THE IMPACT OF PARTICIPATION IN A SCHOOL LIBRARY BOOK CLUB ON STUDENTS’ READING MOTIVATION AND ACHIEVEMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

by

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Reaching grade level proficiency and developing lifelong reading habits are central goals of elementary educators. This study examined the impact of participation in a school library book club upon students’ reading motivation and achievement. Reading promotion activities both motivate students to read and increase their reading proficiency. The study was conducted in a suburban elementary school with six fifth-grade students. The researcher conducted a 10-week book club in which students engaged in literary discussions and activities in a social learning environment. Data were collected using two measures. The Motivation to Read Profile was administered before and after the book club to examine reading self-concept and attitudes. AIMSweb reading assessment data were collected to measure reading achievement levels before and after the book club study. The findings of this study revealed measurable increases in student reading achievement and motivation levels after participation in a school library book club.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .............................................................................................................. x
LIST OF FIGURES ........................................................................................................... xi

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................... 1
  Statement of the Problem ............................................................................................. 4
  Purpose of the Study .................................................................................................... 5
  Research Questions .................................................................................................... 6
  Limitations of the Study .............................................................................................. 6
  Definition of Terms ..................................................................................................... 7
  Research Design ......................................................................................................... 8
  Summary .................................................................................................................... 9

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ................................................................. 11
  Reading Achievement of Elementary Students ......................................................... 12
  The Link Between Reading Motivation and Achievement ........................................ 14
  Theories of Motivation .............................................................................................. 17
  Reading Motivation in the Elementary Grades .......................................................... 19
  Book Club as Reading Motivator and Achievement Booster .................................... 23
    Components of a Library Book Club ........................................................................ 25
    Participatory Nature of Book Club .......................................................................... 27
  Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 27

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY ......................................................................................... 29
Implications........................................................................................................... 65
Recommendations .................................................................................................. 67
Future Research ...................................................................................................... 68
Summary .................................................................................................................. 69
WORKS CITED ......................................................................................................... 71
APPENDICES
A. Consent Forms .................................................................................................... 78
B. Study Approval .................................................................................................... 80
C. Motivation to Read Profile .................................................................................. 81
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. MRP Reading Survey Total and Subscales Comparison of Mean</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. MRP Reading Survey Total and Subscales Comparison of Percentages</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Maze Progress Summary</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Student 1 Scores across Multiple Measures</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Student 2 Scores across Multiple Measures</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Student 3 Scores across Multiple Measures</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Student 4 Scores across Multiple Measures</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Student 5 Scores across Multiple Measures</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Student 6 Scores across Multiple Measures</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Percentage increase for the Motivation to Read Profile</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. R-CBM individual scores and target prior to book club</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. R-CBM individual scores and target after book club</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Maze individual scores and target prior to book club</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Maze individual scores and target after book club</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Total of Corrects on AIMSweb assessments prior to and after book club</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1:
INTRODUCTION

Reading is fundamental to lifelong learning and success. Being literate improves function in society and increases opportunities for career and personal growth (Wigfield and Guthrie 420). A main goal of schools is to provide a learning environment that cultivates students’ reading skills and abilities so they are prepared to enter society as productive members. Educators strive to increase students’ reading achievement levels to the proficiency necessary for grade level work and beyond (Rampey, Dion, and Donahue). Motivation is an important influence on reading attitudes, self-concept, and the formation of reading habits (Gambrell, Classroom Cultures 15). It is also linked with reading achievement as students who are motivated to read generally engage in more reading (Morgan and Fuchs 165). Reading promotion activities are aimed at increasing both motivation and achievement. A school library book club promotes reading in a social context; allowing students to interact with one another during reading activities and provides adult reading role models (Gordon 34). This study focuses on the impact of participation in a school library book club on students’ reading motivation, self-concept as a reader, and reading achievement.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, about 22% of American adults have minimal literacy skills. Adults with minimal literacy skills often did not complete their education through high school, are more likely to be unemployed, hold very low paying jobs, or are homeless. Improving literacy rates benefits citizens and society in general. Morrow contends that a democratic, moral, productive society depends on citizens who can and do read (7). Higher levels of literacy raise self-esteem, lead to
higher paying jobs, increase participation in community issues and groups, and provide adult reading role models for the younger generation. Fitzgibbons stresses the importance of adults modeling reading for young children in the home. She discusses a report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading*, which identified the need for young children to develop reading readiness before entering school (21). An important component of reading readiness is being read to by an adult in the home; therefore, children of illiterate adults are at a disadvantage before even starting school.

The issue of aliteracy is equally important as it relates to reading education in the United States. As discussed by Beers, aliterates are those who are capable of reading but choose not to read (110). Students in the United States spend 13 years of their lives in school where they are taught to read at increasingly higher levels. However, upon graduation from high school many do not read for pleasure or enjoyment. As the reading role models for the younger generation it is imperative that teachers and school librarians design motivational reading activities to encourage lifelong reading. Beers found that aliteracy stemmed from negative reading attitudes at home and for some it was a result of non-participation in reading-related activities (111). When students have a poor attitude toward reading in or out of school, they are unlikely to engage in reading. Reading experiences with parents and teachers help students become lifelong readers because they receive feedback that may influence their attitude toward reading in positive ways (Fizgibbons 22).

Reading abilities and skills must be cultivated as students mature cognitively, academically, and socially. Jeanne Chall, a pioneer in the field of reading research,
described the stages of reading development. Students progress through successive reading stages by acquiring more complex, technical, and abstract skills (12). As students master the fundamental building blocks of reading, they progress toward more advanced skills in order to be competent readers. Attaining reading success in the upper elementary grades is critical to the transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn,” as identified by Chall. Promoting the reading habit advances reading skills, which helps students transition from being able to read to reading for learning and meaning. According to Bloom, children’s reading habits form no later than the sixth grade, making it imperative that educators help students develop a positive attitude toward reading and an understanding of both the independent and social aspects that make up the process (28).

Motivation plays an important role in the reading process, formation of student reading habits, and reading achievement. The link between motivation and achievement is well represented in research and identified as important in understanding reading trends (Aarnoutse and Schellings; Applegate and Applegate; Baker and Wigfield; Morgan and Fuchs; Quirk, Schwanenflugel, and Webb; Wigfield and Guthrie). Motivated readers will have positive attitudes toward reading and engage in more reading activities than non-motivated readers (Baker and Wigfield 1). Students who are highly motivated to read increase their amount of reading over time leading toward increased usage of skills, strategies, and knowledge, thus impacting achievement.

School library media specialists have a vital role in promoting reading, motivating students to read, and increasing reading achievement. The link between the school library and reading achievement is well documented in research. In a landmark study, Lance
found that academic achievement tends to be higher when schools are staffed with qualified library media specialists (76). Loertscher expands upon this link between school libraries and student achievement by investigating the roles of the library media specialist in regard to school reading programs. Especially relevant to reading motivation and achievement is the development of authentic opportunities for readers to make connections to reading in a community environment (Loertscher 6). Successful reading promotion strategies positively affect student motivation, self-concept, and achievement; they are necessary in developing proficient and lifelong readers. A school library book club, like the one implemented in this research study, is a participatory reading activity designed to motivate students to read and encourage lifelong reading (Hall 33).

**Statement of the Problem**

Educators have a two-fold responsibility regarding reading in schools: to promote reading habits necessary for lifelong success and to develop proficient readers, as evidenced on achievement tests. Both of these goals are affected by students’ motivation to read, which educators have struggled with for many years. Most students start school with high levels of intrinsic motivation to learn. They want to please their parents and teachers and experience positive progress in school. Research has shown a decline in motivation and performance as students move from fourth to fifth grade, elementary to middle school, and a decline in personal reading in early adolescence (Chall, Jacobs and Baldwin; Eccles and Wigfield, “Schooling’s Influences”). Reading achievement scores indicate students are progressing; however, national reading statistics data indicate that 68% of students in grades four and eight are performing at basic or below basic reading levels (National Center for Education Statistics 2). The problem of low reading
achievement levels paired with generally decreasing levels of motivation is a concern for educators. Investigating ways to increase motivation and achievement in upper elementary students is crucial in helping all students reach reading proficiency and develop lifelong reading habits.

**Purpose of the Study**

Reading achievement statistics and the documented decline in reading motivation of upper elementary students provided an impetus for this research study. While students are making reading progress, a large percentage of students continue to perform below grade level targets (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; Rampey, Dion, and Donahue). The goal of elementary reading education is to raise all students to grade level proficiency (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; Rampey, Dion, and Donahue). This thesis explores the link between reading motivation and achievement necessary to develop successful reading initiatives in which students will participate and progress. Theories of motivation and factors that affect motivation were reviewed in the literature to gain a better understanding of student attitudes and behaviors that influence their reading. The school library book club as a catalyst to motivate readers and boost achievement was implemented. The nature of the book club addresses the indicators found in research that generally motivate students to read: reading role models, the social aspects of reading, and access to books. The purpose of this study is to determine how participation in a school library book club impacts reading motivation, self-concept as a reader, and reading achievement.
Research Questions

This thesis examines the ways a book club impacts reading motivation, self-concept as a reader, and reading achievement levels of fifth-grade students. The students were voluntary members of a before-school book club held in the school library media center. The students represented various levels of readers from below average to above proficient, as indicated on reading achievement tests. This thesis will focus on three main questions:

1. How does book club participation affect students’ reading motivation?
2. How does book club participation affect students’ self-concept as a reader?
3. How does book club participation affect students’ reading achievement?

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited in size, scope, and time. It was implemented in one grade level at one elementary school with participation being voluntary, which led to a sample size of 6 students. Students who had access to parent transportation, room in their weekly schedules, and interest in participating became subjects in the study. Time was a factor as the study took place over a period of two months, not enough time for a longitudinal study. It would have been beneficial to conduct a book club regularly and measure reading motivation, self-concept, and achievement again in sixth grade. Results could have been compared across grade levels to gauge impact of participation in book club over time and correlate it with reading motivation and achievement.

Further limitations include availability of books and other influencing factors that affect reading progress. Selection of books for the book club was limited to resources available in the school library and local public libraries. Additional book choices and
copies make high interest books more accessible to students and further reading interest. Other influencing factors that the researcher could not control affected reading progress, such as core reading programs in classrooms, interventions implemented by other educators, and home reading influences.

Because of these limitations, the results of this study are not generalized to other elementary students. However, this study provides information regarding student reading motivation, achievement, and the efficacy of a school library book club. The results of this study might provide useful information to library media specialists and teachers for the development of reading promotion activities.

**Definition of Terms**

AIMSweb – AIMSweb is a benchmark and progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent, and continuous student assessment (NCS Pearson 2011).

Book club – For the purposes of this study, a book club is a group of people who meet to read books, discuss books, and engage in related book activities.

Cloze passage – This is a 150-400 word passage where the first sentence is left intact. Thereafter, every 7th word is replaced with three words inside parenthesis. One of the words is the exact one from the original passage (NCS Pearson 2011).

Motivation – The general desire to do something.

Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) – The MRP refers to a two-part instrument designed to assess reading motivation (Gambrell et al. 10).

NAEP – National Assessment of Educational Progress

NAEP advanced reading level – Tests whether students are able to make complex inferences and construct and support their inferential understanding of the text.
Students should be able to apply their understanding of a text to make and support a judgment (National Center for Education Statistics 6).

