READING MOTIVATION: USING EXTRINSIC INCENTIVES AS A MOTIVATIONAL TOOL

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quasi experimental quantitative research study was to investigate the difference in the number of books read intrinsically to the number of books read after the introduction of extrinsic incentives. The sample consisted of twenty-one second-grade students, ages six and seven. The project was implemented over a six-week period. Student reading logs were used as the method for collecting data. Data consisted of the total number of books recorded in reading logs for a period of six weeks. A statistical analysis of reading log data employing a one-tailed paired t-test was conducted. Results from the study disclosed students’ reactions to the use of extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool. Analysis of the data revealed the importance of motivation and a method that educators might implement to increase reading in their classrooms. The use of extrinsic incentives revealed a statistical significance in contributing to the number of books read by students throughout the length of the study. Results of this study corroborated The Expectancy Theory of Motivation. Findings verified that the majority of students preferred receiving incentives for reading.
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Dr. Brenda Dean, Chair

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Dedication

This work is dedicated first and foremost to my savior, Jesus. For without him I never would have been able to accomplish this dream. Secondly, I would like to thank my family. To my husband Charles, thank you for your love, support, and for believing in me. To my son Porter, thank you for being my biggest cheerleader, your encouragement was significant in times when I needed it the most. To my dear friend, Denise, thank you for the abundant gift of your time and talent. To Mrs. Linda Andress, you truly were a God send. Without the influence of each of these individuals this journey would have not been possible.

I love you all!
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPYRIGHT</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH COMMITTEE</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERMISSION STATEMENT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Foundation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations and Delimitations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Document</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theories of Motivation</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Behavioral Learning Theory</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Expectancy Value Theory of Achievement (The Incentive Theory)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Self-Worth Theory</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Self-Efficacy Theory</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Social Cognitive Theory</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Achievement Goal Theory</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domains of Motivation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic Motivation</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewards</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic Motivation</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies of Highly Effective Teachers</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy in the Home</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Attitude</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY</strong></td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Population and Sample ................................................................. 43
Description of Instruments .......................................................... 44
Variables and Instrumentation ....................................................... 46
Data Collection Procedure ......................................................... 46
Data Analysis ........................................................................... 47
Summary ................................................................................. 48

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS .................................................................. 50
Research Question ..................................................................... 51
Analysis of Data ......................................................................... 51
Descriptive Statistics of Student Reading Log (Weeks 1-3) ............ 52
Descriptive Statistics of Student Reading Log (Weeks 4-6) ............ 53
Histogram of Differences ............................................................ 54
Box and Whisker Plot of Differences .......................................... 55
Mean, Variance, and Standard Deviation (Weeks 1-6) .................. 56
Summary .................................................................................. 57

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS .. 58
Summary of the Study ................................................................ 58
Research Question ..................................................................... 59
Findings .................................................................................... 59
Conclusions .............................................................................. 60
Limitations ................................................................................ 62
Recommendations ..................................................................... 63
Summary .................................................................................... 64
References ................................................................................ 66
Appendices .............................................................................. 85
LIST OF FIGURES

Figures

Figure 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Student Reading Logs (Weeks 1-3)

Figure 4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Student Reading Logs (Weeks 4-6)

Figure 4.3 Histogram of Differences for Number of Books Read in Weeks 4-6

Figure 4.4 Box and Whisker Pot of Differences

Figure 4.5 Mean, Variance, and Standard Deviation for Weeks 1-6
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

According to Applegate and Applegate one of the preeminent contributors for student success in school is the motivation to read (2010). Students who enjoy reading and who read consistently are more likely to become skilled and proficient readers. Gambrell believes those who are self-motivated and make the choice to read become readers for life (2011). Most of these students have been taught that reading is important, but what about those who are not motivated?

Often times students who show no desire to read are those for whom it does not come easy. They struggle with the process, feel defeated, and often exhibit no motivation. Frequently, their reading skills and exposure to reading affect their motivation. While the motivation to learn is innate, the process of learning to enjoy reading and becoming a good reader takes practice and sometimes prodding. McGeown, Goodwin, Henderson and Wright remind us that reading requires interest and effort both of which is linked to motivation (2012).

Many of us would not accomplish much if it were not for motivation for; it is the catapult springing forth action. Since motivation is viewed as an important aspect in education, then we must agree with Guay et al., (2010) and conclude that it is also fundamental for academic success. Motivating students to read requires a team of practitioners, parents, and researchers working together to target the action necessary to produce skilled, competent readers. The definition of motivation and its importance brings to light two domains of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic.
Background of the Study

Extrinsic motivation refers to the process of carrying out an action or behavior in order to receive an external reward (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p.55). Those who are extrinsically motivated are not concerned with enjoying the activity, but with the outcome associated with the action. Extrinsic motivation can also be linked to avoiding punishment or other negative outcome. Students may choose to read to avoid a bad grade instead of for enjoyment. In contrast, the incentive for intrinsic motivation is found in the action itself (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p.55). Those who are intrinsically motivated may engage in a task because it is fun regardless of its potential to produce an extrinsic reward.

Metsala, Wigfield, and McCann, (1996) believe a lack of motivation causes students to become less engaged in classroom activities. In this current study, the effects of using extrinsic incentives in an effort to motivate students to read is addressed supporting the need for motivation, based on the findings of Wigfield et al., (1997) and Applegate and Applegate (2010), who found a steady decline in student motivation to read as students advanced in school.

It is customary for students to enter school excited about learning and more explicitly learning to read (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, and Mazzoni, 1996). It is also important to remember that students enter school with varied backgrounds, levels of learning, motivation, and experiences (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Learning to read at a young age sets the student on the right track for becoming a strong, avid reader. This aspiration is fueled by motivation, and it is the educator’s responsibility to perpetuate and cultivate the passion.

Reading can be a challenging task, another reason why motivation is important (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2004). The more students are exposed to reading, the more desire they will have to read. This desire to read the then creates the skillful reader (Morgan &
Reading leads to academic success so it is important for the educator to value reading. Students who are exposed to reading and read consistently learn the value and will pursue opportunities to read on their own. Those not motivated and encouraged to read often see the task as arduous and avoid it at all cost. Motivation is an important and essential component for inspiring students and developing skills necessary to become lifelong learners who love to read.

Statement of the Problem

The elementary school used in this study was established in 1943 and is one of four city schools in a rural portion of a Southern state. The population of the school included approximately 429 pre-Kindergarten through fourth grade students and forty teachers. The racial configuration of the school was comprised of fifteen percent (15%) African American, fifty-eight percent (58%) White, twenty-six percent (26%) Hispanic, and (1%) Multiracial students. The socioeconomic status of the school was low/middle class with approximately 52% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunches.

Purpose of the Study

This purpose of this study was to build a solid foundation for why using extrinsic incentives as a motional tool would motivate students to read. The purpose of this study will determine if the use of extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool will increase reading in young students. Participants will be elementary school students in a low socioeconomic area. The premise for this document is an attempt to answer the question: Will the use of extrinsic incentives, as a motivational tool, increase reading motivation in young children?

Ideas overcoming resistance will be addressed. The importance of instructional motivation, students' attitudes, instructional practices, the parent’s role, and how to encourage
uninterested unmotivated students will be attended to. In conclusion, this investigation will discuss the significant impact and importance of reading motivation on student learning. Berliner believes the enthusiasm to learn is reflected in all students when they have a confident view of themselves and a motivating learning environment (2003). Teachers must be aware of students’ value, potential, and learning styles and foster it by working to create learning environments that are organized and friendly. Worley and Dvrud remind us that one key element in motivation is motivating students to become lifelong learners (2003). Doing this requires educators to approach the process in a creative, passionate, and committed fashion (Lumsden, 1994). Motivation begins the moment a student walks in the door of a classroom and flows from the head of that room. A teacher’s excitement about learning spills onto her students making those students more likely to gravitate toward and share the enthusiasm. This atmosphere encourages open communication and camaraderie and fosters motivation in all stakeholders.

**Theoretical Foundation**

The theoretical framework for this study is that student motivation will lead to gains in reading achievement as affected by incentives. Reading is the foundation for learning and a student’s confidence in his ability and the effort he employs can grow or wane depending on several factors. Performance can be diverse when external factors are introduced. This study will address the differences between intrinsic and extrinsic stimuli and explore the outcome these stimuli have on the motivation. Cultivating a society of readers has challenged teachers and schools for decades. While some students possess a natural love for learning, others arrive at the school's doorsteps kicking and screaming. Teachers must find a way to embrace the challenge of motivating these students. Some teachers and schools have chosen to launch reading incentive programs to motivate students by establishing programs which allow students to receive rewards.
given in the form of food, tickets, or a myriad of prizes. An underlying basis of extrinsic motivators is that they lead to intrinsic motivation, reading for pleasure (Collins & Matthey, 2001).

The theoretical framework for this study was based on the Expectancy Value Theory of Achievement also known as the Incentive Theory. It is closely related to the Operant Theory founded by Skinner (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). However, the Incentive theory states that behavior is dependent upon the expectancy of achieving a goal. It is a set purpose for performing, completing, and achieving a reward instead of merely evading a consequence (Dever, 2016). This theory predicts that when more than one behavior is possible, the behavior chosen will be the one that has the greatest combination of expected success and value.

**Research Question**

The researcher conducted the study related to the following research question:

What are the effects of implementing extrinsic incentives with second-grade students to motivate students to read?

1. Is there a statistical difference in the number of books second-grade students will read when extrinsic motivation is provided?

   \[H_0\]

   There will be no differences in the number of books second-grade students read after extrinsic incentives are presented.

   \[H_a\]

   Once extrinsic incentives are implemented, second-grade students will read more books than when extrinsic incentives were not offered.
Limitations and Delimitations

Several limitations should be mentioned in order to identify potential weaknesses in the study. One limitation of the study was the use of reading logs with young children. Several students lost, forgot, or misplaced their logs. Some had to be given replacements and therefore was unable to account for all the books they had read. A second limitation may have been parental influence. Some parents may have stressed reading at home while others may not have been as involved in their child’s education. Motivation might be the influence parents had on the student rather than the influence the extrinsic incentives had on the student. A third limitation may have been the way the cooperating teacher stressed reading. For example, the cooperating teacher may have sent home books or additional books on some days and not on others. A fourth limitation may have been the lack of involvement from parents. Some parents may have pressured students to read while others did not. Parents of English Language Learners may not have understood the purpose of the reading logs and failed to return them. Students may fail to return their reading logs. Students or parents may lie. The parents’ inability to read could have been another limitation.

As both the researcher and teacher, my role [ED1] may have caused a limitation including personal involvement and the need to diminish partiality was increased. In addition, another limitation may have been the small student population and sample size as well as the length of the study. Research was conducted in one school for six weeks and may not have allowed enough time for students to demonstrate an increase in the number of books read.

