summer reading program, having an enthusiastic teacher/librarian to personally help me choose a book in the library is _____.
- Very important.
 - Important.
 - Not very important.
 - Not important.

APPENDIX B**SURVEY ANNOUNCEMENT**

Permission slip announcement to students by Mr. McConnell

Students remember to ask your parents about the permission forms for Mrs. Fleagle's research study. Also, remember to bring it in before March 5, 2011 to be able to participate in the study.

APPENDIX C
RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Teachers: Mrs. Nelson & Mr. McConnell

Researcher: Tricia Fleagle

To be used with students who have parental permission in Mrs. Nelson's and Mr. McConnell's classroom.

Mrs. Nelson: Choice time is going to begin in the next few minutes. So, you all need to get out a free-reading book or word work. Some of you will be working on your work right away in a quiet manner without causing disruptions, and others will be completing a survey to be used by Mrs. Fleagle. Once your survey is completed read or then work on your word work. Please now listen.

Mrs. Nelson: Students you are going to be completing a survey to help gather data about reading. Mrs. Fleagle is trying to gather data from you and other 7th grade students about your reading habits during the summer, how your friends and family can influence your reading habits, and then your opinion in what would motivate you to participate in a summer reading program. The survey should not take you long to complete, and if you have questions please raise your hand and I will come and help.

Mrs. Nelson: Now I will first be handing out assent forms for you to fill out and sign.

These forms give me your permission to gather data from you and use your results within my study. It also tells me that you understand your parents have given you permission to complete this survey, and that you can stop the survey at any moment. Once you receive

an assent form, please read through it and print your name in the first blank, and then sign and date. The date is _____.

(Give a minute or two to read and sign. Then pick up each assent form from the students.)

Mrs. Nelson: Now I will have Mr. McConnell help me pass out the surveys for you to complete. On the survey, you need to circle the answer that you think best fits you. Please be thoughtful and honest in your answers. Once you are done, please raise your hand and someone will be around to pick up your survey.