NAEP basic reading level – Tests whether students are able to locate relevant information, make simple inferences, and use their understanding of the text to identify details that support a given interpretation or conclusion (National Center for Education Statistics 6).

NAEP proficient reading level – Tests whether students are able to integrate and interpret texts and apply their understanding of the text to draw conclusions and make evaluations (National Center for Education Statistics 6).

Reading fluency – the ability to read orally with speed, accuracy, and proper expression (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development 11).

Reading comprehension – intentional thinking during which meaning is constructed through interactions between text and reader (Harris and Hodges 207).

**Research Design**

The review of literature began with searching for information in three main areas: reading achievement, reading motivation, and school library book clubs. The research review included books, journal articles, and research reports. Books written by teachers and experts in the respective fields of reading, motivation, and library science were used, as were journal articles ranging from scholarly, peer-reviewed articles to those by practicing teachers and school librarians. Articles were retrieved from the following databases; *Academic Search Complete, EconLit with Full Text, Education Research Complete, Education Resources Information Center, MasterFILE Premier, Library Literature and Information Science Full Text*, and *PsycARTICLES*. Search terms used
included “reading,” “achievement,” “reading achievement,” “motivation,” “reading motivation,” “school library,” and “book club.”

Search criteria initially remained broad to include a range of experts in the field of reading, motivation, and school library science, but search terms had to be made more specific after trends in the research were identified, most notably, the link between reading motivation and reading achievement. The search was then narrowed to include “link motivation achievement.”

The literature review commences with background information regarding the elementary library media specialist as a leader in developing reading promotion programs. The subsequent areas of focus include these five topics: reading achievement statistics, the link between reading motivation and achievement, theories of motivation, and reading motivation in elementary grades. Finally, the exploration of school library book club as reading motivator and achievement booster is studied. The conclusion emphasizes the need for understanding students’ reading motivations, the tie between reading motivation and achievement, and the impact school library book clubs have upon student reading success.

**Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of the importance of reading skills for academic and lifelong success, discussed the role of motivation and its link to achievement, and established the school library and library media specialist as positive influences upon student reading success. The challenge of increasing motivation and achievement is revealed as crucial to helping all students succeed in reading. This challenge leads to the purpose of this study, which is to determine how participation in a
school library book club impacts reading motivation, self-concept as a reader, and reading achievement. The research questions address this in the context of a fifth grade, before-school, library book club conducted in the school library media center by the researcher and the school library media specialist. Limitations of the study were discussed, necessary terms defined, and the research design identified. The literature review is presented in Chapter 2 and examines the research regarding student reading achievement, motivation, the link between the two, and book club as reading motivator and achievement booster. Chapter 3 describes the methods used in this study, which include implementation of the book club, weekly book club meetings, reading surveys, interviews, and collection of reading achievement data. Chapter 4 presents the results of the analysis of data that were collected through the reading motivation and assessment scores. Chapter 5 consists of a summary of the study, conclusions, implications, recommendations, and ideas for future research.
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Motivating students to read and increasing reading achievement are widely discussed issues in education. Beginning in early childhood and continuing into adolescence, educators work to help all students achieve reading proficiency, as well as to encourage them to be lifelong readers (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education). According to Wigfield and Guthrie, “Students’ reading amount and breadth contribute substantially to several valued aspects of their achievement and performance, such as reading achievement, world knowledge, and participation in society” (420). Elementary school years are crucial times in terms of affecting attitude and shaping lifelong reading habits, thus providing an impetus for the study of effective reading methods to increase motivation and achievement. School libraries and library media specialists are integral components of promoting reading. Loertscher suggests that school library media specialists create authentic opportunities for students that emphasize reading as a lifelong endeavor (36). The school library, as a central community space within the school, has the potential to affect all students in positive ways in terms of motivation and achievement.

This chapter explores the reading achievement of upper elementary students and the link between motivation and reading achievement. Theories of motivation and research on students’ motivation to read are discussed. Factors surfacing in the research that affect reading motivation are investigated. Finally, this chapter explores library book clubs as a way to motivate readers and boost achievement.
Reading Achievement of Elementary Students

Strong foundational reading skills are predictive of future academic progress and success as a literate adult. Reading skills are necessary for success in a global society that relies on the transfer of information. According to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), weak reading skills correlate to lower academic achievement, fewer opportunities for employment, and reduced opportunities for advancement (3). Petrilli and Scull discuss reading achievement data in an international context by analyzing the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009 results. In relation to other nations belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United States produces average proportions of low and high achievers in math and reading. The study points out that the United States produces fewer high-achieving students per capita when compared to other nations typically praised for their education systems, such as Finland, Korea, and Japan (Petrilli and Scull 10).

Reading achievement levels of elementary students in the United States have dominated discussions among educators and policy makers with emphasis on increasing the percentage of proficient readers (Allington 40). According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the percentage of fourth grade students scoring at or above the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Proficient level was 32 percent in 2011, 32 percent in 2009, and 27 percent in 1992 (23). The percentage of eighth grade students scoring at or above proficiency was 32 in 2011, 30 in 2009, and 27 in 1992 (National Center for Education Statistics 52). Allington (40) interprets the data as two out of every three students in the United States reading below levels necessary to perform grade-level work. Kaniuka (184) contends that the main purpose of schools is to improve
the academic performance of all students; but more recently, emphasis is placed on students struggling to meet state achievement goals for proficiency. The “State Snapshot Report,” states that 34 percent of fourth grade students and 36 percent of eighth grade students in Missouri performed at or above the NAEP Proficient level on state reading assessments (National Center for Education Statistics 23). The data indicates that 66 percent of fourth grade students and 64 percent of eighth grade students performed at the NAEP Basic or Below Basic levels. Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) research documents the importance of student engagement in varied reading activities, as they are predictive of learning and reading achievement in school. Reading for enjoyment is positively correlated with reading proficiency as reported in PISA findings (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development 13). Students who reported reading daily for enjoyment, on average, performed one-and-a-half grade levels above those who did not.

Research has linked the achievement behaviors of students to their beliefs, values, and goals; however, affective processes have not gained as much attention (Eccles and Wigfield, Motivational Beliefs 127). Further study of affective processes is necessary to “capture” conceptual change in cognitive research models and not rely solely upon rational processes (Eccles and Wigfield, “Motivational Beliefs” 127). It has been theorized that attitudes and motivation impact reading achievement by influencing the time students engage in reading (McKenna and Kear, 934).
The Link between Reading Motivation and Achievement

Educators generally agree that motivation plays an important role in developing proficient reading skills among elementary children (Quirk, Schwanenflugel, and Webb 199). Reading motivation initiates and guides reading behavior. Wigfield and Guthrie (421) indicate a link between motivational processes, cognitive development, and strategic reading. Children’s motivation to read is a predictor of the amount of reading done by children outside of school (422), and this practice is an important component of developing reading skills and increasing achievement (Quirk, Schwanenflugel, and Webb). McKool points to studies that found vocabulary acquisition, fluency, comprehension, and general intellectual development are positively influenced by out-of-school reading engagement (111). Fitzgibbons documents results from Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading, which determined the best predictor of reading comprehension, vocabulary growth, and gains in reading achievement between the second and fifth grade is the amount of personal reading (21).

Quirk, Schwanenflugel, and Webb investigated the relationships between motivation to read and reading fluency skills and found that self-concept begins to influence reading achievement earlier than previous research had indicated (196). They expanded on a study by Baker and Wigfield which found that children’s motivation to read accounted for as much as a 14% variance in the amount of reading done by third- and fifth-grade students (200). Quirk, Schwanenflugel, and Webb found that students’ reading self-concept and reading fluency skills are reciprocally related to one another in second grade. The researchers note the importance of this finding in regard to struggling readers and, as Wigfield and Guthrie described, the negative impact that early struggles
with reading have on student motivation (428). Further study by Quirk, Schwanenflugel, and Webb relates the impact of sensitivity to previous performance experiences upon students’ reading self-perceptions (217). Negative self-concepts in reading impede future reading fluency development. Children with high reading fluency levels develop positive self-concepts as readers and spur future reading fluency progress (222).

Maintaining reading fluency progress is crucial to achieve grade level targets and reach proficiency. Research suggests that students’ reading motivational needs are relational to their reading skill needs and both require attention from educators (Morgan and Fuchs 166). Aarnoutse and Schellings expand the link between reading motivation and achievement by indicating a reciprocal relationship (388). Reading motivation is affected by the use of reading strategies and utilization of reading strategies is affected by motivation to read. Morgan and Fuchs suggest a bidirectional relationship between children’s reading skills and reading motivation. A bidirectional relationship is also explained in the following manner by Everhart, Angelos, and McGriff: the more students read, the more successful they become; and the more they read, the better they get at reading (43). In turn, the better readers they become, the more they tend to read. Addressing motivation and achievement simultaneously tends to have a greater impact on reading progress and provides a greater chance for maintenance of skills gained. Morgan and Fuchs point to studies that suggest repeated failure in acquiring necessary reading skills causes children to lose motivation to read. They term this discouragement as a “poor-get-poorer” situation in which low motivation is a consequence of limited skill acquisition and is a cause of later reading failure (Morgan and Fuchs 166).
Morgan and Fuchs suggest that schools implement interventions that focus on remediating skill-based deficiencies and motivation-based deficiencies together. Skill-based deficiencies in the area of reading refer to lack of sight word recognition, adequate word decoding skills, or low reading comprehension. Motivation-based deficiencies may include lack of reading material or negative reading attitudes in the home as well as internal negative beliefs regarding reading skill. Skill-based initiatives paired with motivational strategies provide a setting in which struggling students feel successful. More success is probable with this approach rather than teaching strategies in isolation without regard to student interest and motivation.

Baker and Wigfield found that children who are highly motivated engaged in independent reading activities outside of school three times as often as children less motivated (2). This illustrates a statistically significant divide between students who engage in reading and those who do not. Morgan and Fuchs attest that motivation is a complex, multidimensional factor and, based on existing research, is difficult to measure, leading them to focus on two indicators of reading motivation: competency beliefs and goal orientations (167). They reviewed research regarding these two reading motivation indicators and found several studies that supported their concept of a bidirectional relationship between reading skills and reading motivation. The researchers suggest research-based interventions coupled with motivation-building techniques may positively affect reading motivation and achievement (Morgan and Fuchs 172). The link between reading motivation and reading achievement is represented strongly in the research and brings the importance of motivation to the forefront. Understanding motivation in an
educational and theoretical context is important to understanding its relationship to reading achievement and elementary students’ school success.

**Theories of Motivation**

The word *motivation* is defined as the “general willingness of someone to do something; drive, enthusiasm” (Oxford English Dictionary Online). Motivation is framed by the self-concepts, expectations, values, and interests for success that people attach to specific activities in specific contexts (Eccles and Wigfield, “Motivational Beliefs” 110). Motivation determines why individuals do (or do not) choose to engage in particular activities (Eccles and Wigfield, “Schooling’s Influences” 154). Two types of motivation have been studied by researchers in regard to motivating students: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Deci and Ryan describe a person as intrinsically motivated when the rewards are the positive thoughts and feelings associated with that activity (3). Competence and self-determination are factors that intrinsically motivate people. In contrast, Deci and Ryan describe a person as extrinsically motivated when the reward is the focus of the activity, not the process, and behavior is only a means to an end (Deci and Ryan 4). Wigfield and Guthrie concur that intrinsic motivation is choosing an activity and engaging in it for its own sake, rather than for reward or recognition (421). For the purposes of this study, which investigates the impact of a participatory activity upon students’ motivation, a review of motivational theories in the contemporary educational psychology context will be presented.