The scope of the study was determined by investigating whether there would be a difference between the number of books read by students before the use of extrinsic incentives as opposed to the number of books read after extrinsic incentives were introduced.
Assumptions

The current study was conducted with the assumption that the participants represented a general population of second-grade students. The student body reflected the student populations of most public schools, and the students were from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds with varying forms of parental support. It was assumed that the cooperating teacher followed the guidelines for providing incentives to motivate students. Using a larger sample size might produce a more expansive range of determining where differences exist between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

Definition of Terms

- **Extrinsic Motivation** - Extrinsic Motivation refers to being motivated in an activity as a means to an end, such a receiving a reward (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p.55).
- **Goal**: Personal accountability that affects motivation and achievement (Cabral-Márquez, 2015).
- **Intrinsic Motivation** - Intrinsic motivation refers to being motivated and curious to do an activity for the sake of doing it (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p.55).
- **Praise**: A verbal accolade of admiration or esteem for an individual (Henderlong & Lepper, 2002).
- **Reading Logs** - Reading logs are records providing documentation of student growth (Pak & Weseley, 2012)).
- **Reinforcer**: An experience or article that encourages a behavior to continue (Akin- Little & Little, 2004).
- **Reward**: An item given to acknowledge achievement, effort, or behavior (Akin-Little & Little, 2004).
Organization of the Document

This research is organized into five chapters. The first chapter delivers background information for the study and outlines the statement of the problem and the purpose of the study. The theoretical framework is discussed and research questions are explicitly stated. Limitations and delimitations are listed and explained. A list of definitions is available to guide the reader. Chapter two provides a comprehensive review of related materials on the topic. Specific and preceding literature comprises the literature review. The review is a combination of summaries and critiques from previous findings and thoughts about motivation. A thorough examination and analysis of theories of motivation related to the study, as well as the domains of motivation is included. In addition, strategies of highly effective teachers using motivation is included. Furthermore, literacy in the home and student attitude toward reading and motivation is referenced and discussed. Chapter Three offers an overview of the methodology encompassed in this study. Research methods including the population, sample, and time frame of the study are discussed. A description of the instruments as well as the variables, instrumentation, and data collection procedures are assessed. A methodical data analysis and summary testing the hypothesis by responding to the research questions completes the chapter. The fourth chapter examines the outcomes of the study and incorporates any relation noted between domains of motivation and reading. Chapter Five summarizes the conclusions drawn from the study and proposed recommendations for future studies.

Summary

Reading motivation equals reading achievement and simply cannot be exaggerated enough. Student success relies not only on ability, but motivation. Reading achievement is paramount in the school noted in this study. Those involved agree with the opinions of Wigfield,
et.al (1997) that motivating students to become lifelong learners must first begin with motivating them to read. The purpose of this study was to determine which type of motivation intervention— intrinsic or extrinsic—would have the greatest influence on increasing the number of books students read.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

One of the greatest stories of motivation and power of positive thinking ever told is *The Little Engine That Could* (Piper, 1930). In the book, the little blue engine’s chant of “I think I can, I think I can” is finally rewarded with “I thought I could, I thought I could.” He was intrinsically motivated to reach the top of the mountain; he knew inside himself that he could attain the goal. Unfortunately, this type of deep intrinsic motivation is lacking in the majority of students regarding their education. Schunk (1990) says, “Although some simple types of learning can occur with little or no motivation, most learning is motivated.” Many children today do not possess the intrinsic motivation needed to succeed. Educators are finding that extrinsic motivation is a necessary component to promote learning.

The theoretical framework for this study is that extrinsic incentives will affect student motivation leading to gains in reading achievement. Deci and Ryan (1985) promoted a theory of self-determination that fostered and developed a fascination for learning. The theory concentrated on student confidence and the value students placed on education. Their prior research indicated that intrinsic motivation influenced by external factors resulted in high-quality learning. Research over a period of three decades confirmed the idea that experience and performance can be very diverse when one is performing for extrinsic versus intrinsic reasons (Ryan, & Deci, 2000b). The purpose of this study is to reassess the differences between extrinsic and intrinsic stimuli and summarize the variances of these two universal types of motivation within this theoretical framework.
Reading is the foundation of learning and motivation acts as one of the pillars of support. Vansteenkist, Len, and Deci (2006) described the self-determination theory as “natural.” However, while children are naturally curious, they are not always naturally motivated. According to Skinner and Belmont (1993) identifying the “unmotivated student” is easy, but the motivated student can be difficult to find. They possess a myriad of qualities. These students are inquisitive, ambitious, excited, interested, driven, and hard-working even in the face of adversity. Skinner and Belmont identified with Harter (1981) who found that intrinsic motivation; however, decreased as a student moved through school.

Motivating students to read is a goal set by most educators. Throughout the years, numerous studies have focused on reading and motivation in an effort to determine what motivates students to become successful readers. Educators constantly search for ways to cultivate reading motivation and to help students discover the art of reading for pleasure. Teachers frequently choose to use extrinsic motivational tactics to engage students in reading. Cambria and Guthrie (2010) believed ignoring the motivation stage for children would damage the building structure of basic reading skills. According to The National Research Council one of the main stumbling blocks preventing children from becoming skilled readers is a lack of motivation (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Hunter (2005) agreed and affirmed, “No reading program is complete if it doesn’t include motivation” (p.1).

A number of significant factors and a wide spectrum of theories, findings, and issues play a part in motivating students. The literature on reading motivation suggests that strong readers read more and attain higher levels in their reading classes, perform better on standardized tests, and have higher grades overall (Applegate, 2011). Research included in this review examines theories of motivation, domains of motivation, strategies used by highly effective teachers,
literacy in the home, and student’s attitudes toward reading. The need to determine and understand how to motivate students was the premise for this literature review. It was conducted with a focus on the idea of using extrinsic incentives to motivate students.

The following literature review represents methodologies, literature, and strategies to support and answer the question: Does the use of extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool increase reading in young students? The sources reviewed were books, journals, and websites collected through electronic databases. The review began by conducting a comprehensive research of several theories of motivation. Keywords such as: *theories of motivation, reading motivation, extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, reading achievement, students attitude toward reading, motivating elementary students to read, parents role in motivation and literacy, rewards, and incentives* were used to search for pertinent information.

**Theories of Motivation**

Years of research by various philosophers have paved the way for a wealth of information addressing theories of motivation. According to Rakes and Dunn, (2010) motivation is a process involving how an individual’s needs and desires are set in motion and is the reason one has for acting or behaving in a particular way. Educators and parents face the dilemma of knowing if a student is performing his best academically and how and when to provide incentives to increase performance. Motivation not only impacts what a student learns but how. This investigation focused on theories of motivation related to extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and incentives and their use in promoting reading. Theories examined included: The Behavior Learning Theory, The Expectancy Value Theory of Achievement, Self-Worth Theory, Self-Efficacy Theory, and Achievement Goal Theory.
The Behavioral Learning Theory

B.F. Skinner is known as the father of Operant Conditioning. The basis of his behavioral learning theory stated that extrinsic rewards reinforced a desired behavior (Bilouk, 2015). His work was inspired by Thorndike’s Law of Effect, which indicated that any behavior followed by a positive outcome is likely to be repeated, and any behavior followed by negative consequences is likely to be stopped (Nevin, 1999). Thorndike (1927) discovered that positive reinforcement strengthened a behavior when a valued consequence was bestowed. Skinner concurred with Thorndike’s discovery and added the term reinforcement. While some researchers approved of Skinner’s work, others condemned the use of incentives and believed them to be detrimental to a learner’s intrinsic motivation (Bilouk, 2015).

Although Skinner’s name is most associated with the “Skinner Box” and other aspects of behavior and psychology, his research turned to education as he dealt with his own children’s education during the 1950’s. According to Rottschaefer, in observing his own children, Skinner noticed assignments comprised of numerous stages. Grading of the arduous process was delivered once the entire project had been completed (1982). Skinner disagreed with this approach, believing it held back growth, and he set out to develop a program that provided incremental feedback with the idea that frequent reinforcement would generate faster learning. He referred to this as “shaping” a behavior (Day, 2016) and it involved changing environmental events associated with behavior. His idea was later integrated into the education realm and is even utilized today in technology (Rottschaefer, 1982). Skinner’s behavioral learning theory is closely linked to the next theory researched, the Incentive Theory.
The Expectancy Value Theory of Achievement (The Incentive Theory)

The Incentive Theory, also known as the Expectancy Value Theory, shares common beliefs with the behaviorist theory of operant conditioning. In operant conditioning, students learn that their actions are associated with outcomes causing reinforcement to strengthen a behavior and punishment to weaken it (Bilouk, 2015). The difference with this Incentive theory is the relationship between the expectancies and the value of the goal the student is working toward. Teachers recognize the significance of motivating students to learn and habitually try a gamut of ideas to nurture student motivation (Schunk, 1990). However, the basic idea of the Expectancy Value Theory is that the chosen behavior will be representative of the one with the largest combination of both success and value. It creates behavior dependent upon one’s expectancy of attaining a goal, linking association and reinforcement. While the incentive theory is similar to operant conditioning, it is the act of purposefully working to complete an action in order to gain a reward instead of just to avoid a consequence. The loftier the reward the greater the motivation to perform the action.

John Atkinson, (1981) an American psychologist, was a major figure in pioneering the mindset of motivation. He worked with his mentor, D.C. McClelland, to understand individual differences in motivation and achievement. He developed the Expectancy-Value Theory of Achievement Motivation which indicated that the attainment of a goal was dependent on a person's behavior and expectation. His theory helped identify ways to manage motivation by exploring the intellectual alternatives and potential consequences to earlier ideas of drive and habit. What he considered to be shortcomings in the traditional framework of thinking and motivation became clear. He found that action and persistence were two factors under the umbrella of motivation and that the main objective was to resolve the war between the two
contradictory feelings. He affirmed that conflict occurred anytime a person encountered an achievement-oriented task. He also stressed the need and significance of extrinsic motivation when beginning an activity, especially when the result of the task could be negative (Atkinson & Feather, (1966).

According to Dever (2016) people are more motivated to pursue a goal when they believe there will be a positive outcome. Three key elements related to the expectancy theory include valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. A positive valence is an outcome that offers immediate or personal rewards while a negative valence is one that is seen as unlikely to be beneficial. Instrumentality attributes ownership of the part a person plays in achieving the outcome. For example, if a person believes he can be successful in attaining a goal he is more inclined to pursue it; however, if he believes the goal is out of reach or control, he is less likely to pursue it. The capability and confidence to actually reach an outcome is the final element called expectancy. Those who feel they are capable will put forth their best effort to reach the goal while those who feel they lack the skills will be less motivated to try. The value side of this theory is affected by these domains: interest, attainment, utility, and cost. The interest value indicates a student’s level of intrinsic interest in a task. Attainment value signifies how a student personally identifies with a task. The utility value involves personal goals. In this domain students ask themselves: How will this benefit me in the future? Lastly, cost involves a student’s belief in what will need to be sacrificed or tolerated to reach the set goal (Dever, 2016).

