

Effects of School Library Reading Promotion Activities on Reading Motivation

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Brief Review of Literature

School librarians are in the position to provide activities that promote students' motivation to read and to help further students' choice to read for pleasure (Guldager et al., 2016; Small et al., 2009; Small & Arnone, 2011; Small et al., 2017; Williams et al., 2012). This is a critical role because, as Baker and Scher (2002) noted, "motivation is a key factor for reading success" (p. 240). Library activities that include families, are not tied to extrinsic rewards, allow for free choice, include variety, and/or stimulate curiosity are noted as motivating for children's free choice reading for pleasure (Baker & Scher, 2002; Guldager et al., 2016; Small et al., 2009; Small & Arnone, 2011; Stauffer, 2007; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997; Williams et al., 2012).

Reading motivation is multifaceted. Students are motivated to read for different reasons or purposes (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). Wigfield and Guthrie (1997), found that students measuring highest in intrinsic motivation to read engaged in reading about three times as many minutes as those testing lowest in reading intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation has been shown to significantly impact students' reading skill (McGeown et al., 2012). Conversely, unrelated extrinsic rewards (i.e. candy and toys) can lessen intrinsic motivation, create negative long-term effects on reading for pleasure, and promote reading as merely a way to win a prize (Small et al., 2009; Small et al., 2017; Stauffer, 2007; Williams et al., 2012). School library reading promotion activities have the potential to center around extrinsic, intrinsic, and a combination of both types of motivation.

In addition to the motivational aims of reading promotion activities, budget is a factor when deciding which activities a school library can provide to motivate students to read. Library budgets have been decreased in recent years, and, as a result, libraries must develop strategies for dealing with budget constraints (Hedlund & Copeland, 2013). Small et al. (2009) reiterated,

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“Many of the elaborate, formal reading incentive programs can be costly. In harsh economic times, it makes sense to offer other reading incentives that excite children about reading but cost little or no money” (p. 29). Understanding which reading promotion activities result in the most beneficial type of motivation has the potential to help librarians improve financial decisions.

While numerous articles addressing motivation and motivational factors affecting reading can be found, studies showing the effects of specific school library reading promotion activities could not be located. Stauffer (2007) stated, “Most published information on reading promotion is vague and general. Programs are merely reported as “a success,” “a lot” of children participate, and they read “many” books, with no definition of those terms” (p. 403).

Understanding reading motivation will contribute to the design of library activities that increase students’ enjoyable reading (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). Articles present informative data on computerized programs, such as Accelerated Reader and the results of summer reading programs (Krashen, 2005; Roman & Fiore, 2010). These often focus on extrinsic rewards, which past research has shown to be less effective on long-term effects on reading for pleasure (Guldager et al., 2016; Small et al., 2009; Small & Arnone, 2011; Small et al., 2017; Williams et al., 2012). Even as articles (Baker & Scher, 1999; Guldager, 2016; Small et al., 2009; Small & Arnone, 2011; Small et al., 2017; Stauffer, 2007; Williams et al., 2012) named traits reading motivational programs should include (i.e. family involvement, self-selection, book discussion, etc.), they did not provide data indicating that the specific programs are effective regarding reading rates or motivational changes. More research needs to be conducted on school library reading promotion activities’ effects on intrinsic motivation and reading material checkout rates.

Research Problem

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The problem is positive attitudes towards free choice reading for pleasure begin to decline at the ages of nine to eleven years old (Cummings et al., 2018). This has a significant impact on students because the amount of leisure reading drastically impacts academic reading achievement (Cummings et al., 2018; Mol & Bus, 2011). Furthermore, librarians, who are unaware of activities that support intrinsic motivation to read, may support the notion that reading is in some way unpleasant because extrinsic rewards are required to make students do it (Guldager et al., 2016; Small et al., 2009; Small et al., 2017).

Study Purpose

The purpose of the proposed quantitative quasi experimental study is to examine the effects of specific reading promotion activities (i.e. family reading night, award book week, Banned Book Week, booktalks, and book clubs) on reading material checkout rates and intrinsic motivation to read for pleasure (identified by measuring efficacy, curiosity, and involvement). The quantitative quasi experimental design is appropriate as the study examines the relationship between variables and lacks random assignment of participants. If activities positively impact checkout rates and intrinsic motivation, these activities can be recommended to future and practicing school librarians to increase the amount children freely choose to read for pleasure.

Research Question and Hypotheses

Q1: How do school library reading promotion activities affect reading material checkout rates and intrinsic motivation to read for pleasure?

H1₀: School library reading promotion activities do not significantly increase reading material checkout rates and intrinsic motivation to read for pleasure.

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H1a: School library reading promotion activities significantly increase reading material checkout rates and intrinsic motivation to read for pleasure.

Procedures

Population and Sample

The study population consists of fourth grade students enrolled in Oklahoma public schools. According to the Oklahoma State Department of Education (2019), there were 50,904 fourth grade students enrolled in Oklahoma public schools in the 2019-2020 fiscal year, and they will be accessed, for the study, through library program participation at their school sites. The nonprobability convenience sampling technique will be used to draw a minimum of 382 participants from the study population. According to the Raosoft (2004) sample size calculator, with inputs of 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level, a sample size of 382 Oklahoma fourth grade students in the proposed study would allow results to be generalized to the study population.

Data Collection Process

Data for the study will be collected using two methods including reading material checkout reports from school library database software and from answers participants provide via a researcher-revised Motivation for Reading Questionnaire developed by Wigfield and Guthrie (1995). School librarians, from participating school sites, will provide checkout reports one week before the reading promotion activities occur (the first week in October), the last day of the week when the activity was conducted, and one month from when the activity was completed. After obtaining consent from participants, guardians, and school administration, teachers will conduct a group-administered survey questionnaire before conducting the reading promotion activities (during the first week in October) and one week after the activity was

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completed. Teachers will ensure participants understand how to complete the questionnaire, inform students that their responses are confidential, distribute cardboard dividers for privacy, distribute paper questionnaire, explain instructions to circle yes or no to answer the questions, read the fifteen yes or no questions to assess intrinsic motivation to read (indicated by reading efficacy, curiosity, and reading involvement questions on the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire), and collect the questionnaires to be mailed back to the researcher. Upon collection, participants will be thanked for their time and resume the school day.

Data Analysis Procedures

Write five to seven sentences about how you will analyze your quantitative data. Describe any univariate analyses you will conduct, clearly stating the descriptive statistics you will report, and telling us why those statistics are appropriate. Explain what inferential statistical test, if any, you will use to test your null hypothesis and why the chosen inferential statistical test is appropriate, referring to the number of variables in your study and the level of measurement of each variable. Cite your sources.

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