Self-efficacy theory refers to a person’s belief that he or she is able (or unable) to perform a particular task (Seifert 140). An individual’s self-perception highly affects confidence levels and judgment about what can be accomplished. Students who have
self-confidence will be more prone to tackle challenges, while students with low self-confidence will likely avoid challenging situations. Seifert points to a study that suggests students who perceive themselves as capable are more likely to develop adaptive skills in order to accomplish a task or goal (140).

Achievement goal theory focuses on the purpose an individual has for achieving a task or goal. According to Seifert (142) research has focused on how achievement motivation leads to performance and learning goals. Individuals focus on their own progress and define success by their mastery of a skill. Behavior is a means to an end with the end being achievement of the goal. Students focusing on mastery believe that their effort in this pursuit is the cause of their success or failure. Comparing their success or lack of success with others is another characteristic of a goal-oriented student.

Attribution theory refers to an individual’s perception of the cause of a particular outcome (Seifert 138). Individuals associate characteristics with attributions following an outcome whether the result is positive or negative. Specific factors such as ability or effort are common attributions made by students in school settings. Students may comment that they perform poorly on a math test because they are bad at math, not because they may not have studied for the test.

Expectancy-value theorists contend that an individual’s choice, persistence, and performance can be explained by their beliefs about how they will do on the activity and the extent to which they value the activity (Applegate and Applegate 226; Eccles and Wigfield, “Motivational Beliefs” 118). If students are motivated to avoid failure, they may not attempt a challenging task, while students motivated to achieve are likely to attempt challenging tasks.
Motivation theories are intertwined in the literature, and those presented in this review provide a context for the study of reading motivation. Motivation is one of the most studied factors related to success or failure in elementary school (Applegate and Applegate 226). Gambrell et al. reminds educators of the powerful influence of motivation upon literacy learning and stresses the need for understanding it in the context of reading performance (15). Morgan and Fuchs contend the relationship between reading achievement and motivation is bidirectional; reading levels affect the beliefs of students regarding their own potential reading ability, thus affecting motivation and vice versa (165). School efforts to increase student literacy achievement will falter if students cannot or will not engage in learning activities. As Applegate and Applegate note, “the fact remains that teachers may have a wealth of knowledge and experience and a full repertoire of proven teaching strategies at their disposal, but if a child cannot or will not muster the motivational resources to respond, then there is virtually nothing that teachers can do” (226). Studying motivation is a key to understanding the behavior of students in relation to reading and engagement in school.

**Reading Motivation in the Elementary Grades**

For the activity of reading, it is likely that motivational processes are the foundation for cognitive goal setting and strategic reading (Eccles and Wigfield, “Schooling’s Influences” 157). This foundation is crucial in early reading development when habits and attitudes are forming. Reading motivation involves many of the aforementioned motivation theories as related to elementary students. Aarnoutse and Schellings contend that reading motivation is multifaceted and includes intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, social motivation for reading, and setting goals for
reading (387). Students are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to put forth energy to achieve and reach goals. Wigfield and Guthrie suggest that when students value an activity for intrinsic reasons, they likely do better at the activity and choose to do it more frequently (423). The energy for completing the task or reaching the goal comes from within and requires little prompting from adults. Wigfield and Guthrie further contend when students believe they are competent and efficacious at reading they will likely engage in more reading opportunities. Higher ability readers are more interested, have a higher intrinsic motivation toward reading, and a higher value for reading activities. Characteristics of highly motivated readers include the application of knowledge, reading skills, and strategies to new situations in order to reach goals. They are not reluctant to decode challenging words, read higher-level texts, or engage in meaningful reading discussions.

Reading motivation studies have found that the intrinsic motivation to learn and read declines across elementary grades (Aarnoutse and Schellings; McKenna and Kear; Wigfield and Guthrie). Elementary students in grades one through six show a decline over the years in regard to learning to read and engagement in recreational reading (McKenna and Kear 627). Erosion in reading attitude was found to be especially significant at the fourth and fifth grade levels. In a study by Wigfield and Guthrie, fifth-graders were less positively motivated on some of the scales than the fourth graders, especially in the fall semester of the school year (424). Gambrell et al. studied third and fifth-grade students’ motivation to read and found that the younger third grade students reported they valued reading more highly than fifth-graders (18). The study also revealed that generally elementary students value reading, but many students do not view it as a
positive activity or regard it as a high priority. Research studies in the area of reading motivation provide evidence that the elementary grades are crucial for shaping future reading motivation and achievement. The habits formed in elementary school provide a foundation for students as they enter middle school. Wigfield and Guthrie note that motivation in reading, as well as their interest and achievement, declines further as students enter middle school (360). Understanding reading motivation may provide educators with valuable information with which to develop preventative measures to combat this decline in the crucial time before students enter middle school.

At the elementary level access to books was found to be a factor that positively affects reading motivation (Edmunds and Bauserman, 419; Marinak, Malloy, and Gambrell 503). Availability of books in the home was found to be a factor in students’ motivation to read, as exposure promotes early literacy (McKool 111). In the study by Edmunds and Bauserman, students indicated that access to books in terms of availability, quantity, and frequency are of equal importance (419). This provides valuable information for library media specialists in terms of collection development. Access to the library, availability of high interest titles, and time to spend in the library during the school day are important considerations. Students surveyed by Edmunds and Bauserman responded that they received most of the books they were reading from the school library, highlighting this importance of quantity and frequency (419). Students exposed to a wide variety of reading materials are encouraged to read more frequently.

Students’ reading habits affect reading achievement and motivation to read. McKool points to studies that suggest the out-of-school reading habits that are established by the fifth and sixth grades are often the independent reading habits that remain with
individuals throughout their lifetime. The choice of students to read on their own time, or engage in independent reading, is a strong indicator of reading success (Knoester; Krashen; McKool).

Developing a habit of reading for pleasure is emphasized by Krashen, who contends that those who do not develop the habit will have a difficult time reading and writing at necessary levels (56). Independent reading involves students’ choice of materials related to personal interests. Edmunds and Bauserman (415) identify this as a primary factor in motivating students to read. Cullinan notes that independent reading builds background knowledge, contributes to vocabulary growth and reading achievement, and has a positive effect on learning (12). Students who do not develop positive independent reading habits are at a disadvantage in terms of school success and adult literary awareness.

The social aspect of reading is a key factor that influences motivation (Edmunds and Bausterman; Knoester; Marinak, Malloy, and Gambrell). Students are more motivated to read when someone reads to them or they share reading experiences. The active involvement of others has a positive impact on students’ reading motivation and reading development. Wigfield and Guthrie refer to social goals and the need for some students to read for social reasons and in order to please teachers and parents. Social reasons for reading generally refer to sharing meanings with friends or family (422). Edmunds and Bauserman found that students reported they are highly motivated by teachers who read aloud daily and allow opportunities for them to share what they are reading (422). Children with opportunities to listen to literature read aloud develop a deeper involvement in reading (Sainsbury and Schagen 380). Cultivating relationships in
social contexts related to reading has a positive impact on reading motivation (Knoester 1). According to McKool students who have opportunities to discuss books they were reading were encouraged to read more. Thus, social interactions are valued by upper elementary students and provide impetus for reading engagement. Strommen and Mates contend that discussions about books allow students to view reading as a part of their social life as they explore their own and others’ reading experiences. Peer interactions motivate students to read by allowing them to relate reading to their age-related experiences. The value of reading is reflected in adults who model positive reading behaviors for students. Teachers, librarians, and parents are frequently mentioned in reading motivational studies as positive reading role models.

Book Club as Reading Motivator and Achievement Booster

A school library book club is a venue for students to engage in group reading experiences. Engagement in reading has been established in this review as predictive of academic success and the relationship is bidirectional as academic success also affects motivation (Morgan and Fuchs 165). Increasing the enjoyment of recreational reading with the expectation of increasing reading achievement is a goal of school library book clubs (Littlejohn, “Oprah Revolution” 28). Whittingham and Huffman found that book clubs have a positive impact on students who are reluctant readers (130). Students who initially had the worst attitudes about reading showed the most positive movement regarding reading attitude after book club participation. Whittingham and Huffman state that when struggling readers interact with positive peer role models in a book club setting, they experience more success (131). Nippold, Duthie, and Larsen emphasize the importance of promoting interest in reading specifically for those students who spend
little time reading (99). Peer influence may initiate reading activity in reluctant readers seeking social acceptance and inclusion in peer groups.

Polleck, who studied academic, social, and emotional development through facilitation of a book club with adolescent females, noted the “unique” space of a book club (50). Polleck found that participants in a book club “share, negotiate, and transform their understanding of the texts, themselves, and the world” (52). Therefore, book clubs have the potential to promote cognitive, social, and emotional growth. In order for book clubs to be successful, book club facilitators must be knowledgeable about children’s literature and able to lead a discussion (Hill and Bean 9).

The library media specialist is a reading role model in the school who motivates students to read through various reading promotion initiatives. A library book club is an initiative designed not only to encourage students to read but also to expose them to resources available at the library (Capalongo-Bernadowski 32). Providing materials of interest to students is a primary job of the school library media specialist, since it supports literacy efforts within the school as well as fosters lifelong reading (Fitzgibbons 23; Littlejohn, “Oprah Revolution” 28; Loertscher 1). Littlejohn points to research by Keith Curry Lance, who found that reading achievement increases when students have access to well-developed media collections (28). The book club is an opportunity for the library media specialist to build positive relationships with students, boost the image of the library media center, and impact student reading achievement (3). Reading promotion projects, like book clubs, are tools for library media specialists to advocate for the library media center, support literacy efforts, and foster a positive interactive school culture.
Components of a Library Book Club

The school library book club may be conducted in a variety of ways. It promotes socialization and discussion in the neutral space of the school library (Appleman 5). The emphasis is on being a reading “club” as opposed to a traditional literature class, and the focus is on the reading experience rather than school grades (Dias-Mitchel and Harris 17). The book club is a social event that operates outside of the school day without the demands of the regular classroom. In a book club reading is its own reward, is enjoyable, and appeals equally to reluctant and avid readers. The focus is on the interaction, not performance. In a well-run book club, students feel comfortable and accepted regardless of reading ability or fluency performance.

The flexibility of a library book club is what makes it an effective choice to promote reading, as it can adapt to the interests of its members (Littlejohn, Book Clubbing 5). The components of a book club are dependent upon its goals (3). Common goals of book clubs prevalent in the research are for students to develop an appreciation of reading for enjoyment and learning, become lifelong readers, appreciate literature, engage in shared reading experiences, and develop social skills through interaction with other students and adults (Appleman; Capalongo-Bernadowski; Fitzgibbons; Gordon; James; and Littlejohn, Book Clubbing). Soltan expands this list by adding creative thinking and cultivation of new ideas as goals of a book club (xiii).

Soltan suggests beginning with a plan for the book club in terms of facilitators, members, books, and organization (2). Capalongo-Bernadowski recommends enlisting teachers and adults who love reading, facilitating collaboration between the library media specialist, classroom teachers, and other adults (32). Publicizing the book club to attract
members and enlisting adult co-facilitators is crucial for success and participation. Nippold, Duthie, and Larsen (99) point to a successful book club that utilizes retired volunteers who are interested in helping students read as co-facilitators.