Self-Worth Theory

According to Covington (1984) the Self-worth theory is connected to self-value and a student’s ability to perform an activity. It is widely known that society values and recognizes personal accomplishments. In general, people who are in a position of high status are often
thought of as more worthy than those in lower positions. Similarly, in educational institutions, good readers are often considered high achievers while struggling readers are considered slow learners (Seifert, 2004). The theory is an example of an emotional conflict combination between hope for success and fear of failure. That lacking self-worth habitually avoid partaking in an activity entirely in an effort to escape failure. Struggling students often exhibit behaviors such as not trying, stalling, or asking for help in an effort to avoid failure. (Seifert, 2004). This concept is natural. Students and adults alike experience these feelings when they embark on a new adventure. The anxiety of not knowing what to expect is linked to the idea of failure or success, which is why it is important to be seen as capable by oneself and by others (Covington, 1984).

A principal impact on motivation is the opinion a student has of his own ability. Expending effort carries risk. Researchers Eccles and Wigfield, (2002) believe that the ability a student has of his own ability impacts his expectations for success or failure--his own perception is key. Motivation, achievement, competition, and social comparison make it difficult for many children to maintain the belief that they are competent academically. Covington (1984) reminds us that ability and effort depend largely on the age of the child. High effort that produces achievement maintains the opinion of ability, but extraordinary effort that results in failure implies low ability. The younger student views himself as successful when he sees his achievement improve over time; he believes his effort is making him smarter (Covington, 1984). Most elementary aged students believe in themselves and work hard to achieve; however, as they progress in school they have the tendency to question their abilities and begin to doubt themselves. When this happens they try to avoid failure at all cost. They choose easy assignments when given choices, cheat, drop a class, or quit school (Thompson, Davidson, &
Barber, 1995). In an effort to deter negative self-worth in students, teachers must recognize that the emergence of aptitude is a normal, unavoidable process.

**Self-Efficacy Theory**

Self-efficacy measures the belief one has in his own ability to complete tasks and reach goals. This concept explains how individuals feel and think about themselves, as well as the manner in which they self-motivate (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy levels can enrich or inhibit motivation. According to Taboada et al. (2009), “reading self-efficacy refers to individuals’ judgments or self-evaluations about their ability to do well on reading activities such as reading a book or reading a passage” (p. 89). In order for students to maintain the determination to be successful, they must be confident of their abilities (Pajares, 2002). To view themselves as thriving, competent readers, students must be successful readers. Consequently, when presented with more challenging texts, they will persevere with confidence (Gambrell, 2011).

In the article *Understanding Student Motivation*, Seifert (2004) discusses the self-efficacy theory which is part of a larger theoretical framework known as the social cognitive theory. This theory, founded by Albert Bandura, suggests that human achievement depends on personal factors such as thoughts, beliefs, behaviors, and environmental conditions (Schunk, 2003). Self-efficacy suggests certainty—certainty in one’s ability to wield control over behavior, motivation, and the social environment. Maddux (1995) reiterates Bandura’s definition of self-efficacy as self-belief. It is a tenacious behavior or action set in motion by expectations, and it requires a personal willingness to successfully perform or attain a challenge (p. 4). This means of self-evaluation impacts all areas of human experience. Self-efficacy validates the probability, fuels the desire, and drives people to achieve their goals. Schunk (2012) affirmed that pairing goal
setting with outcome expectations equaled self-efficacy which in turn means people acting in ways they believe will help attain their goals.

According to Furrer and Skinner (2003) a student’s opinion of his academic ability, in combination with self-efficacy, habitually predicts his level of motivation, scholastic success, and engagement. The principles of self-efficacy are fundamental for motivation and success (Schiefele, et al., 2012). Students with a lack of academic self-efficacy rarely see the importance of reading, whereas those intrinsically motivated not only value, but also enjoy reading (Guthrie, 2001). More often than not, unmotivated students have had a less than positive experience with reading (Ambe, 2007) and are habitually unconcerned in becoming effective readers (Worthy, 2002).

A student’s level of self-efficacy can be a catalyst or hindrance for motivation. Guthrie (2001) and Seifert (2004) concur and believe those exhibiting elevated levels of self-efficacy will select, set, and achieve loftier goals because they choose challenging activities. In contrast, Margolis and McCabe (2006) maintain that students who possess an incompetent opinion of themselves usually exhibit low levels of self-efficacy. These students tend to evade demanding or arduous tasks which can impede learning and affect motivation. Self-efficacy is an important variable and research shows that it can be fostered by several factors which include both parents and teachers.

Using the belief that self-efficacy can be nurtured, Bandura (1994) alleged that a person’s self-efficacy increased with verbal confirmation, with successful completion of a challenging task, and by witnessing other’s success. All these confirm the idea that the spoken word is powerful, challenging, builds character, and the spark of success can spread like wildfire. When educators encourage and motivate verbally, doubt is overcome and achievement becomes a
realism. Giving students challenging tasks prompts a second opportunity for them to build self-efficacy. Students who receive positive feedback will work extra hard to successfully complete challenges (Guthrie & Humenick, 2004). Motivation and self-confidence will increase prompting future challenges, which in turn further motivation. Bandura’s final idea for increasing self-efficacy is the idea that successful students can influence their peers (1994). Strong readers set the bar for those who struggle. The simple act of modeling and observing can plant a seed of inspiration. Bandura (1986) also observed, “What people think, believe, and feel affects how they behave” (p. 25). Regardless, some students do not believe their efforts will improve their performance (Dwek, 2010).

The Social Cognitive Theory

The Social Cognitive Theory argues that rewards earned for achieving a difficult task can bring about increased interest in the particular activity (Pierce, Cameron, Banko, & So, 2003). For example, when a child can successfully read a passage with no mistakes and receives a reward, he is more likely to engage in the activity again. The extrinsic reward increases the student’s self-efficacy and belief in his success, thus leading to an increase in intrinsic motivation. Deci and Ryan (2000) believe motivation provides the fulfillment of fundamental psychological needs such as connection, ability, and independence. Students are more apt to be intrinsically motivated to master an objective when given a choice. Cameron, Pierce, Banko, and Gear (2005) believe rewards seen as information increases intrinsic motivation while extrinsic rewards lead to reduced views of self-worth, and lower intrinsic motivation. Ryan and Deci (2000b) concur and believe that praise and positive feedback during an activity increase feelings of capability and boosts intrinsic motivation.
Achievement Goal Theory

Spinath and Steinmayr (2012) define the achievement goal theory as the reason students strive to engage in and master a task. Task mastery is when a student is eager to improve his ability and diligently works to understand instructional material (Schiefele et al., 2012). Students who possess the achievement goal theory are seen as self-determined and self-regulating (Seifert, 2004). Students who focus on task mastery prefer challenging work and invest time learning new strategies. Students work to achieve these goals by setting personal standards (Fitch, 2013). Those who are motivated believe that effort leads to success (Bong, 2001). They understand the need to develop new skills, strengthen their confidence, improve existing skills, and engage in challenging activities (Ames, 1992).

A 2010 quantitative study by Guay et al. focused on student motivation and reading. Participants included 425 students in Grades 1-3. The study compared the use of extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation and found that intrinsic motivation had the greater impact on reading interest. Mata (2011) discovered a significant decline in task mastery and performance goals among grade levels. Students focused on task mastery frequently worried about exhibiting their capability and level of performance. They were also concerned with how others viewed them or compared them to others (Fitch, 2013). These students saw ability rather than effort as a causal factor while attributing success or failure to uncontrollable factors (Schiefele et al., 2012). If failure is a possibility, students often withhold effort. They would rather not try than risk failing and without effort, failure cannot be recognized as a lack of ability.

Domains of Motivation

Reading motivation is multidimensional. Wigfield (1997) related motivation to these subjective task values: interest value, attainment value, and utility value. Subject task values...
refer to the incentives individuals have for doing different activities. Students who believe they are not knowledgeable and effective in an activity may not engage in it if there is no incentive. Guthrie and Humenick (2004) surmised that students display different types of motivation. Ames (1992) concluded that children who receive incentives are more likely to remain motivated. Wigfield (1997) concurred with Ames and affirmed that students can be proficient in an activity, but may not engage in it without an external reward. Conversely, Lamme (2002) believed incentives have done more to undermine reading than any other trend in schools today.

When students begin to read, there is an excitement within them. If that excitement is not cultivated, reading can lose its luster (McCombs, 1997). Natural curiosity in children does not always equate with motivation. Fitzgerald believed instructional motivation is paramount in literacy development (1999). The most important reason for motivating students to read is the more they read, the better readers they become (Gambrell, 2011). Motivation and instruction are principal in developing literacy in young students; the key is to create a balance in the use of intrinsic and extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool to increase reading (Fitzgerald, 1999; Metsala, Wigfield, & McCann, 1997).

Research suggests a resilient debate over which type of motivation has the preeminent potential of impacting reading achievement. While each domain has its advantages and disadvantages, Ryan and Deci (2000b) contend that motivation parallels inspiration and that both must exist for action and growth to occur. For students to read more and want to read more, they must to be motivated. Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) proposed that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence children’s motivation and achievement.
Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation indicates being motivated in an activity as a means to an end, such as receiving a reward (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Harter, 1981). Performance goals are often reflected in the form of recognition, grades, or competition and may significantly influence a pupil’s motivation for reading (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). While some professionals are against the use of extrinsic incentives, believing they send the message that reading is not much fun (Lamme, 2002), others agree incentives may prove to be very effective in instigating a lifelong love for reading (Sine, 1991). A fundamental foundation of extrinsic motivators is the hope that they will lead to intrinsic motivation (Collins & Matthey, 2001). In an effort to motivate students and cultivate a society of readers, teachers and schools have introduced extrinsic incentive programs with the hope of self-motivation in mind.

Crow and Small’s (2011) evaluation of today’s educational system gives the appearance that extrinsic motivation is a central component. High-stake test scores, evaluations, and grades elicit motivation from administration, teachers, parents, and students. This method of measuring and reporting progress and achievement provides motivation for putting forth one’s best effort.

Results of a meta-analysis study by Deci, Koester, and Ryan in 1999 indicated that the use of extrinsic rewards weakened a student’s intrinsic motivation while another conducted by Feingold and Mahoney in 1975 concluded there were no negative effects of reinforcement. Akin-Little, et. al (2004) noted that the use of extrinsic incentives caused students to avoid challenging tasks and fulfill only the requirements needed to reap the reward. Lazowski and Hulleman, (2016) believe extrinsic incentives can promote an interest in reading by motivating the student that lacks interest. Guthrie et al., (2007) agrees and reasons
that the initial use of extrinsic incentives can be used to motivate students with the hopes of developing into an intrinsic desire.

Froiland (2011) believes students who are extrinsically motivated engage in activities to please a parent or teacher, earn a good grade, or gain the admiration of peers. When they do this they have the propensity to concentrate on the reward and recognition instead of learning (Guthrie & Humenick, 2004). Guthrie and Humenick (2004) further state that students who depend on reinforcement from teachers, parents, or peers are externally driven. Crow and Small (2011) believe extrinsic motivation and rewards have a significantly negative effect on the simple gratification one gets from learning causing intrinsic motivation to considerably diminish. Law (2008) agrees and says they cause students to not actively participate and focus on daily learning taking place in the classroom. Goals, rewards, and praise are ways to successfully motivate students.