Hill and Bean (8) suggest working with members to create norms for behavior and guidelines for book club meetings. Student members and adult co-facilitators may see more success if the group decides appropriate norms together. The expectations about the amount of reading required prior to, during, and after meetings should be clarified (Hall 3). An agenda is also useful if multiple activities are to occur during the meeting. The availability of books is important, and the framework for the club, whether the group reads a single title or splits into small groups to read multiple titles will depend upon the goals of the book club and interests of the members.

Soltan stresses the importance of having books available for all participants prior to the first meeting and using creative ways of funding, such as donations or fundraisers to achieve this goal (4). Nippold, Duthie, and Larsen found that offering books with different themes—such as nature, machines, or suspense—is a way to get students excited about book club participation (100). Providing books in various categories or formats, such as non-fiction selections or graphic novels, expands the target membership for the book club. Drawing upon students’ interests is a method of book selection that may attract reluctant members. Hall suggests brainstorming activities and relevant resources to accompany books once selections are made (4). Discussion activities that make students think, promote conversation, and connect text to self and the world are generally successful (James 30).
Participatory Nature of Book Clubs

Reading, discussing books, and engaging in activities during book club meetings transforms the group of readers into a reading community. Shared reading experiences help students connect with one another in positive ways (Capalongo-Bernadowski 32). Upper elementary students seek social interactions, and a library book club can provide that environment in a safe and engaging way. Discussion that reflects the openness experienced in real life helps to develop students’ social skills (Hall 5).

In classrooms students are generally required to raise hands to speak, whereas a book club has the flexibility and opportunity to engage in discourse reflective of conversation. As co-facilitators and members of book clubs, the library media specialist, classroom teachers, and other adults help promote positive interactions by modeling social skills. Social success is promoted when children witness adult exchanges through modeling and collaboration (Dias-Mitchel and Harris 4). When students and adults share literature in a participatory environment, it relates the reading to real life. The adults are reading role models who teach students about the benefits of being a lifelong reader. The participatory nature of a book club provides an outlet for students to converse, interact, reflect, and connect what they read in a risk free environment with peers and adults.

Conclusion

Existing research supports the importance of motivation as a dominant factor in fostering reading achievement. Recent reading achievement statistics suggest that a large majority of students are not performing at proficient reading levels. Research shows that students who are motivated to spend more time reading tend to score higher on achievement tests than less engaged readers. Therefore, it is important to understand the
theories of motivation as related to reading and the link between motivation and achievement.

Students may be motivated to read or not to read due to many factors. Attitude toward reading plays a major role in determining the amount of time students spend reading and engaging in reading related tasks. The school library media specialist, as a reading leader in the school community, promotes reading for learning as well as enjoyment, leading to lifelong reading habits in students. The design and implementation of a library book club provides a risk free environment for students to actively participate in discussions and activities with peers in a social context. It integrates reading into the school culture and highlights the library media center as a central space for reading growth to take place. It provides a potential platform for increasing students’ reading motivation and achievement. This provides a framework for the study described below, which investigates the impact of participation in a school library book club on students’ reading motivation and achievement. The methods for the research study are presented in Chapter 3.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of participation in a school library book club on students’ reading motivation and achievement. Student attitudes toward reading, self-concept as readers, and reading achievement were studied prior to and after involvement in a school library book club. This study provides evidence that participating in an extra-curricular book club increases student reading motivation, reading self-concept, and reading achievement. Specifically, these research questions were addressed:

1. How does book club participation affect students’ reading motivation?
2. How does book club participation affect students’ self-concept as a reader?
3. How does book club participation affect students’ reading achievement?

Participants

One hundred and seventy fifth-grade students in a western Missouri suburban school district were invited to participate in an extra-curricular school library book club. The building demographic data for 2011 posted a total enrollment of 533, with specific ethnic group data in percentages as follows: 0.90 Asian, 0.60 Black, 3.00 Hispanic, 0.60 Indian, and 94.90 White. The free and reduced lunch percentage for 2011 was 15.6 percent. Permission to conduct the library book club was granted by the school principal. An informational flyer announcing the place, dates, and times for the book club meetings was sent home with students. The flyer was distributed to all fifth-grade classroom teachers to send home with fifth-grade students. Two school district employees led the
book club: the researcher, who is a teacher in the same school building, and the school library media specialist.

Participation in the book club was limited to 20 students selected on a first-come first-served basis according to the date they returned the bottom portion of the information flyer with parent signature. Fifth-grade classroom teachers were directed to send the information flyer home on a designated day consistent among all fifth-grade classrooms. (This procedure was building protocol for extra-curricular clubs that have a maximum number of students to conform to teacher-student ratio requirements.) It was anticipated, based upon recent statistics at this school with regard to extra-curricular student participation, that approximately fifteen students would sign up and regularly attend the book club meetings. Recruitment for the library book club resulted in six participants. Participant demographics included one male and five females; all in the White ethnic group. One student was in the free and reduced lunch program.

The students who returned the flyer with a parent signature granting permission for their participation in the school library book club were given informed assent forms for the research study. Informed consent forms given to parents described the study, the instruments used, as well as the risks and benefits of participation. The consent form included the number of weeks for the study, meeting time frames, and a statement of confidentiality. When the informed consent forms were returned and parental permission granted, assent forms were provided to the students, who were given opportunity to ask questions of the researcher and decide if they wanted to participate in the study. The assent form explained to the students what would be expected of them during the study and advised them of their right to withdraw at any time, and that they would not be
eliminated from the book club if they did not want to participate in the study. Parents and students were assured through the informed consent and assent forms that all data would be secured and confidential. Contact information for the researcher, the researcher’s advisor, and the University of Central Missouri’s Human Subjects Review Board office was provided to parents and students so they could ask questions as necessary.

The school library book club was scheduled to meet weekly from November 2011 through January 2012 with exceptions for holidays, snow days, or days when school was not scheduled. The weekly meetings were scheduled to last approximately 45 minutes each session. An informal book club environment was created in the school library. Students were encouraged to freely engage in group discussion without constraints of normal classroom protocol, such as raising one’s hand to speak or waiting to be called upon. Collaboration between participants was encouraged and modeled by the researcher and the library media specialist.

**Instrumentation and Data Collection**

Assessing students’ motivation to read is necessary to develop effective reading programs, strategies, and methods in order to increase student achievement and develop lifelong literacy skills. Realizing this importance has led to the development of reading motivation assessments targeted at elementary grade students. Guthrie and Wigfield identified three categories of the dimensions of reading; the competency and efficacy belief constructs, the purposes children have for reading, and the social purposes for reading (2). The competency and efficacy belief category includes self efficacy, challenge, and work avoidance. The purpose for reading category centers on intrinsic and
extrinsic motivation, and the third category addresses the social purposes for reading and is based on the belief in the social nature of reading (3).

Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, and Mazzoni developed a measure that assesses various constructs related to reading motivation: reading self-concept, reading self-confidence, and the value of reading to the student. Their Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) consists of two instruments: the Reading Survey and the Conversational Interview. The profile combines quantitative and qualitative approaches for assessment of motivation and is norm-referenced with validity and reliability documented in the research (10). The Reading Survey is group administered, consists of 20 items, and is a self-report student survey. The Reading Survey consists of two subscales: self-concept as a reader (10 items) and value of reading (10 items). It is designed to provide information about students’ self-perceived confidence in reading relative to peers as well as the value students place on reading tasks and activities (10). The Conversational Interview in the MRP is administered on an individual basis, through a conversation between researcher and student, and provides authentic insights into reading attitudes and experiences (11). The MRP results may be used to profile students and monitor changes in motivation, identify students in need of extra support, and gauge the effectiveness of a reading intervention or promotion program.

The subjects were asked to attend book club meetings, complete the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) at the first book club meeting and following the last meeting. In addition, data from AIMSweb assessments in two reading progress areas, the R-CBM (oral reading fluency) and the Maze-CBM (reading comprehension) were included. This provided the researcher with data regarding student motivation to read as
well as reading achievement. The instruments were used at the initiation of the book club and at its conclusion.

The Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) (Gambrell et al.) is a public-domain instrument designed to assess motivation to read in terms of the value a student places on reading and self-concept as a reader. It was published in 1995 by the National Reading Research Center as part of a National Reading Research Project of the University of Georgia and the University of Maryland and funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education. The Motivation to Read Profile was designed after thorough research and was field tested to ensure both validity and reliability. Administration of the MRP survey takes approximately 15-20 minutes and can be administered to an entire class, small group, or individual.

The Reading Survey in the MRP was administered by the researcher in a whole group setting at the first meeting of the school library book club. The protocol called for the questions to be read aloud to students as they read along. Students were informed that the Reading Survey would not be graded; it would provide teachers and librarians with information to help make reading more interesting, as well as assist in the design of engaging reading activities for students in the library media center. Students were advised to answer the questions honestly as that would provide the best information for the researcher and other educators. The Reading Survey uses a 4-point Likert-type response scale. The profile was field tested with 330 third and fifth-grade students in 27 classrooms in four schools from two school districts in an eastern state. The field test resulted in a moderately high reliability for both third and fifth grade.
The Conversational Interview consists of questions that are designed to engage students in an informal conversation about reading. The Conversational Interview takes approximately 15-20 minutes or three 5-7 minute sessions. The intent of the Conversational Interview is to provide authentic insights into students’ reading experiences. The interview questions allow for deviation from the script and can result in open-ended answers highlighting the child’s voice and perspective. The researcher conducted the interviews and adapted the questions in the Conversational Interview as mentioned in the instrument protocol according to the responses of the participant. The Conversational Interviews were conducted with three of the six book club participants during the first book club meeting after the Survey portion of the MRP was administered. The remaining three interviews were conducted the next day before school began. The Conversational Interview was field tested for reliability and validity based upon careful data analysis of teacher reports of motivated and non-motivated readers (Gambrell et al. 12). The Motivation to Read Profile was also validated across the two instruments through random selection in which independent raters compared the responses of 4 students and achieved an interrater agreement of .87 (Gambrell et al. 13). The consistency rate for the relationship between the Reading Survey and Conversational Interview is 70 percent, which supports the MRP as a reliable and valid instrument for its intended use in education (Gambrell et al. 13).

Data from AIMSweb, a benchmark and progress monitoring system, were used to assess reading achievement. AIMSweb is currently purchased and utilized by the school district. Teachers have been trained in the administration of AIMSweb assessments, and a standard protocol has been established for the school district. Students participating in the
book club took the AIMSweb assessments with their regular classroom teacher according to school district procedures. Teachers administer the assessments to each student in their homeroom class and input the data via the AIMSweb Web site portal.

The data from the AIMSweb assessments were provided to the researcher by the school principal and will consist of fall and winter assessment scores. The fall assessment occurred before the book club starts and the winter assessment occurred at a date after the book club concluded. A written letter of permission to use the AIMSweb data collection for this study was obtained by the researcher from the school principal. Two reading assessments are used by the district in the AIMSweb assessment and data management system; the R-CBM fluency assessment and the Maze reading assessment. R-CBM reading fluency probes are grade level reading passages, which students read for one minute each, and the words per minute read are recorded. This median score is based upon a broad sample of performance. The Maze-CBM is a reading comprehension measure, multiple choice cloze task, in which every seventh word of a 150-400 word passage is replaced with three words inside parentheses. Students circle an answer choice in each sentence of the passage while reading silently. Maze-CBM passages are research-based and identified as having convincing evidence of reliability and validity based upon National Center on Student Progress Monitoring data. The R-CBM and Maze C-BM meet the seven criteria derived from the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, developed by the Joint Committee appointed by the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the American Psychological Association (APA), the National Council on Measurement Used in Education (NCMUE), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Used in conjunction, the R-CBM and the Maze-
CBM sections of AIMSweb provide the educator with both an assessment of a student’s oral reading fluency and reading comprehension level. AIMSweb assessments provided data in regard to students’ reading achievement.

**Book Club as Treatment**

The treatment in this study was participation in a school library book club. The researcher, who is a classroom teacher, and the school library media specialist co-facilitated the book club meetings. The book club was structured according to a single-title model to encourage group discussion and interaction regarding the chosen book. The focus was on creating positive group dynamics where students feel accepted, comfortable, and motivated to read in an interactive setting outside the normal school day. The students participated in the book selection process and had input regarding book titles for group consideration. A list of suggested titles and sample books was made available at the first book club meeting. Students were given time to discuss and choose the first title for the book club. Students chose *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen. Time was allotted each week for reading, questions, and discussion. Reading enrichment activities based upon theme, character, setting, or plot of the book club book selection were implemented based upon group input.

In addition, booktalks and reading enrichment activities designed to promote social interactivity within the group were implemented. Students had the opportunity to give booktalks for books they had read and wanted to promote to others. The library book club activities emphasized the social nature of reading and encouraged collaboration between participants and the whole group.
Data Analysis Procedure

Data collected at the beginning book club consisted of the Motivation to Read Profile Survey scores and Conversational Interview responses. AIMSweb reading scores for the fall assessment were obtained from the school principal and recorded. At the conclusion of the book club, students completed both sections of the Motivation to Read Profile with the researcher and AIMSweb reading assessments with their classroom teacher. The researcher collected the AIMSweb winter assessment scores from the school principal and recorded the data.

The Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) Reading Survey was scored according to instrument protocol. The Reading Survey provided quantitative information about students’ motivation to read. The Reading Survey contained a total score and two subscale scores: self-concept as a reader (10 items) and value of reading (10 items). The 20 items are based on a 4-point Likert scale. The highest total score possible is 80 points. The more positive response is assigned the highest number while the least positive response is assigned the lowest number. Recoding is necessary on some questions as the response options of positive and negative are reversed. Items are starred on the scoring sheet identifying the items in which recoding is required.

The researcher used the MRP Reading Survey Scoring Survey to calculate the Self-concept raw score and the Value raw score by adding the responses in the appropriate columns. Scores were coded according to a student number assigned by the researcher. The researcher created tables to organize the Motivation to Read Profile data results. The survey raw score was obtained by combining the two column raw scores. The scores were converted into percentage scores by dividing student raw scores by the total
possible score, which were 40 for each subscale and 80 for the full survey. Individual student percentage scores and an average group score was documented for the survey.

The Conversational Interview was scored according to instrument protocol. The instrument is intended to reveal qualitative information about students’ reading interests and attitudes toward reading and does not result in a numeric score. Student responses to the questions in the Conversational Interview were analyzed to compare reading attitudes prior to and after book club participation. The data from the Motivation to Read Profile at the beginning of the library book club and at its conclusion was compiled and analyzed to track changes.

The AIMSweb reading assessment data were obtained from the school principal and student scores on the fall assessment (prior to book club) and the winter assessment (after book club) were compiled. The researcher created tables to organize the AIMSweb data prior to and after book club participation.

The data from all instruments were aggregated and comparisons were drawn between reading motivation and achievement. The researcher created tables organizing the data from all instruments and assessments in order to conduct an overall analysis of the results. Data collected provided information regarding the effectiveness of a school library book club in increasing student reading motivation and achievement.
CHAPTER 4:
RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine how participation in a school library book club impacts reading motivation, self-concept as a reader, and reading achievement levels of fifth-grade students. In order to determine the impact, the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP), consisting of a reading survey and conversational interview, was given to book club participants prior to book club participation in November 2011 and after book club participation at the end of January 2012. Reading achievement data in the form of AIMSweb assessment scores were collected from the school principal prior to and after book club participation. The Reading Survey portion of the Motivation to Read Profile, Aimsweb R-CBM reading fluency scores, and AIMSweb Maze reading comprehension scores provided quantitative data for this research study. The Conversational Interview portion of the MRP provided qualitative data for this research study utilizing categories related to reading motivation.

Demographics and Context of the Study

The book club took place in a Midwestern suburban public school from November 2011 through January 2012. The book club consisted of six fifth-grade students; one male and five females. The facilitators were the researcher and the school library media specialist. The book club met once a week before school, for 45 minutes each week, for a total of 10 weeks in the school library. The participants and facilitators agreed upon a single title book study format. Participants chose to read Hatchet, by Gary Paulsen, for the first book study. Time allowed for a second title study and participants chose another title by Gary Paulsen, Brian’s Winter. Weekly meetings consisted of read
alouds, discussion of theme, and predictions as related to the current title being studied. Time was also allotted for booktalks by the facilitators and participants about other books being read in classrooms, during library time, and for leisure outside of class and the book club.

A participatory environment was cultivated for this book club in which participants and facilitators were involved in informal discussions, creating a small group atmosphere rather than a traditional classroom environment with associated constraints such as grades and curricular expectations. Participants were able to ask questions in a conversational format and share ideas about the book club title as well as other reading interests and events.

Results of the Motivation to Read Profile Reading Survey

The Reading Survey portion of the MRP provided quantitative baseline data for students’ reading motivation prior to book club participation. The Reading Survey was group administered by the researcher and items read aloud to students according to testing protocol. The survey consisted of 20 items and used a 4-point Likert-type response scale. The survey assessed two specific dimensions of reading motivation: self-concept as a reader (10 items) and value of reading (10 items). Raw scores were calculated for the two subscales by adding student responses in the respective columns. A full survey raw score was obtained by combining the column raw scores. The raw scores were then converted into percentage scores by dividing the student raw scores by the total possible score of 40 for each subscale and 80 for the full survey.

All six participants answered all twenty questions of the reading survey. The group median score before book clubs began was 59.33 for the full survey, 28.33 for the
Value of Reading subscale, and 31 for the Self-concept as a Reader subscale. Analysis of results revealed a group percentage of 74.2% for the MRP Reading Survey Total Score, 70.8% for the Value of Reading subscale, and 77.5% for the Self-concept as a Reader subscale. These reading survey percentages indicate students’ level of reading motivation prior to book club participation.

The Motivation to Read Profile Reading Survey was administered to all six participants after book club participation. All participants answered all twenty questions of the reading survey. The group median score was 66.77 for the full survey, 31.50 for the Value of Reading subscale, and 35.17 for the Self-concept as a Reader subscale. Analysis of results revealed a group percentage of 83.3% for the MRP Reading Survey Total Score, 78.8% for the Value of Reading Subscale, and 87.9% for the Self-concept as a Reader subscale. Tables 1 and 2 present the results prior to and after participation in the book club both in terms of group mean scores and group percentages.

Table 1

*Motivation to Read Profile Reading Survey Total and Subscales*

*Comparison of Mean Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation to Read Profile</th>
<th>Mean Prior to Book Club</th>
<th>Mean After Book Club</th>
<th>Change in Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Reading</td>
<td>59.33</td>
<td>66.67</td>
<td>+7.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Reading Subscale</td>
<td>28.33</td>
<td>31.50</td>
<td>+3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concept as a Reader Subscale</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35.17</td>
<td>+4.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

Motivation to Read Profile Reading Survey Total and Subscales

Comparison of Percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation to Read Profile</th>
<th>% Prior to Book Club</th>
<th>% After Book Club</th>
<th>Percentage Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Reading</td>
<td>74.2%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>+8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Reading Subscale</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
<td>+8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concept as a Reader Subscale</td>
<td>77.5%</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>+10.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 1 and 2 reflect the mean scores prior to and after participation in the book club and indicate positive change in mean scores and average percentages per group data. Increases were reflected in all areas of reading motivation after book club participation as reflected by whole group data, though individual student progress varied, as will be discussed later in this chapter. Figure 1 shows the percentage increase as a whole group for the MRP Reading Survey Total score, the Value of Reading subscale, and the Self-concept as a Reader subscale.
Students in the book club experienced group gains in all areas of the Motivation to Read Profile Reading Survey indicating that the group’s general motivation toward reading increased, the value placed upon reading importance increased, and self-concept as readers increased.

**Results of AIMSweb Reading Assessments**

Data collected from two reading assessment measures; the R-CBM (oral reading fluency) and Maze-CBM (reading comprehension) provided baseline data for reading achievement levels prior to book club participation. Students completed the AIMSweb assessments with their regular classroom teacher according to district protocol and data for participants was provided by the school principal.

The R-CBM assessment is a grade level reading passage that students read aloud for one minute and the words per minute read correctly are recorded. The R-CBM target
for fifth-grade students was 114 words read per minute. Scores ranged from 86 to 158 words read per minute.

Figures 2 and 3 represent the reading fluency scores and respective target levels prior to and after book club participation for that point in the school year on the R-CBM AIMSweb assessment. Significant movement was noted after book club; 3 students remained at or above the target level, 1 student progressed from near target level to at or above target, and 1 student remained well below the target level. The data documents progress for each student in the at or above target levels, an increase for the student progressing to the target level, and a slight decline in reading fluency for the student at the well below target level.

The group mean for all fifth-grade students was 125.7 words read per minute. Book club participant results in regard to the target level were as follows; 3 students scored well above target, 2 students near target within acceptable range, and 1 student well below target level (see Figure 2).

Data collected after participation for the AIMSweb R-CBM oral reading fluency assessment resulted in a score range of 84 to 184 words read per minute. The group mean for all fifth-grade students was 143.5 words read per minute. Book club participant results in regard to the target level were as follows; 4 students scored at or above target, 1 student near target within acceptable range, and 1 student well below target level (see Figure 3).
The Maze-CBM assessment is a reading comprehension measure, multiple choice cloze task, in which every seventh word of a 150-400 word passage is replaced with three...
words inside parentheses. Students are timed for three minutes in which they circle an answer choice in each sentence of the passage while reading silently. The target score for fifth-grade students was 16 corrects. Before the book club, participants scores ranged from 10 to 26 corrects. The group mean was 20.8 corrects. Book club participant scores in regard to the target level were as follows; 5 students scored above target and 1 student scored well below target.

The Maze assessment target for all fifth-grade students after book club was 21 corrects. After the book club, participants scores ranged from 21 to 35 corrects. The group mean was 26 corrects. The data documents progress for four students who increased the number of corrects, sustain of level for one student, and a significant increase for the student progressing from well below target to one point above target level (see Table 3).

**Table 3**

*Maze Progress Summary*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Before Book Club Correct Responses</th>
<th>Movement after Book Club</th>
<th>Relative to Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>9 above target</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td>19 above target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>4 above target</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>5 above target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>10 above target</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>3 above target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>7 above target</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 above target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5</td>
<td>6 below target</td>
<td>+12</td>
<td>1 above target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 6</td>
<td>5 above target</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td>15 above target</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures 4 and 5 represent the before and after reading comprehension scores and respective target levels for that point in the school year on the Maze AIMSweb assessment. Book club participant scores prior to book club in regard to the target level
were as follows; 5 students scored above target and 1 student scored well below target (see Figure 4). Book club participant scores after book club in regard to the target level indicated that all six students reached the target for the Maze assessment (see Figure 5).