**Extrinsic / Goals**

Furtak and Kunter (2012) advocate the importance of supporting students in their learning by allowing them to have an active role in the process. Students are often motivated to put forth additional effort and strive to learn when they realize they are making progress and acquiring skills (Schunk, 1990). These researchers believe that students are motivated differently and by allowing them to actively participate in setting a goal, students created a deeper meaning in their learning. Helping students set goals is paramount and supports Szabo’s (2011) research which maintains goal setting as a positive motivator that helps students visualize achievement. Peterson and Davis (2008) concur and add that goal setting leads to intrinsic motivation. Smithson (2013) believes the educator’s role is to help the student set relevant, attainable, and realistic goals so when the goals are attained, the student will recognize the accomplishment and
want to set new goals. Swain (2005) recaps Smithson’s idea and states the importance of meeting on a regular basis with the student to discuss the goal and provide feedback. Bowman agrees that students need both oral and written feedback. The positive feedback a student receives encourages improvement, acknowledges success, reinforces positive behavior, and determines areas of growth (2007). Droe (2013) states that “teacher feedback to student performance is an important component of the teaching and learning cycle.” Tangible rewards also serve as extrinsic motivation.

**Extrinsic / Rewards**

The use of rewards for motivation is a topic that has generated considerable controversy and has been debated by numerous theorist (Cameron, Pierce, Banko, & Gear, 2005). According to Chen and Wu (2010) rewards serve as reinforcers for increasing a desired behavior and those rewards relevant to the desired performance are motivating. Akin-Little, et al. (2004) supports that rewarding students with incentives is not detrimental as long as the reward is not contingent upon student achievement. Performance-contingent rewards are awarded explicitly for completing an activity well or exceeding an identified benchmark, which typically leads to decreased motivation (Pierce et al., 2003). Cameron et al., (2005) believes incentives are only effective when they resemble or are as similar as possible to the task at hand. Crow and Small (2011) believe rewards should be relevant to the task at hand and that rewards unrelated to the task only motivate temporarily. Motivation might be weakened if the reward is irrelevant to the activity (Clark & Fumbold, 2006). For example, Raffini (1996) says motivation for reading should be rewarded with books.

Researchers have found that the effectiveness of an award depended on the expectancy, type, contingency, and attributions set for receiving the reward (Cameron & Pierce, 1994;
Cameron, Pierce, Banko, & Gear, 2005; Rosenfield, Folger, & Adelman, 1980). Akin-Little et al., (2004) believe an effective use of rewards can be used to stimulate low interest activities on a short-term basis. Uninteresting activities can be amped up and motivating when rewards are introduced (Pierce et al., 2003).

Cameron et al., (2005) believes allowing students ownership and collaboration in deciding how incentives can be obtained as well as the reward itself, makes them more effective. Deci, Koestner, and Ryan (1999) believe that providing a reward immediately following a wanted behavior increases the probability that the behavior will continue and be repetitive. According to these findings, rewards can increase not only performance, but also a student’s intrinsic motivation when used properly (Cameron & Pierce, 1994; Pierce, Cameron, Banko, & So, 2003).

Froiland et.al., (2012) cautions relying on the continual use of physical rewards to enrich academic efforts. Akin-Little and Little (2004) defined the word *reward* as an object given in recognition of effort, behavior, or achievement. The reinforcement theory, founded by B.F. Skinner, focused on behavior and believes the basis for the reinforcement theory is that rewards are bestowed to reinforce positive behavior and punishment is for negative behavior or given to weaken negative behavior.

Some researchers believe relevance is the problem with rewards and that teachers often reward to motivate a performance that could otherwise be exciting and motivating in its own right (Akin-Little & Little, 2004; Small, 2009). According to Akin-Little et al., (2004) rewards are only effective for a brief period of time and the implementation of an incentive will not likely lead to lasting changes in a student’s performance. Small (2009) concurs and affirms the belief by saying that students become dependent on rewards and as long as they are present the wanted
behavior will continue and when the reward is phased out the behavior will follow. Deci (1995) advanced that behavior related to extrinsic motivation would last only as long as rewards were in place. Once rewards were removed, students might withdraw from the activity (Akin-Little, Eckert, Lovett, & Little, 2004). Deci (1995) agreed and believed that once students were accustomed to rewards, they began to take the shortest or quickest path to the reward. Covington (2000) concurred and believes this is a clear indication that extrinsic incentives will only control behavior temporarily. Researchers found that extrinsic rewards do not change attitudes or lead to lasting change, but act as a band-aide, only effective for a brief period of time (Akin-Little et al., 2004). Some researchers believe when rewards are tied to performance negative results can occur.

While the world offers a myriad of tangible rewards to motivate individuals, it is no surprise to find teachers using the same tactics in the classroom to motivate students. While there are a number of incentives, some of the most popular are stickers, prizes, and tokens (Crow, & Small, 2011). Cameron et al., (2005) and Raffini (1993) believe rewards in and of themselves neither weaken nor sustain intrinsic motivation, but what matters is how the rewards are implemented. Boggiano et al., (1991) deliberates on the use of extrinsic rewards declaring that they depress capability, decrease problem-solving skills, lessen effort toward mastery, and reduce intrinsic motivation. In contrast, operant behavioral theorists Akin-Little & Little, (2004) and Cameron and Pierce (1994) disagree that tangible rewards are likely to harm intrinsic motivation. Lepper, Corpus, & Iyengar (2005) along with Deci, Koestner and Ryan (1999) agree and believe a negative effect occurs in isolated situations and is often accompanied by issues counteracting the efficiency of the incentive.
While some researchers believe extrinsic rewards undermine intrinsic motivation (Akin-Little & Little, 2004; Covington, 2000; Small, 2009) others like Guthrie et al., (2007) believe they could be used to stimulate intrinsic motivation. Metsala et al., (1996) added to the belief by declaring that once the reward is removed, students no longer participated in the activity. Pierce et. al (2003) believe numerous incentives awarded on a contingency basis, such as performance, weakens a student’s intrinsic motivation. Operant behavioral theorists agree with the idea that tangible rewards could be used to spur intrinsic motivation (Cameron, Pierce, Banko, & Gear, 2005). Using rewards or prizes for reading has been linked to students performing the desired task for a short term, but long term rewards “undermine the development of intrinsic motivation” (Gambrell, 2011, p. 10). Cameron et al., (2005) believes the use of intangible rewards such as verbal praise is a better choice of recompense that indicates capability at the end of an activity, or when a specific goal has been obtained.

**Extrinsic / Praise**

Pressley et al., (2003) believes one of the most powerful rewards a teacher can use is praise. When this form of extrinsic incentive is used it can increase a student’s motivation and give them the desire to more deeply engage in the promoted activity (Zentall & Lee, 2012). Educators who praise students create a stimulating, positive, and encouraging learning environment (Gambrell, 2011). Complements edify students. Students who receive praise gain confidence and achievement (Guthrie, 2001, Wilson & Trainin, 2007). Henderlong and Lepper say this type of affirmative response can function as positive reinforcement (2002). A study by Droe (2013) concluded that score evaluations paired with positive feedback could be influential for determining achievement goals. Results from the study proved that verbal praise influenced a student’s achievement goal choice. Those who received verbal praise had an increased
determination and attitude toward choosing a goal and accomplishing the task compared to those who simply received their score or were told they were talented. The extra incentive from the teacher, in the form of praise offered support affecting task persistence and task enjoyment. Kanouse, Gumpert, and Canavan-Gumpert (1981) defined praise as a positive evaluation. In the study, students receiving specific, genuine, and appropriate praise were prone to accomplish more than the students who did not.

Accolades are not uncommon when a student makes an accomplishment. However, several scholars who have researched praise believe the use of praise can have some negative repercussions on student confidence, problem solving, and intrinsic motivation (Gamboa, Rodriguez & García, 2013). Akin-Little et al., theorize (2004) that students who seek praise by working to gain attention and approval become dependent and will discontinue the hard work and lose their motivation when praise ceases. This causes praise to become an extrinsic motivator.

According to Gambrell, praise is not always effective--especially if students suspect it is insincere (2011). Students accept praise when it matches their self-perceptions. Praise must be used in moderation and be genuine or students might perceive it as meaningless (Henderlong & Lepper, 2002). Wilson & Trainin (2007) say generic praise decreases motivation and students feel like they are being controlled and manipulated. While teacher feedback is important, a public display of praise can create competition between students if educators are not distributing it equally. Praise is an important variable and must be honest, sincere, precise, and specific, in order to bridge the gap between what the student hears and his or her self-perception (Henderlong & Lepper, 2002).
Bowman (2007) says the best form of praise is through private interaction such as a comment on a paper, a short discussion, or a mini conference. This form of interaction is a way to motivate performance and insure students that their work is valuable. Deci et al, believes unanticipated verbal rewards can enhance intrinsic motivation while confirming ability (1999). Crow and Small (2011) believe when sincere praise is fixated on student effort and hard work rather than ability a positive impact can be had on motivating students to learn.

**Intrinsic Motivation**

Intrinsic motivation is the greater of the two domains as affirmed by Guay et al. (2010). If a person is driven to participate in an activity for the sake of doing it, he is considered to be intrinsically motivated (Lepper, Corpus, & Iyengar, 2005, p.192). According to Schiefele et al., (2012) intrinsically motivated individuals are enthusiastic about learning and (Putman & Walker, 2010) the quantity and degree of their reading exceeds those who are not. Students instilled with a sense of intrinsic motivation to read at a young age will experience success in reading for life (Wang & Guthrie, 2004).

Research identifies self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, and interest as important elements of reading motivation (Metsala & McCann, 1997; Wigfield, 1997). Scholars believe students are more likely to engage in reading when they consider themselves confident and self-motivated (McCombs, 1997; Metsala, Wigfield, & McCann, 1997). According to McCombs, when a learner’s perception of reading is positive, interest in participating is more likely to occur (1997). In a study focusing on the conceptualization of reading motivation, Wigfield (1997) discovered students who have a desire to achieve advance academically and outperform others.

Since intrinsic motivation is the favored of the two domains, it is essential to the promotion of lifelong, voluntary reading (Melekoglu, 2011; Metsala et al., 1996; Pulfrey,
Darnon, & Butera, 2013) because readers who are intrinsically motivated to read and find personal meaning in reading will excel in literacy development (Metsala, Wigfield, & McCann 1997; Wigfield, 1997). Engaged readers are those who are intrinsically motivated (Vieira & Grantham, 2011) and realize reading is valuable (Guthrie & Humenick, 2004). Malloy, Marinak, Gambrell, and Mazzoni, (2013) ascertain that students who are intrinsically motivated to read find reading enjoyable and interesting and believe that becoming a good reader is a way to become a valued member of society. Guay et al., (2010) says these students exceed academically, demonstrate self-confidence, enjoy absorbing knowledge, and are determined to succeed. Froiland et al., (2012) supports the idea and adds that intrinsically motivated students pursue topics of interest and are motivated to learn for personal gain. The intrinsically motivated reader yields additional effort and perseveres when confronted with difficult text (Becker et al., 2010). Avid readers are said to be intrinsically motivated leading to an increase in reading skills and extraordinary academic achievement (Mol & Bus, 2011; Senn, 2012).