![MAZE Scores Prior to Book Club](image)

*Figure 4. Maze individual scores and target prior to book club participation.*
Increases were reflected in all areas of reading achievement after book club participation as reflected by whole group data, though individual student progress varied, as will be discussed later in this chapter. Figure 6 shows the increases whole group in correct responses for the AIMSweb R-CBM reading fluency and Maze comprehension assessments.
Figure 6. Total of correct responses on AIMSweb assessments prior to and after book club.

Individual Student Results Across Multiple Measures

This section provides a data analysis of individual student results across the multiple measures administered, except the MRP Conversational Interview which is reported in the next section. The Motivation to Read Profile scores consist of the total score, the Value of Reading subscale score, and the Self-concept as a Reader subscale. The AIMS web scores consist of R-CBM reading fluency and Maze reading comprehension assessments. Scores prior to and after book club participation are presented and discussed in respect to each individual participant. Analyzing individual participant data is intended to provide more in-depth information regarding each student’s reading motivation and achievement. The percentage of change after participation in the book club across each measure will be presented.
Student 1 Individual Results

Student 1 indicated positive progress after book club participation in areas of reading motivation and reading achievement (see Table 4). The total MRP score increased 13.8%, the Value of Reading subscale score increased 17.5%, and Self-concept as a reader subscale score increased 10%. Reading achievement increased 7.1% on the R-CBM reading fluency assessment and 40% on the Maze reading comprehension assessment. Student 1 scored well above target in both reading achievement areas prior to and after book club participation.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prior to Book Club</th>
<th>After Book Club</th>
<th>% change</th>
<th>+/- Target Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MRP Total Score</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>88.8%</td>
<td>+13.8%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Reading</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>+17.5%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concept as a</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader Subscale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-CBM Reading Fluency</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>+7.1%</td>
<td>+36 above target of 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maze Reading</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>+40%</td>
<td>+14 above target of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student 2 Individual Results

Student 2 indicated positive progress after book club participation in all areas of reading motivation and reading achievement (see Table 5). The total MRP score, the Value of Reading subscale score and the Self-concept as a Reader subscale scores each increased 2.5%. Reading achievement scores increased 20.6% on the R-CBM reading fluency assessment and 5% on the Maze reading comprehension assessment. Student 2
scored 6 points under target for reading fluency but within acceptable range and at target level on the Maze reading comprehension assessment.

Table 5

Student 2 Scores Across Multiple Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prior to Book Club</th>
<th>After Book Club</th>
<th>% change</th>
<th>+/- Target Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MRP Total Score</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>+2.5%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Reading Subscale</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>+2.5%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concept as a Reader Subscale</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>+2.5%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-CBM Reading Fluency</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>+20.6%</td>
<td>-6 in acceptable range of 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maze Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>At target of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student 3 Individual Results

Student 3 indicated positive progress after book club participation in all areas of reading motivation and reading fluency achievement but not reading comprehension, although remaining above target level (see Table 6). The total MRP Reading score increased 22.5%, the Value of Reading subscale score increased 17.5%, and the Self-concept as a Reader subscale score increased 31.9%. Student 3 experienced the greatest gains on the MRP of all participants. Reading achievement scores increased 31.9% on the R-CBM reading fluency assessment at 20 points above target level, however scores decreased on the Maze 7.7% but remained above target level by 3 points.
Table 6

*Student 3 Scores Across Multiple Measures*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prior to Book Club</th>
<th>After Book Club</th>
<th>% change</th>
<th>+/- Target Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MRP Total Score</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>76.3%</td>
<td>+22.5%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Reading Subscale</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>+17.5%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concept as a Reader Subscale</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>+27.5%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-CBM Reading Fluency</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>+31.9%</td>
<td>+20 above target of 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maze Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-7.7%</td>
<td>+3 above target of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student 4 Individual Results**

Student 4 indicated positive progress after book club participation in all areas of reading motivation and reading fluency achievement but not reading comprehension, although remaining above target level (see Table 7). The total MRP score increased by 2.5%, the Value of Reading subscale as well as the Self-concept as a Reader both increased 2.5% respectively as well. Reading achievement scores increased by 10.6% on the R-CBM reading fluency assessment and score on the Maze reading comprehension assessment mirrored the score prior to book club and remained at 2 points above target level.
Table 7

**Student 4 Scores Across Multiple Measures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prior to Book Club</th>
<th>After Book Club</th>
<th>% change</th>
<th>+/- Target Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MRP Total Score</strong></td>
<td>86.2%</td>
<td>88.8%</td>
<td>+2.5%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value of Reading Subscale</strong></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>+2.5%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-concept as a Reader Subscale</strong></td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>+2.5%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R-CBM Reading Fluency</strong></td>
<td>141</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>+10.6%</td>
<td>+27 above target of 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maze Reading Comprehension</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>+2 above target of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student 5 Individual Results**

Student 5 indicated positive progress after book club participation in all areas of reading motivation and in Maze reading comprehension assessment but not R-CBM reading fluency assessment (see Table 8). The total MRP score increased by 12.5%, the Value of Reading subscale score increased 10%, and the Self-concept as a Reader subscale scores increased 15%. Reading achievement scores increased 120% on the Maze reading comprehension assessment indicating the greatest percentage gain in one area of reading achievement of book club participants. This gain propelled Student 5 from well below the target level in comprehension to 1 point above target level after book club. Reading fluency remained at well below target with a decrease of -2.5% and 45 points below target.
Table 8

Students 5 Scores Across Multiple Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prior to Book Club</th>
<th>After Book Club</th>
<th>% change</th>
<th>+/- Target Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MRP Total Score</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>+12.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Reading Subscale</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concept as a Reader Subscale</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td>+15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-CBM Reading Fluency</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
<td>-45 below target of 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maze Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>+120%</td>
<td>+1 above target of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student 6 Individual Results

Student 6 indicated positive progress after book club participation in two areas of reading motivation and both areas of reading achievement (see Table 9). The total MRP score increased 1.3% and the Self-concept as a Reader subscale score increased 5%. The Value of Reading subscale score decreased from 85% to 82.5% after book club participation. Reading achievement scores increased on the R-CBM fluency assessment by 16.5%, with 55 points above target level and on the Maze reading comprehension assessment by 47.6%, with 10 points above target level.
Table 9

Student 6 Scores Across Multiple Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prior to Book Club</th>
<th>After Book Club</th>
<th>% change</th>
<th>+/- Target Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MRP Total Score</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
<td>+1.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Reading Subscale</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>-2.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concept as a Reader Subscale</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-CBM Reading Fluency</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>+16.5%</td>
<td>+55 above target of 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maze Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>+47.6%</td>
<td>+10 above target of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual students experienced varying levels of gains and a few decreases after book club participation which is evident in the data. The results of the multiple instruments providing quantitative data indicate positive trends overall in the areas of reading motivation and reading achievement after book club participation.

Results of Motivation to Read Profile Conversational Interview

The Motivation to Read Profile Conversational Interview provided qualitative baseline data in regard to reading motivation and general reading categories important to this research study. The interview was an informal, conversational exchange between the researcher and students according to instrument protocol. It was administered prior to and after book club participation in order to gain information regarding students’ current reading experiences. The Conversational Interview consisted of four general reading questions in these areas; current book interests, improving reading skills, excitement about reading, and the influence of others. Student responses were logged and examined to determine trends and changes regarding students’ motivation to read prior to and after
book club participation. The following section summarizes the data revealed related to each category. Since researchers are encouraged to allow students to deviate from questions and expand the conversation, responses applicable only to this study are included.

*Current Book Interests*

The first question in the Conversational Interview focused on books students were currently reading or interested in reading. Students frequently mentioned personal interests indicating that finding books related to their own interests often motivated them to read. One student responded; “Doctors have to learn about the human body and I want to be one so I read about the human body in science books.” Books about friendship, sports, ghosts, mysteries, and history were prevalent in the comments both prior to and after book club participation. Comments after book club revealed interest by three students in reading a third book by Gary Paulsen; *The River*, to continue following Brian in his adventures. One student stated; “I want to see why Brian would go back to the wilderness and if he can survive.” The data suggests that students experience increased motivation to read when they are able to select their own reading material and have choices available to them either at home, in the classroom, or school library.

*Improving Reading Skills*

The second question in the Conversational Interview asked students to think about what one must learn to be a better reader. Interviews revealed similar attitudes and feelings prior to and after book club participation. Student comments centered on reading frequency as each student mentioned that in order to be a better reader one must read more often. One student stated; “Practicing reading whenever you can helps you read
better.” Reading both at school and at home was a common theme in the interviews. The students acknowledged and spoke to the importance of becoming a better reader and reading often; however, some indicated that reading time assigned by teachers or parents felt like homework instead of something to enjoy. The theme of personal choice based on interests surfaced again as important to students regarding reading.

Excitement About Reading

The third question in the Conversational Interview asked students to think about things that get them really excited about reading books. Trends in this category were subject areas such as animals and nature, friends’ recommendations, and goal setting. One student responded: “I like to read picture books about nature so I feel like I’m outside.” Students expressed interest in reading the same books as their friends so they may converse about them. Recommending books to friends and receiving recommendations was noted as important when making independent book choices. Students explained that their excitement to read comes from various sources. Some enjoy contests or competitions where goals are set. Others mentioned the physical aspects of books such as aesthetically appealing book jackets and attention drawing covers. Personal interests continued to emerge as important to the students when self-selecting books or being assigned books to read by teachers.

Influence of Others

The fourth question of the Conversational Interview centered on the influence of others and asked the students to identify who gets them interested and excited about reading books. Adults in the home or relatives of the student were mentioned during the interviews as strong influencers to reading. As previously cited in the research, families
who provide access to books and share reading experiences motivate their children to read (McKool 111). Interviews prior to and after book club participation drew similar responses from the students. Frequent mentions included family members, teachers, librarians, other adults, and friends. One student expressed increased motivation through sharing reading experiences with a sibling: “I get excited about reading to my sister at home.” This student enjoyed being a reading role model and helping younger siblings engage in reading experiences. Many students stressed a desire to read in partners with friends. They also stated a preference for read alouds in school by teachers and librarians as they enjoy being able to listen and visualize what is being read. The social nature of shared reading experiences appealed to many students as reflected in the interview data collected.

The Motivation to Read Profile Conversational Interview data revealed several prevalent factors related to students’ motivation to read. The importance of choice surfaced as students enjoy reading books based on personal interests. Reading both in school and at home was identified by students as necessary to become better readers. Adequate quiet time and availability of books in the home was mentioned as motivators to read. Student excitement toward reading was influenced by book characteristics such as genre, topic, and physical characteristics such as visual appeal. The influence of adults and peers emerged as strong reading motivators as students reported that shared reading experiences with others as enjoyable. Students in this study were motivated by three strategies to connect reading experiences: read alouds, booktalks, and partner reading.
Summary

In summary, this research study examined the impact of participation in a school library book club upon students’ reading motivation, self-concept as a reader, and reading achievement. Six students in the fifth-grade enrolled at the elementary school in this study participated in the research study through a library book club from November 2011 through January 2012. The Motivation to Read Profile consisting of a Reading Survey and Conversational Interview was administered to students prior to book club participation. AIMSweb reading achievement data were collected in two areas: R-CBM reading fluency and Maze reading comprehension. The library book club was then facilitated by the school library media specialist and the researcher, a classroom teacher in the same school. At the conclusion of the library book club, the Motivation to Read Profile consisting of the Reading Survey and Conversational Interview was administered to students. AIMSweb data were collected for the R-CBM reading fluency assessment and Maze reading comprehension assessment. Book club data were analyzed prior to and after participation to determine the impact of the school library book club upon students’ reading motivation and achievement.