Since children are naturally curious, it is incumbent upon the teacher to actualize on this attribute by surrounding students with a variety of materials to spark intrinsic motivation (Raffini, 1993). Becker et al., (2010) believes a variety of reading materials increase reading skills. Wigfield et al., (2004) submits that educators who empower students with choices motivate them to be lifelong learners. By creating an intrinsically motivating environment, teachers can stimulate curiosity (Baker et al., 2000. This can be done by providing a wealth of choices to engage readers about topics that are new or unfamiliar (Ülper, 2011). Gambrell (2011) says this is a great way for students to own their learning. Wigfield et al., (2004) believes teachers help to motivate students intrinsically when they allow them a voice and ownership in learning. Students become increasingly interested and motivated in an environment that
encourages choice (Gambrell, 2011). Those allowed to select reading material often choose to read more and develop reading skills (Vieira and Grantham, 2011). Raffini (1996) declared the importance of allowing students autonomy. He found this independence as an avenue for success, pleasure, and a way to build self-esteem (p.3). Horner and Shwery, (2002) agree because it gives students some control over their choices and environment and according to Allyn, (2011) students will most likely choose a text written on their proficiency level. Hon-keung, Man-shan, and Lai-fong (2012) recommend offering an assortment of stimulating reading materials for students who enjoy a challenge. However, it is important to consider that students might withdraw from reading and feel overwhelmed when offered too many choices (Fitch, 2013). Hobbs, Oleynik, and Sacco (2009) agree that students who are presented with choices and allowed to read at their own pace will choose to read for enjoyment and develop into adults who enjoy reading. (Cremin, Mottram, Collins, Powell, and Safford, 2009).

Wang and Guthrie (2004) have determined that success in reading achievement is tied to intrinsic motivation. McGeown et al., (2012) agrees and says intrinsic motivation is responsible for improving reading skills and encouraging reading activities. Miller (2012) believes reading comprehension is strengthened when intrinsic motivation is promoted. Students who effectively apply reading strategies (Froiland et al., 2012) believe themselves to be competent readers and are more intrinsically motivated than students who lack reading skills (Guay et al., 2010). This type of intrinsic motivation can help students conquer the challenge of reading more difficult tasks (Lin et al., 2012; Swanson & Ros-Voseles, 2009). Fulk and Montgomery-Grymes, (1994) opined that active involvement strengthens intrinsic motivation.

Noted earlier, reading educators need to help cultivate intrinsic motivation for reading. Collins and Matthey (2001) conducted a study centered on tasks a child enjoys. They found that
an individual’s intrinsic motivation was not altered after verbal and tangible reinforcements were given and then removed. This research identified self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, and interest as important elements of reading motivation. However, some theorist believe that the use of extrinsic incentives can defer intrinsic motivation (Drevitch, 2017). Guthrie, (2001) believes intrinsic motivation will encourage long-term interest for learning as opposed to the temporary motivation that extrinsic motivation offers.

**Strategies of Highly Effective Teachers**

Teachers pull from a plethora of ideas and strategies to motivate students, and motivating students to read can be a struggle. Although a fundamental characteristic for learning is fun, students today have video games, television, movies and sports that compete with reading. Finding fun yet challenging strategies for the classroom can be difficult for teachers. A quantitative study by Skinner and Belmont (1993) found that teacher attitude and interactions with students affect learning, so it is important for the teacher to propose learning opportunities in a manner students see as fun.

Unfortunately, there are some teachers who never try to reach the unmotivated student, but for those who do, the results are outstanding. In order to facilitate reading motivation, teachers must foster a child’s belief in himself as a reader and build on his interests and curiosity about reading using a variety of materials (Metsala, Wigfield, & McCann, 1997). Coupled with teacher observation, careful analysis of student achievement can help teachers plan for meaningful instruction that supports students in becoming highly motivated readers (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996).

Metsala and Wharton-McDonald (1997) conducted a research project on the nature of outstanding primary level literacy instruction. Their findings highlighted strategies and
perspectives of highly effective teachers. The study revealed the need for students to be immersed in a literate environment with explicit teaching of reading and writing both in context and in isolation. They found using a variety of materials, various types of reading strategies, and opportunities for authentic reading and writing were key to growing great readers.

In 1999, Miller and Meece revealed a motivational link to high-challenge tasks. Students had to apply reading strategies to solve unknown words and comprehend text. They were motivated by challenging tasks and disliked those that were boring and uninteresting. Findings from a qualitative study by Edmunds and Bauserman (2006) identified six categories responsible for motivating students to read: actions of others, sources of motivation, sources of book referrals, factors that stimulate excitement about narrative and expository text, and the purpose for selecting reading in general. Data from student surveys advise teachers to consider self-selection, personal interests, access to books, involvement of others, and characteristics of books when seeking to motivate students. Instructional activities that will positively influence attitudes towards reading facilitate high levels of achievement (Barnett & Irwin, 1994), and students who read more become better readers; they become more proficient in reading fluency and comprehension, vocabulary and cognitive development (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001).

Another strategy is the use of technology. Annetta, Murray, Laird, Bohr, and Park believed schools lack the instructional technology in their curricula that students have grown accustomed to using in everyday life (2006). Although adapting it to reading instruction should not replace traditional methods, it makes sense to use it as a motivation tool (Alduraby & Liu, 2014). It holds a strong attraction for children (Ciampa, 2012) and is familiar, forgiving, and exciting (Hunter, 2005). With all of these strategies in mind, motivation is not just the teacher’s responsibility; the responsibility begins at home.
An educator’s expectations can affect how students perform (Dweck, 2010). By developing a culture that supports a growth mindset teachers show students that someone believes in them and in turn students will work hard to make that belief a reality. Students with a growth mindset face challenges head on while those with a fixed mindset become discouraged when they do not succeed. Those in greatest need of reading growth and vocabulary intervention are children who come from poverty or those who enter school and are behind in language development. Snell, Hindman, and Wasik, (2015) reinforced the idea that effective reading strategies used within the curriculum instead of taught in isolation builds vocabulary and motivates students to read.

**Literacy in the Home**

The importance of motivation and the parents' role are factors in birthing successful readers. These two components together are valuable and immeasurable (Baker, Dreher, & Guthrie, 2000; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Baker, Scher, and Mackler, (1997) declared that most parents desire to help their children but do not know how. Experiences children have at home set the stage for developing a love and motivation to read. Parental influences are paramount for effecting motivation and the advancement of reading levels (Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1988).

Based on research by Formby (2014) children who are read to at home have significantly more attainment and more positive attitudes toward reading, this survey from 2014, was conducted using 567 educators and 1,012 parents of children aged three to five. Findings proved that children who were read to were more likely to have above average vocabulary attainment than those who were not. Children who looked at or read stories daily were four times more likely to enjoy stories “a lot” compared with peers who did not look at or read stories in a typical
For those children whose parents talked about the story or pointed out the pictures, literacy attainment rose even higher. At least a third of these parents took the reading a step further by drawing, making models, or acting out scenes with their child thus instilling a positive attitude about reading in these early years. Both educational and literacy outcomes rose for children whose parents shared stories during these early literacy years—the more the children enjoyed the stories, the better the literacy outcome (Formby, 2014).

Children develop intrinsic motivation for reading when they have a pleasurable experience. Studies indicate experiences differ due to variations in home experiences, parental attitudes, and backgrounds, which all play major roles in motivation (McCombs, 1997). More often than not, opportunities reflect the value. According to Whitehurst and Lonigan, (2001) and Yaden, Rowe, and McGillivray, (2000), children who are involved in literacy activities in the home generated positive attitudes toward reading, enjoyed leisure reading, and excelled in reading achievement. A critical beginning for readers is to be motivated in both home and school experiences, teaching them that reading can be pleasurable and worthwhile (Csikzentmihalyi, 1990; Snow et al., 1998).

**Student Attitude**

As a psychological theory, attitude holds an important position in governing one’s level of motivation. As students practice reading, they acquire fluency and realize the rewards of their efforts (Spiegel, 1992) while developing their own attitude about reading, yet many educators forget the importance of attitudes in relation to reading (Gillespie, 1993). A positive attitude with regard to reading can affect reading motivation and reading achievement (McKenna & Kear, 1990). For the primary grades with students who are just beginning to experience reading, positive reading experiences are imperative. Motivating students to read is important in order for
students to develop positive attitudes toward the activity and to build a strong foundation for future reading successes.

According to Russ (1989) a belief among classroom teachers is that students’ attitude toward reading (Ley, Schaer & Dismukes, 1994) and their attitude about a specific reading activity significantly impacts reading achievement. Some factors contributing to reading attitudes include cognitive skills (Cothern & Collins, 1992; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001) and instruction (Saracho & Dayton, 1989). Downing, (1982) Ghaith and Bouzeineddine, (2003) agree and note that factors that develop, shape, and influence attitude are also important. Wigfield and Guthrie (1997), for example, found that motivated students read more books and spend longer time reading, which is expected to bring about better performance in reading. Anderson, Wilson and Fielding, (1988) caution the timing of developmental states, noting that age development plays a part in shaping reading attitudes. Negative attitudes toward reading impact attention and motivation, and both attention and motivation are critical for student success in school (Shapiro and White, 1991). According to Alexander and Cobb (1992) attitude, whether positive or negative, is a prerequisite for attainment and the greatest predictor for student achievement. Researchers Russ and Mark (1988) conducted a survey with 7th grade students in which they discovered those with positive attitudes toward reading also had high achievement in reading. Further evidence by Logan and Johnson (2009) indicated that lifelong readers are those who consistently had a positive attitude toward reading while in school.

McKenna et al., (1995) conducted a study exploring the attitude toward reading exhibited by 18,185 first to sixth-grade students. Students were instructed to respond to a reading attitude survey developed by McKenna and Kear, (1990). The survey consisted of a 20-item rating scale measuring recreational and academic reading attitudes. The first significant point from the study
revealed a negative attitude toward academic and recreational reading. According to the mean scores, first grade students indicated positive attitudes while sixth graders’ scores suggested a negative one. Finally, girls exhibited more of a positive attitude than the boys and the gap widened with age.

Knuver and Brandsma (1993) express the importance of developing a positive attitude early on as the relationship between attitude and achievement weakens through primary school. Research also indicates that students’ attitudes toward reading vary according to gender (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; McKenna, 1997; McKenna & Kear, 1990). Research by Parker and Paradis, (1986) denotes that the female gender generally has an increasingly positive attitude toward reading than males. A study of 276 gifted students in first through twelfth grade by Anderson, Tollefson and Gilbert, (1985) supports this claim adding that the greatest gap was found when recreational reading was compared to academic reading. Research conducted by Chatterji (2006) also shows that boys have consistently lagged behind girls in reading; from when they were enrolled in kindergarten until the end of first grade where the gap is the widest. A study by McKenna (1997) consisting of 269 students found that the majority regarded reading as a predominantly feminine activity. They were of the opinion that reading is an activity more suitable for girls and that those perceptions intensified with age.

De Naeghel, et al., (2012) says students who invest time and have a positive attitude toward reading will gain reading achievement skills; however, those who avoid reading or are unmotivated to read squander the opportunity to become successful readers. Wigfield and Eccles (1994) proposed that students’ difficulty in reading at an early age contributed to negative achievement related to beliefs and lowered expectations for future achievement. Conversely, positive attitudes about reading lead students to seek opportunities to read, to have higher levels
of motivation, and to have a greater sense of self-esteem (Robinson & Weintraub, 1973). In a sample of elementary students, Metsala et al., (1996) found that the level of motivation to read correlated with the amount a student read. McKenna and Kear, (1990) believe students’ attitude can cause them to avoid or pursue reading. Schiefele, et al., (2012) believes reading motivation relates to a purpose for reading and feelings about reading relates to reading attitude. One’s attitude toward reading is vital because it affects reading performance (McKenna, Conradi, Lawrence, Jang, & Meyer, 2012).

Students favor activities for which they are proficient. They are also more prone to repeat or continue an activity when successful at an activity (Becker et al., 2010). Research has shown that reading achievement is related to positive attitudes toward reading (Baker & Wigfield, 1999). Gamboa, Rodríguez, and García, (2013) agree and believe motivation creates students who value subjects they are studying.

Ames (1992) argued that children who have set goals are more likely to maintain a positive attitude. Those who believe they are capable and competent are prone to show greater achievement in reading than those who do not hold such beliefs. A commentary by McCombs (1997) stated that efficacy expectations, subject task values, intrinsic motivation, and goal orientations influence learners’ motivation to read.

Mohd-Asraf and Abdullah (2016) believe A positive reading habit beyond academic reading should be encouraged, and quote Herron-McCoy’s 2009 research as “academic reading can be developed in a way to promote recreational reading outside the classroom” It has been found that reading decreases as students age. Recreational choices lure students away and provide interests that appear to be more exciting. Epstein & McFarland, (1976) confirm
motivation for learning declines as students’ progress in school, which presents educators with the task of finding a way to bridge the gap as students progressed through grade levels.

**Conclusion**

The age-old deliberation over the ideal type of motivation is continuous as well as the argument of whether or not rewards help or hinder motivation. According to Billington (1995), the child who learns to read for enjoyment and discovers the colossal riches available in books will by habit become the adult who keeps learning and progressing throughout life. The body of literature reviewed links the domains of motivation, effective strategies of educators, literacy in the home, and student attitudes toward reading.

Balance is needed in order to stimulate literacy development. A balanced approach creates a learning community where participants are valued contributors and active participation is a motivational factor in itself. Reading is a fundamental part of education and continued research in reading instruction and motivation is vital to the educational process.

This research could be used to foster motivation and increase academic achievement for primary-school students. As noted earlier, students arrive in the classroom with varying attitudes toward education. Motivating students who enter the classroom with little to no motivation and changing their negative beliefs surrounding self-worth are difficult undertakings for teachers. The reward is seeing student potential come to fruition as learning and achievement manifest inside as well as outside the classroom (Berliner, 2003).

The primary role of a teacher is to inspire and encourage students to reach beyond their comfort zones (Bowman, 2007). In order to foster self-esteem so that students can become successful in school, it is imperative that teachers support their students in all aspects of their learning.
As noted earlier, the findings of this study may enable primary-school teachers to promote social change by helping students become active members of society through reading achievement. Teachers are strategically positioned to tap the potential of highly motivated students and encourage those who struggle. Educators have significant impact on student motivation. Students enter school excited to succeed and become productive American citizens; however, learning must be ongoing.

In contemporary society, reading proficiency is an indispensable ability (De Naeghel et al., 2012). It is the job of educators to teach students how to read while also cultivating the motivation to read (Rasinski, 2011). When students begin their academic careers, they arrive at school curious about learning and with high expectations for success. They are motivated and enjoy learning, are exposed to a completely new world of learning, and are continually learning new things in a variety of ways (Gottfried, 1990; Mata, 2011; Mulford, 2006). The joy and wonderment of learning must be sustained throughout their educational careers. By focusing on the motivation of first graders, a strong foundation can be built toward lifelong learning and a love for reading. Mulford (2006) stated, “Society’s most important investment is increasingly seen to be in the education of its people” (p. 48). In the beginning the reluctant reader might need encouragement through the use of extrinsic incentives; however, as the love for reading grows it develops into an enjoyable, rewarding, experience and is replaced with a lasting intrinsic motivation.

This review of current literature focused on specific theories of motivation, domains of motivation, (including extrinsic and intrinsic incentives) strategies of highly effective teachers, literacy in the home, and student attitude toward reading and represented the extensive existing research found on motivation. Prior to this study, no specific research had been published on the
use of extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool for encouraging first-grade students to read and whether the extrinsic incentives used motivated students to read more than they would have without the incentives. This study examines types of motivation related to increasing the number of books first grade students read as well as reading achievement. This current study was conducted with a focus on the types of motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic) as they relate to improving the amount of reading as well as reading achievement. Second graders were chosen because second grade is when students begin to gain independent reading skill, understanding, and fluency.

Data was measured and compared before and after extrinsic incentives were implemented. It was used to compare intrinsic motivation to extrinsic motivation during the six-week period. The number of books read within a given period of time was calculated and compared to the weeks that included extrinsic incentives and the weeks that did not. This manner of research embodies a significant addition to the existing literature on reading motivation because it clearly compares both domains of motivation and reveals the one responsible for impacting the number of books read by first-grade students within a given period of time. The following paragraph describes the research design of the present study.

Chapter three contains an explanation of the research design used in the current study. Information on the population, sample, description of instruments, variables and instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis are explained. In chapter four, the results of the study are discussed; research procedures are reviewed; the results regarding the hypothesis being investigated are described and connected to the research questions; and statistical test results as well as those unplanned but discovered in the course of the investigation are described and analyzed in detail. In Chapter five, a review of the study including conclusions, and implications
in relation to the theoretical framework are interpreted and the research findings in relation to the research questions and hypotheses are provided. The recommendations for action, further study, and policy issues are discussed.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This section includes descriptions of the research design, setting, population and sample, treatment, variable and instrumentation, and methods used for collecting and analyzing data. The purpose of this study was to reassess the differences between extrinsic and intrinsic stimulus and summarize the variances of these two universal types of motivation when used with second grade students. A reading log was used as the tool to determine if this type of motivation intervention had an impact on increasing reading.

This study was quantitative with a quasi-experimental research design. The reason for the study was to test the idea that extrinsic incentives, when used as a motivation tool for reading, make a difference in the number of books read by students. The group of students participating in the study was 21 second graders, ages six and seven. The sample did not receive awards or incentives for reading for the first three weeks of the experiment, but began receiving extrinsic incentives for reading the final three weeks of the study.

Population and Sample

The site for the current research study was located in a rural area in the state of Tennessee. The school was one of four Title 1 elementary schools in a small city system that enrolls students in preschool through fourth grade. The school served a population of 429 students. The racial configuration of the school was comprised of fifteen percent (15%) African American, fifty-eight percent (58%) Caucasian, twenty-six percent (26%) Hispanic, and (1%) Multiracial students. The socioeconomic status of the school was low/middle class with
approximately 49% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunches. The sample consisted of twenty-one second grade students previously separated for instructional purposes before the study began. The group of students was selected as a convenience sample and represented 25% of the second-grade population in the school where this study took place. The racial composition of the students was comprised of (41%) Caucasian (12%) African American, (25%) Hispanic, (17%) Asian, and (5%) multi-racial students. The cooperating teacher was a regular education teacher.

The researcher contacted the superintendent’s office and submitted written permission to conduct the study. The district’s letter of approval was signed by the superintendent, the executive director of school leadership, the executive director of teaching and learning, and the director of pupil services (see Appendix A for district letter of approval).

After receiving approval from the district, the researcher drafted and sent a letter to the parents of each student included in the population sample. The letter of consent described the study and asked for permission allowing their child to participate in the study (see Appendix B for informed consent form). Participants and parents were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time in the process.

**Description of Instrument(s)**

After obtaining permission from the Carson-Newman University Institutional Review Board to proceed with the study, the process of collecting data began. The quantitative data were collected using individual student reading logs (see Appendix C for reading log). Students were instructed to record the number of books read. The researcher used extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool to promote reading beginning the fourth week of the study. Incentives were based on the number of books read by the student and coincided with the school wide effort to
engage students in reading. As a part of this effort, second-graders participated in Book Clubs. The researcher used a chart to illustrate the progress of students based on the number of books read, and incentives were awarded at each level. As students advanced to higher levels within the club, the value of the reward increased. Participating students were given time to read during school and allowed to take books home for additional reading after school. Prior to the intervention of incentives, school wide reading instruction was composed of reading aloud. At the beginning of the fourth week, the participating students set a goal for the number of books they wanted to read. A variety of books were available for students to take home each day, and parents were encouraged to read with students at home.

The cooperating teacher began intervention by sending home take home folders accompanied by a reading log and books for the parent to read and share with their child. Parents were encouraged to record all books read at home. Some parents chose to check out additional books from classroom libraries and the school library in order to have a broader selection of books to read at home. Guest readers, principals, teachers, librarians, parents, and community volunteers were encouraged to visit the classroom and read to students. The researcher and teacher paired students and established a buddy system with older students allowing readers to have a one-on-one time of reading books.

Incentives were based on student interests and prizes were awarded each time a new level was achieved. Extrinsic incentives were awarded to students in increments of 10. For example, if a child read 10 books he was listed in the 10 Book Club and would receive a reward as he advanced to the 20 Book Club he would receive an additional reward.
Rewards were stored in a treasure box. The box consisted of trinkets, small toys, candy, books, and school supplies. Students were able to choose from a variety of items and the variety of incentives provided an incentive to read additional books.

Student achievement was displayed on the door of the classroom. The exhibit was used as a visual means of creating excitement among students as they advanced to each new level. Students earned a sticker to place on the chart each time 10 books were read. Students were able to achieve each level as they read the required number of books. Rewards were provided and presented when a level was accomplished.