The results indicated that students’ overall reading motivation scores increased after participation in the school library book club. Students also showed increases overall in both reading achievement areas of fluency and comprehension. Individual student scores varied from measure to measure with increases and decreases evident. However, all students made progress after book club participation in multiple areas surveyed and assessed. Additionally, Conversational Interview data revealed positive attitudes toward
reading from adults and peers as well as shared reading experiences as strong motivators for students.
CHAPTER 5:
CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of this research study was to determine the impact of participation in a school library book club on students’ reading motivation, self-concept as a reader, and reading achievement. Therefore, the following research questions guided this study:

1. How does book club participation affect students’ reading motivation?
2. How does book club participation affect students’ self-concept as a reader?
3. How does book club participation affect students’ reading achievement?

The participants were fifth-grade students from an elementary school in a school district located in a suburban area of northwestern Missouri. The students were voluntary members of an extra-curricular book club held in the school library media center. The students represented various levels of readers from below to above proficient, as indicated on reading tests. Results from a reading motivation survey, conversational interview, and reading assessment were compared prior to and after book club participation.

Summary of the Study

The researcher began this study by creating an informational flyer to invite fifth-grade students to participate in a school library book club co-facilitated by the researcher, a classroom teacher in the same school, and the library media specialist. Students who expressed interest in joining the book club were given parental consent forms explaining the research study. Six students joined the school library book club and returned signed parental consent forms as well as completed student assent forms to voluntarily
participate in the research study. In order to assess reading motivation prior to and after book club participation, the Motivation to Read Profile was administered to participants in both sections; the Reading Survey and Conversational Interview. Reading achievement data in the form of AIMSweb R-CBM reading fluency and Maze reading comprehension assessment scores were obtained per the school principal prior to and after book club participation. The library book club met for a total of 10 weeks for 45 minutes each week from November 2011 through January 2012. Participants engaged in a single title book study format as mutually agreed upon by students and facilitators although weekly time was allotted for booktalks and discussions of other reading materials. At the conclusion of the book club, reading motivation data was collected from the instruments and reading achievement data collected per the school principal. Scores and assessment data were compared prior to and after participation in the school library book club.

**Conclusions**

The results of the researcher’s analysis of data indicated that the book club participants experienced an overall increase in motivation to read, an improved self-concept as a reader, and higher reading achievement after participation in the book club. According to the data analysis, students placed increased value on shared reading experiences and related frequency of reading to improvement of reading skills.

**Reading Motivation after Book Club**

This research study utilized the Motivation to Read Profile Reading Survey and Conversational Interview to measure students’ reading motivation before and after involvement in the library book club. The total score on the Reading Survey on the Value of Reading subscale score both indicate a students’ general motivation to read level.
Comparison of baseline data obtained prior to and after book club participation provided documentation regarding the impact of the book club. Overall, the students in this study showed an increase in general reading motivation. Group total percentage scores increased from 74.2% prior to the book club to 83.3% after the book club indicating a gain of 9.1% in general motivation to read. The value students’ placed upon reading also showed an increase from 70.8% prior to the book club to 78.8% after the book club indicating a gain of 8% for the group. Conversational Interview data results indicated a sustained and slight increase in students’ motivation to read as comments revealed student interest in reading additional books outside of the classroom, school day, and participate in shared reading activities.

**Self-concept as a Reader after Book Club**

The Motivation to Read Profile Reading Survey subscale Self-concept as a Reader provided data related to students’ self-perceived confidence as a reader and performance relative to peers. Comparison of baseline data obtained prior to the book club with data obtained after the book club provided evidence regarding students’ growth in the area of self-confidence as a reader. Overall, the students in this study showed an increase in self-perceived self-confidence as readers. Scores on the Self-concept as a Reader subscale increased from 77.5% prior to the book club participation to 87.9% after the book club indicating an increase of 10.4% for the group. The gain of 10.4% on the Self-concept as a Reader subscale represents the highest gain in comparison with the 9.1% gain on the Total Reading Survey and the 8% gain on the Value of Reading subscale suggesting the positive impact of the library book club upon how students’ view themselves as readers.
Reading Achievement after Book Club

Student reading achievement data were collected prior to and after the book club participation in two areas: reading fluency and reading comprehension. On average, the students in this study experienced gains in both areas of reading achievement. The R-CBM reading fluency mean score increased for the group as a whole. The mean increased from 125.7 prior to book club to 143.5 after book club indicating an increase of 17.8 for the group. This translates to a percentage increase of 14.16% for the group after the book club participation. The Maze reading comprehension mean score also increased as a group. The mean increased from 20.8 corrects prior to the book club to 26 corrects after the book club, indicating an increase of 5.2 as a group. This translates to a percentage increase of 25% for the group during the span of book club participation. Summarizing the percentage increases for the group of students in this study of 14.16% on reading fluency and 25% on reading comprehension indicates an increase in the area of reading achievement after book club participation. The average expected percent increase for fifth-grade students is 13.15% on reading fluency and 31.25% on reading comprehension based on target levels (NCS Pearson).

The results of this study led the researcher to conclude that participation in a school library book club, facilitated by adult reading role models, has a positive impact on students’ reading motivation and achievement. This conclusion is based on the results of multiple instruments used to measure students’ reading motivation and reading achievement before and after participation in a school library book club. Students who were highly motivated and high achieving prior to book club demonstrated gains after participation. Significant strides included two students with 40% increases in reading
comprehension scores and two students with 20% or higher increased reading fluency scores. Students with low motivation and average to low achievement prior to participation made progress in both achievement and motivation. One student progressed from well below target in reading comprehension to above target with a 120% increase in score and another student with low motivation scores prior to book club demonstrated a 22.5% increase after participation. The performance and attitude data analyzed in this study suggests that high levels of motivation and achievement were sustained or increased while low levels of motivation and achievement experienced significant growth.

**Implications**

This research study shows that students benefit from participation in a school library book club in terms of reading motivation and achievement based on increases indicated across multiple measures. Students at all levels of reading motivation prior to the book club made strides during the study. This affirms the benefit of reading promotion activities that target both unmotivated and motivated readers. Students who are highly motivated and students with low motivation levels both may benefit from the extra attention received from peers and adults in a book club. Drawing upon previously cited research regarding the link between motivation and achievement, motivation plays an important role in developing proficient reading skills among elementary children (Quirk, Schwanenflugel, and Webb). This study reflects that statement as indicated by student survey, interview, and achievement data collected and analyzed.

Students who are aliterate may benefit from participation in reading promotion activities such as a library book club. Such students, who can read but choose not to,
often perceive reading as a functional skill rather than an enjoyable experience. They often have not participated in reading-related activities such as being read to by parents in early childhood, visiting the public library, or obtaining a library card. As Beers noted; “aliteracy grows from not participating in reading-related activities” (111). School librarians can impact the reading motivation levels of aliterate students by creating reading promotion activities within the school as well as collaborating with public libraries to encourage student participation in summer reading programs.

Students who are low-achievers may benefit from the extra attention and personalization available in a school library book club. Low-achieving students work on developing reading skills and strategies with their classroom teachers and reading specialists. The focus is on increasing reading achievement and bringing these students to proficiency. While book clubs and other reading promotion activities also help accomplish this, greater emphasis is placed on the enjoyment of reading. In a book club setting, school librarians and teachers may be able to motivate low-achieving students by focusing on their personal reading interests (Beers 113). This may be accomplished by providing time for personal responses to reading, diversity in resources both in type and format, and listening to what students think about their reading experiences.

The results of this study also point to the benefits of collaboration as the researcher and school library media specialist worked together to provide a reading promotion activity in the form of a school library book club in order to enhance students’ reading opportunities and experiences beyond the normal school day. The researcher and school library media specialist drew upon their respective areas of expertise in reading to facilitate a book club of interest to students and serve as reading role models. By utilizing
an informal, participatory, conversation-oriented book club format, students were able to interact purposefully with peers and adults in shared reading activities. The development of reading as a lifelong endeavor to enjoy was emphasized and modeled by the facilitators. Collaboration between classroom teachers and library media specialists is not only of benefit to students but to educators as well. Increased collaboration will likely result in successful reading promotion activities, foster student success, and meet common goals of elementary schools.

The results of this study also imply benefits regarding the library media program in terms of visibility and recognition within the school community as a strong influence on student motivation and achievement. The data collected in this study regarding student achievement strides in curricular areas as a result of reading promotion programs provide additional documentation supporting the important role of school library media specialists within the school.

**Recommendations**

The data in this study show the positive impact of a library book club on students’ reading motivation and achievement. A library book club may be utilized to help motivated or unmotivated readers regardless of reading level develop or maintain interests in reading. Participation in a book club may help struggling readers reach proficiency levels as well as maintain the proficiency levels of advanced readers. As previously cited, a bidirectional relationship between children’s reading skills and reading motivation exists, suggesting that reading motivation is affected by the use of reading strategies and utilization of reading strategies is affected by motivation to read (Morgan and Fuchs). Reading promotion activities within a school such as a library book
BOOK CLUBS, STUDENT MOTIVATION, AND ACHIEVEMENT

Club offer students an opportunity to develop independent reading skills and social reading skills through shared activities. Their exposure to reading materials is also increased, expanding upon their personal interests and encouraging them in developing lifelong reading habits.

A specific recommendation for teachers and library media specialists is to study the benefits of collaboration and how it can positively affect students and educators. Collaboration between a certified library media specialist and a certified classroom teacher utilizes each educator’s area of expertise and ensures that students receive well-rounded enrichment opportunities. Students learn through positive role modeling which affects both attitude and achievement. Collaboration also helps students develop socially, through peer interaction, by participating in shared reading settings. Educators benefit from collaboration activities as they learn from each other how to best serve the students they educate.

**Future Research**

As the students in this research study are currently in the fifth grade, continuing this study into sixth grade would produce data regarding the transition between elementary and middle school, since this school district’s middle school consists of grades six through eight. Baseline data obtained in fifth grade could be compared against reading motivation and achievement scores in sixth grade providing information useful in tracking student progress. Studying the same group of students, if they continued to participate in offered programs, would add further data with which to determine the impact of school library book clubs on reading motivation and achievement as trends over time could be studied.
Future studies involving a targeted group of students for a book club could be conducted based upon reading levels, motivation levels, gender, or specific book interests and how they relate to reading habits. A study might be done on the impact of online book club participation and how social media and technology might play a part in motivating students to read and possibly increase reading achievement levels. Integrating technology such as e-readers and portable computer tablets would provide valuable data in regard to reading habits and motivation. Circulation statistics could be studied before and after a reading initiative to measure the impact of such programs. Studying the impact of collaboration between library media specialists and teachers in the context of reading promotion initiatives could also be implemented. The impact of such collaboration upon school climate, student attitudes, and student achievement could be explored. Any study investigating the impact of reading enrichment activities or programs would likely benefit students and educators.