Variables and Instrumentation

Individual reading logs served as a data collection tool for all students. The 21 second grade students were asked to keep a running record of reading completed inside and outside of school. An individual log was prepared for each student (Appendix C). Students were asked to record the date and title of the book and have an adult sign as evidence the book was read. Reading log entries were reviewed for a period of three weeks prior to intervention and three weeks following intervention. The comparison of prior and post measurements offered insight into the amount of reading taking place by and with students.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher and cooperating teacher used a class chart to track student progress and participation. The chart contained a spot for each student’s name and was divided into small squares, each one representing ten books. Milestones from the list of incentives were highlighted on the chart in yellow, and a sticker was placed in a square each time ten books were read. Students were encouraged to celebrate peers when a goal was met. Charts served as visual reminders and representation of student accomplishments individually and for the class as a
whole. It enabled the participants to foresee the number of squares remaining to advance to the next milestone and equipped the researcher and cooperating teacher with an accurate account of the number of books read by students in the classroom.

**Data Analysis**

Reading logs were analyzed to determine if the amount of reading increased due to intervention. A comparison of the amount of reading completed prior to intervention was contrasted with the amount of reading that took place during a three-week period immediately following the beginning of the intervention. Results indicated the percentage of students showing growth, those who did not show growth, and those who revealed no change in the number of books read.

The average number of books read before intervention during a span of three weeks were counted and compared to the average number of books read after the introduction of incentives for a span of three weeks. A paired t-test was used to compare how twenty-one second grade students performed. The average number of books read before and after extrinsic incentives were introduced was measured. The statistical significance of the null hypothesis which stated, there will be no differences in the number of books read in the first three weeks compared to those read the final three weeks when extrinsic incentives were used was 0.05%. There was a 5% or less chance that the difference in the mean performance occurred when not implementing extrinsic incentives causing the null hypothesis to be true. Because of these findings, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. A test of the alternative hypothesis, which stated that the difference in using extrinsic incentives as opposed to not using extrinsic incentives was measured. The effect of using extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool
was positive and data suggested students were motivated to read more books when extrinsic incentives were introduced.

The independent variable in the study was extrinsic incentives. It was a nominal variable with a sampling of twenty-one second grade students. Reading logs for each student were monitored for three weeks before the introduction of extrinsic incentives. After three weeks, student reading logs were analyzed to see if the use of extrinsic incentives had an effect on the number of books read by the twenty-one students. The dependent variable in the study was student’s performance, the books read by students. This continuous variable, measured the number of books students read before and after the introduction of extrinsic incentives. The loss of reading logs may have been an extraneous variable; however, it was not confounding. The teachers established a check-in system accounting for reading logs on a daily basis. Replacement logs were issued when a problem occurred.

Summary

A paired t-test was used in the quasi-experimental quantitative research. The method chosen for student participation was based on a convenience method rather than randomization, rendering the quasi-experimental approach. The study sample consisted of twenty-one second-graders. Extrinsic incentives were administered to increase the amount of reading completed by each student. Reading logs were used to measure the number of books read by students prior to the experimental treatment and following the treatment. This comparison was used to establish the effects of reading motivation.

The current section consisted of an explanation of the research design and methods of the study. In the present study, an examination of whether extrinsic incentives had an impact on increasing the number of books read by second-grade students when extrinsic incentives were
involved was directed. The next section of the study will present the results of the data analysis. Chapter 5 will consist of a review of the study in relation to the theoretical framework as well as an interpretation of the research findings and how they relate to the research question and hypotheses. Recommendations for action, future research, and implications for social change will be discussed.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the difference in the number of books read intrinsically by students as compared to those read when extrinsic incentives were introduced as a motivation tool. Twenty-one second grade students made up the sample and participated in the study. The researcher created individual reading logs for each student. The reading logs served as the tool for determining if this type of intervention had an impact on student motivation. The study was quantitative with a quasi-experimental research design.

In this section, the analysis of the data collected throughout the study is described. The focus on the analysis of data using descriptive statistics as well as hypothesis testing in order to determine statistical conclusions to answer the research question is used. The data collected consisted of the number of books recorded in student reading logs. Analysis of the data indicated the importance extrinsic incentives had on motivation and a possible strategy for promoting reading that educators might consider implementing in their classrooms.

Research Questions

The researcher conducted the study related to the following research question:
What are the effects of implementing extrinsic incentives with second-grade students to motivate students to read?

1. Is there a statistical difference in the number of books second-grade students will read when extrinsic motivation is provided?

\[ H_0 \]
There will be no differences in the number of books second-grade students read after extrinsic incentives are presented.

$H_a$

Once extrinsic incentives are implemented, second-grade students will read more books than when extrinsic incentives were not offered.

As clarified in chapter three, this study took place over a six-week time period. During this time, the sample did not receive awards or incentives for the books read, but did receive extrinsic incentives for reading the second half of the study. Students participated by recording each book in a reading log.

**Analysis of Data**

A preliminary descriptive analysis was initiated in order to determine initial insights on the data gathered. The first analysis began by counting and recording the number of books students read during the first three weeks of the study. The researcher and cooperating teacher analyzed each student’s reading log and recorded the number of books read on a chart. The total number of books read by the twenty-one second-grade students in the sample during the first three weeks was 119.

The analysis revealed that six students in the sample did not read any books and the largest number of books read by a single student was thirty-one. Figure 4.1 represents the descriptive statistics for student reading logs in the first three weeks of the study. A total of 119 books were read by twenty-one students.

Further calculation revealed the median to be one ($M=1$) and the average, also known as the arithmetic mean to be 5.67 ($M=5.67$). Calculation of the mean revealed the average number
of books read by the twenty-one second-graders in the population sample within the first three weeks of the study to be 5.67 books.

Figure 4.1
Descriptive Statistics of Student Reading Logs (Weeks 1-3)

To calculate the standard deviation of the data for the first three weeks of the study, the number of books each student read was tallied, the sample mean was subtracted, and the result was squared. The sum of the squared differences was calculated and because the group in the study represented a sample of the second-grade population the number was divided by the number of students minus one (N-1). This calculated the variance. The variance equaled 62.93 ($V=62.93$). By calculating the square root of the variance, the sample standard deviation was determined. The sample standard deviation for the number of books read by students within the first three weeks was 7.93 ($SD=7.93$). Figure 4.1 indicates the data.

The second analysis was conducted at the end of the study. The researcher and cooperating teacher analyzed the reading logs distributed for weeks four, five, and six. The analysis indicated an increase in reading by comparing the number of books read in weeks four through six to weeks one, two and three. After recording the number of books on a paper chart it
was obvious that the use of extrinsic rewards had an increased effect on the number of books read by students.

Figure 4.2
Descriptive Statistics of Student Reading Logs (Weeks 4-6)

To compare results from the second half of the study to that of the first half a calculation of the median, mean, and standard deviation for weeks four through six was conducted. The sample median was 22 ($M=22$) and the average, also known as the arithmetic mean was 33.67 ($M=33.67$). Calculation of the mean revealed that the average number of books read by the twenty-one second-graders in the sample during the final three weeks of the study equaled 33.67 books. Figure 4.2 indicates the data.

To calculate the standard deviation, the total number of books each student read was subtracted from the mean, and the results were squared. The sum of the squared differences was calculated and because the group in the study represented a sample of the second-grade population the number was divided by the number of students minus one ($N-1$). This calculated
the variance with a result of 1199.33 ($V=1199.33$). By calculating the square root of the variance, the standard deviation was determined. The standard deviation for the number of books read by students during the final three weeks of the study was 34.63 ($SD=34.63$).

The next step was to perform a paired t-test using the data. Because paired t-test applies to difference data with normal distribution it was necessary to examine a histogram of the difference data. However, closer inspection of the histogram of difference data raised concern that the statistical significance of the difference in the number of books read may be overestimated by a paired t-test due to a small percentage of students reporting a vast number of books read during weeks four, five and six. Figure 4.3 displays this data.

Three students were identified as outliers when calculating the differences between the two sets of data. This was determined by finding the interquartile range of the difference data which was 27 books. A low data point was considered to be an outlier if the difference was more than
1.5 times the interquartile range below the third quartile. The third quartile presented a difference of -9 books. The first quartile presented a difference of -36 books cutting off the difference at -76.5 books. The three outliers had differences of -83, -109, and -110. There were no outliers on the other end of the data. The following figure represents the difference data in a box and whisker plot.

Figure 4.4
Box and Whisker Plot of Differences

To minimize the effects of the outliers and eliminate any bias, the one-tailed, paired t-test was conducted only after eliminating the three outlying students who recorded reading more than 100 books in the second half of the study. Since the numbers do not appear to be independent there is cause to believe that the students may have been in competition with each other which would be a separate extrinsic motivational factor. That would suggest that they are not truly a part of the same population because their actions set up their own reward system.

A statistical analysis of reading log data employing a one-tailed paired t-test with the categorical dependent variable of student’s performance was conducted. This test was engaged to examine the total number of books read during the weeks of the study. Students’ book totals from weeks one through three were compared to combined totals from weeks four, five and six.
The sample size was reduced to 18 with 17 being the degree of freedom when the three outliers were removed. Table 4.5 provides the mean, variance, and standard deviation for weeks 1-3 and weeks 4-6 when outliers were removed.

Figure 4.5
*Mean, Variance, and Standard Deviation for Weeks 1-6*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Weeks 1-3</th>
<th>Weeks 4-6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>21.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>63.31</td>
<td>309.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>7.95</td>
<td>17.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The *t*-test of means, of the group of second-grade students in the sample compared their pre- and post reading data and produced the following results from the one tailed, paired *t*-test. Results were *t* = -5.56 with a *p* = (T< -5.56) = 0.000017, and since *p* < .05, these results are significant when using an alpha level of .05. When the number of books read by the sample group of students were examined over a six-week period, a deeper analysis suggested that the effectiveness of extrinsic incentives had a positive impact on the number of books read by students. Therefore, the results of the paired-sample *t*-test produced means that were significant.

The null hypothesis stated that the implementation of extrinsic incentives would not result in a statistically significant improvement in the number of books read by students in the first half of the study when compared to those read after extrinsic incentives were introduced. There was a .05% or less chance that a difference in the mean performance would occur without the implementation of extrinsic incentives causing the null hypothesis to be rejected.

Because of the findings, the null hypothesis which stated, there will be no differences in the number of books read by students after extrinsic incentives are presented, was rejected and the
alternative hypothesis was accepted. It is much more likely that the alternative hypothesis, which stated that once extrinsic incentives were implemented, students would read more books than when extrinsic incentives were not offered, is correct. The observed increase in reading cannot reasonably be explained by chance. The effect of using extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool was positive and data indicated students were motivated to read more books when extrinsic incentives were presented.

**Summary**

The preliminary results for implementing extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool for reading indicated promise for continuing its practice in the future. Chapter five will address findings, conclusions, limitations, and recommendations in regard to this study.
CHAPTER 5
FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In an effort to address the findings of this study, this chapter is divided into six sections. The first section is a summary of the study followed by the research question. The third section discusses the findings of the study and how the findings assist in answering the research question. The fourth section examines the conclusions that can be made from analyzing the literature and information gathered through this study. The fifth section addresses possible limitations and the final section suggests recommendations for future research.

Summary of the Study

The primary purpose of this quasi-experimental quantitative study was to determine whether the implementation of extrinsic incentives with second-grade students in the study was successful in motivating students to read. The instrument used to collect data was student reading logs. For years educators have struggled with ways to motivate students, especially in the domain of reading. Research by Wigfield et al. (2008) found that additional research was necessary to completely determine the kind of practices that could be used to motivate readers. Studies by Guthrie and Wigfield (1997) contemplate countless themes and principles of motivation and acknowledge that there are various elements to motivation. Presently, educators use a plethora of concepts to engage and motivate students to read. However, there is no tried and true tactic that works with every student every time. The information gathered and
developed in this study provides a strategy teachers might employ in their classrooms to spur reading motivation.

**Research Question**

The researcher conducted the study related to the following research question: What are the effects of implementing extrinsic incentives with second-grade students to motivate students to read?

1. Is there a statistical difference in the number of books second-grade students will read when extrinsic motivation is provided?

   \( H_0 \)
   
   There will be no differences in the number of books second-grade students read after extrinsic incentives are presented.

   \( H_a \)
   
   Once extrinsic incentives are implemented, second-grade students will read more books than when extrinsic incentives were not offered.

**Findings**

The aim of this study was to determine if the use of extrinsic incentives as a motivation tool would cause students to read more books than they would without incentives and to consider the validity and effectiveness when applied to the area of reading. The research question was answered by analyzing the individual reading logs of the twenty-one second-grade students who participated in the study. Results of the study revealed that extrinsic incentives were successful for increasing the number of books read by second grade students over a period of six weeks. When the number of books read over a six-week period was analyzed, data verified that the use of extrinsic incentives produced results that were highly significant. The findings that reflect the result of the research question are as follows.
The use of extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool was substantial in contributing to the number of books students read within the time the study was conducted. By relating the expectancy theory of motivation to this study, the amount of reading taking place the final three weeks of the study when compared to the reading taking place during the first three weeks verified that most students preferred receiving incentives for reading. This finding substantiates the Expectancy Value Theory of Achievement. It supports the idea that the increase in the number of books read by student during the second half of the study was dependent upon the expectation of earning a reward for achieving a goal. Students’ actions in this study suggest that when more than one behavior is possible, the one that will be chosen is the one that has the greatest combination of accomplishment and worth. In this study it is apparent, when comparing data from weeks 1-3 to weeks 4-6 that extrinsic incentives take precedence over intrinsic motivation. However, this does not mean that all students were only motivated with extrinsic rewards. Some students in the study already read on a consistent basis before extrinsic incentives were introduced.

**Conclusions**

With consideration to external validity, it may be difficult to generalize the results of this study to other populations because of the size of the sample studied and the absence of a random sampling procedure. Schools having similar participant pools with regard to demographics, however, may value this information. Likewise, schools that face similar problems with motivating students to read could likewise benefit from the results. Schools that are in need of programs to enhance motivating students to read may also find the information useful.

It is important to reemphasize the fact that the effectiveness of extrinsic incentives depends on many variables and does not necessarily mean that they always lead to motivation or
an increase in performance from the student. This study proposes that the use of extrinsic incentives simply has the potential to affect motivation of students positively if the necessary circumstances are met.

The review of literature revealed the critical importance of motivation as a basis for a child’s success in school at any level as well as the future overall quality of life (Snow et al., 1998). Since research did not suggest a clear-cut path for motivating students with proven success, the use of extrinsic incentives was added to boost the amount of reading being recorded in student reading logs already in place. The addition of extrinsic incentives helped establish a way to increase the amount of reading done by students and its effectiveness in improving the number of books read by students.

The use of rewards for motivation is a subject that has spawned substantial debate through time (Cameron, Pierce, Banko, & Gear, 2005). Some theorists believe uninteresting activities can be encouraged when rewards are introduced (Pierce et al., 2003). For many students reading can be challenging (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2004) and motivating students to read is an ongoing struggle for educators. According to McGeown, Goodwin, Henderson, & Wright, (2012) reading requires effort and interest and students who possess these traits become lifelong learners. Applegate and Applegate (2010) remind us that the motivation to read is a determining factor for a student’s success or failure. After all, it was determination and motivation that pushed the little engine to the top of the mountain.

Within the limitations of this study, it may be argued that the use of extrinsic incentives could be effective in motivating students to read as an alternative to intrinsic motivation. Some researchers and educators believe incentives satisfy students’ needs in lieu of social interactions, recognition, feeling of achievement, and feedback on performance. Moreover, extrinsic
incentives often provide a valuable means of recognizing success, which reinforces positive behavior. To restate, extrinsic incentives used in this research initiative was successful for improving the number of books read by students during the six-week study. Further benefits for continuing the use of extrinsic incentives is that it will intrinsically motivate students to continue while birthing a love for reading.

**Limitations**

Because of the small sample size used in this study it is difficult to reach precise conclusions regarding limitations and advantages of using extrinsic incentives; however, further investigation may bring to light additional understanding and the potential extrinsic incentives can have for motivating students. One limitation was time. This included the length of the study and the time of year the study took place. The study took place over six weeks. During this time, there were several short weeks as well as a two-week spring break that delayed beginning the second half of the study. It would have been interesting to see if students continued to stay motivated given a longer period of time; results may have been different. It is important to remember that any new program requires an investment in time for change to be effective. Perhaps continuing the study for more than six weeks would yield greater results than what was reported during this short time frame.

The population sample size served as a limitation. The population was limited to twenty-one second-grade students from a rural East Tennessee school district. The use of such a specific population could have potentially impacted the results of this study.

Another limitation was the use of reading logs with young children. Several students forgot, lost, or misplaced their reading logs. These students had to be given replacements and
therefore the effect of this limitation was that some of the students were unable to account for all the books they had read.

An added limitation was parental influence. The consistency and inconsistency in the number of books read daily and weekly led the researcher and cooperating teacher to believe that some parents may have stressed reading at home while others did not. In some cases, the parent never signed the log. The only evidence of reading for some students was recorded at school and signed by the teacher.

An added limitation was consistency. Some students were continual readers throughout the study while others waivered. Several students started strong and slacked off as the days progressed. Others were slow to begin, but gained momentum closer to the end of the study. Because of the variation of the students’ inconsistencies the researcher questioned if the outcome of the study would have differed given a longer period of time.

The final limitation may have been the emphasis placed on reading by the cooperating teacher and researcher. The cooperating teacher and researcher did their best to encourage students and offer daily reminders to read. However, there were several long weekends and breaks that interrupted the daily routine.

**Recommendations**

In order to fully understand the scope of the benefits of using extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool, some additional research needs to take place. There is a lack of current research concerning the use of extrinsic incentives and its effect on motivation. A suggestion for a future study would be to conduct this research with another classroom in the same school to determine the fidelity of the results among the same population. Another recommendation would be to look at the same study with regard to the entire student population and not limit the
study to one grade level. Applying the research to all students would allow the researcher to determine the scope of influence that extrinsic incentives play in motivating students to read.

The final proposal would be to conduct a qualitative study in which students would be allowed the opportunity to share their insight, experiences, and attitudes related to reading and the use of extrinsic incentives. This might be conducted using open-ended questions and surveys. Future researchers might also consider issuing surveys to parents and teachers.

Overall, the t-test indicated that the use of extrinsic incentives had a positive effect and was a successful model for improving the overall amount of reading done by students. The paired t-test provided an extensive analysis of the number of books read by each student in the sample. The results of the paired-samples t-test produced means that were highly significant, resulting in a rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. This analysis suggests that the effectiveness of extrinsic incentives had indeed rendered a positive impact on the amount of reading that took place within a six-week period. These outcomes are optimistic and suggest that an ongoing analysis of the number of books read by students receiving incentives should continue before the use of extrinsic incentives can be deemed an authentic method for motivating students to read. It is recommended that this study be repeated, for external validity, perhaps several times, with other demographic subgroups.

**Summary**

The results of this study led to a better understanding of how extrinsic incentives can motivate students to read more books. Students who are motivated to read at an early age will want to read more and become better readers as they progress in school and through life. The hope is that the students involved in this study will apply this motivation intrinsically as they continue their education.
The effects of this study verified that the use of extrinsic incentives can be a valuable addition to any reading program, especially those seeking to motivate students to reach reading goals. As previously stated, identifying and employing effective motivation can be a positive approach for increasing the number of books read by students as well as literacy skills. An added benefit to using extrinsic incentives as a motivational tool is that they can benefit all students across grade levels and help in the development and love for literacy, especially as there appears to be a decline in learning and academic achievement as students move through elementary school into middle school and beyond.

Findings from this study reinforce what many educators already know to be true. Motivation leads to success. Based on the literature supporting the use of extrinsic incentives as well as the findings from this study, it is possible to argue that extrinsic incentives used as a motivational tool with elementary students may promote reading and lead to student’s willingness to exert more effort in school, to go beyond expectations, and to contribute to effectively obtaining objectives set before them.
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doi:10.1080/0013188042000222421


doi:10.1177/0731948712438556
APPENDIX A
DISTRICT APPROVAL
Approval and Follow-up Record for a Dissertation/Thesis

Date: 3-9-17

Name of Researcher: Donna Turner
College/University: Carson Newman
Address: 1646 Russell Avenue, Jefferson City, TN.
Telephone Number: 865-471-2000
Type of Study: Dissertation

College/University/Advisor/Dissertation Chair: Dr. Brenda Dean

Description of Project: Reading Motivation: Using Extrinsic Incentives as a Motivational Tool

APPROVAL FOR SUBMISSION TO SUPERINTENDENT

[Signatures and comments]

APPROVAL BY SUPERINTENDENT

[Signature]

FOLLOW-UP

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Date: June, 2016
APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Consent to Participate in Research

The Study

READING MOTIVATION:
USING EXTRINSIC INCENTIVES AS A MOTIVATIONAL TOOL

**Purpose of this research study:**
The purpose of this study is to find out if second grade students interest in reading books will increase when tokens/rewards are offered for reading.

**What you will be asked to do:**
Student will be asked to participate by listing all the books they read in a reading log. Reading logs will be provided. Students may also participate by answering questions during the study.

**Time required:**
Three weeks

**Risk and benefits:**
There are minimal risks for participating in this study. There will be no direct benefit for participating in this study.

**Confidentiality:**
The study data will be handled and kept confidential. If results from this study are published or presented, individual names and other personally identifiable information will not be used.

**Rights:**
Participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You and your child are free to choose to not take part in this study. You and your child can decline to answer any questions and are free to stop taking part in the study at any time. Your child will not be penalized for not participating.

**Right to withdraw from the study:**
You have the right to withdraw your child from this study at any time.

**Whom to contact if you have any questions:**
Dana Turner, (865) 425-9501
dturner@ornl.edu
168 Manhattan Avenue, Oak Ridge TN. 37830

**Agreement**
I have read the information above. I voluntarily agree to participate and allow my child to participate in the study and I have received a copy of this description.

Student: ___________________________ Date: _____________________

Parent/Guardian: ___________________________ Date: _____________________
APPENDIX C
STUDENT READING LOG
Student Reading Log

Name: __________________________________________

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