Summary

The results of this study have shown that fifth-grade students participating in a school library book club experienced overall growth in the areas of reading motivation, self-concept as readers, and reading achievement levels. The results indicated that growth occurred as a group and individually in areas measured in the study. Student attitudes toward reading were positive and involvement in shared social reading experiences increased. The participants and the facilitators learned from each other during the book studies and booktalks trading information and ideas back and forth. The informal participatory nature of the school library book club allowed students to be active participants in their own learning and reading for enjoyment was fostered. The more
opportunities students have to engage in reading activities, the greater their chance for developing positive lifelong reading habits.
WORKS CITED


Everhart, Nancy, Susan Angelos, and Nancy McGriff. "Long-term Tracking of Student Participants' Reading Achievement in Reading Motivation Programs." *Knowledge


National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). Report of the


Quirk, Matthew, Paula J. Schwanenflugel, and Mi-young Webb. "A Short-Term Longitudinal Study of the Relationship between Motivation to Read and Reading


APPENDIX A
CONSENT FORMS

Dear Parent or Guardian,

A reading research study is being done by Mrs. Elizabeth Vannelli, a third grade teacher at Smithville Upper Elementary School, and graduate student at the University of Central Missouri. She is conducting research to find out if participation in a school library book club can increase students’ motivation to read and their reading achievement.

Mrs. Vannelli is inviting your child to participate in the book club study, take a reading survey, and take part in a conversational interview with your child regarding reading attitudes. The instrument is called the Motivation to Read Profile and will be given at the beginning and end of book club. The book club will meet before school once a week for 45 minutes and last 8-10 weeks. She will also use AIMSweb reading data from Mr. Kelly to look at scores before and after the book club. Students must be in the fifth grade in order to participate in the study.

The information collected will be confidential and the risks are the same as encountered during the normal school day. Students’ identity will be hidden and coded in all of the data. Student names will not be used in the reporting of the findings for this study. If individual students are written about in this study, an alias will be assigned.

Your child will benefit from participating in this study by getting firsthand experience in educational research. Also, your child will receive extra reading opportunities in an extra-curricular setting designed to support and enhance the school curriculum.

It is your decision whether to grant permission or not for your child to participate. You and your child will not be penalized in any way if you choose not to grant permission. Your child can decide at any time to stop participation in the study and you can withdraw permission at any time during the study. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Mrs. Vannelli. She can be reached at vannelle@smithville.k12.mo.us or at (316) 532-4566. You may also contact her academic advisor, Dr. Patricia Antrim, Chair, Educational Leadership and Human Development, at antrim@ucmo.edu or (660) 543-8633. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Human Subjects Protection Program at (660) 543-4621.

If you grant permission for your child to participate in this study, please sign a copy of this letter and return it to Mrs. Vannelli. The other copy is for you to keep.

I have read this letter and agree to my child’s participation.

Child’s Name (Print): _______________________________

Guardian’s Name (Print): _______________________________

Guardian’s Signature: _______________________________

Date: _______________________________

[Image of approved consent form]
Dear Student,

My name is Mrs. Vannelli, a teacher in your school, and also a student at the University of Central Missouri. I am doing a research study to learn whether school library book clubs can help students read better and encourage them to read more books.

I am inviting you to participate in this study. If you decide you want to be in my study, you will attend book club meetings, take a reading survey with multiple choice questions, and answer some questions with me about reading. I would also use data from your AIMSweb reading assessments to help in my study. When I tell other people about my study or write about it, I will not use your name. No one will know who I am talking about.

Your parents or guardians have to give their permission for you to be in the study. After they decide, you get to choose if you want to do it too. You will not be in trouble if you don’t want to be in the study. You can still be in the book club, even if you don’t want to be in the study. You can also decide at any time to stop being in the study.

You can contact me if you have questions about my study. I will give you a copy of this form in case you want to ask questions later. If you would like to be in my study, please sign your name below.

I have decided to be in the study even though I know that I don’t have to do it. Mrs. Vannelli has answered all my questions and I know that I can stop being in the study at any time.

__________________________  ______________________
Signature of Study Participant  Date

APPROVED

APPROVAL EXPIRES

10/24/2012
APPENDIX B
STUDY APPROVAL

10/27/2011

Elizabeth Vannelli
113 Betsy Court
Smithville, MO 64089

Dear Ms. Elizabeth Vannelli,

Your research project, ‘the Impact of Participation in a School Library book Club on Students’ Reading Motivation and Achievement’, was approved by the Human Subjects Review Committee on 10/26/2011. This approval is valid through 10/26/2012. Your informed consent is also approved until 10/26/2012.

Please note that you are required to notify the committee in writing of any changes in your research project and that you may not implement changes without prior approval of the committee. You must also notify the committee in writing of any change in the nature or the status of the risks of participating in this research project.

Should any adverse events occur in the course of your research (such as harm to a research participant), you must notify the committee in writing immediately. In the case of any adverse event, you are required to stop the research immediately unless stopping the research would cause more harm to the participants than continuing with it.

At the conclusion of your project, you will need to submit a completed Project Status Form to this office. You must also submit the Project Status Form if you wish to continue your research project beyond its initial expiration date.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the number above.

Sincerely,

Janice Putnam Ph.D., RN
Associate Dean of The Graduate School
putnam@ucmo.edu

cc: Patricia Antrim
APPENDIX

Motivation to Read Profile

Reading Survey

Conversational Interview

Teacher Directions: MRP Reading Survey

Scoring Directions: MRP Reading Survey

Scoring Sheet

Teacher Directions: MRP Conversational Interview
TEACHER DIRECTIONS: MRP READING SURVEY

Distribute copies of the Reading Survey. Ask students to write their names on the space provided.

Say:

I am going to read some sentences to you. I want to know how you feel about your reading. There are no right or wrong answers. I really want to know how you honestly feel about reading.

I will read each sentence twice. Do not mark your answer until I tell you to. The first time I read the sentence, I want you to think about the best answer for you. The second time I read the sentence, I want you to fill in the space beside your best answer. Mark only one answer. Remember: Do not mark your answer until I tell you to. Okay, let’s begin.

Read the first sample item. Say:
Sample #1: I am in (pause) 1st grade, (pause) 2nd grade, (pause) 3rd grade, (pause) 4th grade, (pause) 5th grade, (pause) 6th grade.

Read the first sample again. Say:
This time as I read the sentence, mark the answer that is right for you, I am in (pause) 1st grade, (pause) 2nd grade, (pause) 3rd grade, (pause) 4th grade, (pause) 5th grade, (pause) 6th grade.

Read the second sample item. Say:
Sample #2: I am a (pause) boy, (pause) girl.

Say:
Now, get ready to mark your answer.
I am a (pause) boy, (pause) girl.

Read the remaining items in the same way (e.g., number ___, sentence stem followed by a pause, each option followed by a pause, and then give specific directions for students to mark their answer while you repeat the entire item).
MOTIVATION TO READ PROFILE
READING SURVEY

Name ___________________________ Date __________________

Sample #1: I am in ____________________.
  o 1st grade  o 4th grade
  o 2nd grade  o 5th grade
  o 3rd grade  o 6th grade

Sample #2: I am a ____________________.
  o boy
  o girl

1. My friends think I am ____________________.
   o a very good reader
   o a good reader
   o an OK reader
   o a poor reader

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

3. I read ____________________.
   o not as well as my friends
   o about the same as my friends
   o a little better than my friends
   o a lot better than my friends
4. My best friends think reading is _________________.
   - really fun
   - fun
   - OK to do
   - no fun at all

5. When I come to a word I don't know, I can ________________.
   - almost always figure it out
   - sometimes figure it out
   - almost never figure it out
   - never figure it out

6. I tell my friends about good books I read.
   - I never do this.
   - I almost never do this.
   - I do this some of the time.
   - I do this a lot.

7. When I am reading by myself, I understand ________________.
   - almost everything I read
   - some of what I read
   - almost none of what I read
   - none of what I read

8. People who read a lot are ________________.
   - very interesting
   - interesting
   - not very interesting
   - boring
9. I am ________________.
   - a poor reader
   - an OK reader
   - a good reader
   - a very good reader

10. I think libraries are ________________.
    - a great place to spend time
    - an interesting place to spend time
    - an OK place to spend time
    - a boring place to spend time

11. I worry about what other kids think about my reading ____________.
    - every day
    - almost every day
    - once in a while
    - never

12. Knowing how to read well is ________________.
    - not very important
    - sort of important
    - important
    - very important

13. When my teacher asks me a question about what I have read, I ________.
    - can never think of an answer
    - have trouble thinking of an answer
    - sometimes think of an answer
    - always think of an answer
14. I think reading is ________________.
   - a boring way to spend time
   - an OK way to spend time
   - an interesting way to spend time
   - a great way to spend time

15. Reading is ________________.
   - very easy for me
   - kind of easy for me
   - kind of hard for me
   - very hard for me

16. When I grow up I will spend ________________.
   - none of my time reading
   - very little of my time reading
   - some of my time reading
   - a lot of my time reading

17. When I am in a group talking about stories, I ____________.
   - almost never talk about my ideas
   - sometimes talk about my ideas
   - almost always talk about my ideas
   - always talk about my ideas

18. I would like for my teacher to read books out loud to the class ____________.
   - every day
   - almost every day
   - once in a while
   - never
19. When I read out loud I am a _________________.
   - poor reader
   - OK reader
   - good reader
   - very good reader

20. When someone gives me a book for a present, I feel ____________.
   - very happy
   - sort of happy
   - sort of unhappy
   - unhappy
MRP READING SURVEY
SCORING SURVEY

Student Name ________________________________

Grade __________________ Teacher _______________________

Administration Date _______________________

*recording scale
1 = 4
2 = 3
3 = 2
4 = 1

Self-Concept as Reader Value of Reading

*recode 1. ___ 2. ___

3. ___ *recode 4. ___

*recode 5. ___ 6. ___

*recode 7. ___ *recode 8. ___

9. ___ *recode 10. ___

*recode 11. ___ 12. ___

13. ___ 14. ___

*recode 15. ___ 16. ___

17. ___ *recode 18. ___

19. ___ *recode 20. ___


Full survey raw score (Self-Concept & Value): ___/80.

Percentage Scores Self-Concept Value

Full survey

Comments: _______________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________
TEACHER DIRECTIONS: MRP CONVERSATIONAL INTERVIEW

1. Duplicate the Conversational Interview so that you have a form for each child.

2. Choose in advance the section(s) or specific questions you want to ask from the Conversational Interview. Reviewing the information on students' Reading Surveys may provide information about additional questions that could be added to the interview.

3. Familiarize yourself with the basic questions provided in the interview prior to the interview session in order to establish a more conversational setting.

4. Select a quiet corner of the room and a calm period of the day for the interview.

5. Allow ample time for conducting the conversational interview.

6. Follow up on interesting comments and responses to gain a fuller understanding of their reading experiences.

7. Record students' responses in as much detail as possible. If time and resources permit, you may want to audiotape answers to A1 and B1 to be transcribed after the interview for more in-depth analysis.

8. Enjoy this special time with each student!
MOTIVATION TO READ PROFILE

CONVERSATIONAL INTERVIEW

Student Name: ___________________ Date: ___________________

General Reading:

1. Do you know about any books right now that you’d like to read? Tell me about them.

2. What do you think you have to learn to be a better reader?

3. What are some things that get you really excited about reading books?
   Tell me about……

4. Who gets you really interested and excited about reading books?
   Tell me more about what they do.