

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE EFFECTS THAT READING MOTIVATION AND
READING VOLUME HAVE ON READING ACHIEVEMENT

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A REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE EFFECTS THAT READING MOTIVATION AND
READING VOLUME HAVE ON READING ACHIEVEMENT

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Chapter I Introduction

Statement of the Problem

“Reading is the capacity to identify and understand the role that reading plays in the world, to make well-founded judgments and to use and engage with reading in ways that meet the needs of that individual’s life as a constructive, concerned and reflective citizen” (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2003, in Brozo, Shiel, & Topping, 2007). This study will investigate how motivation and reading volume correlate directly with reading achievement. There could be many contributing factors that could play a role in reading engagement, such as time allotted to independent reading (Allington, 2014), socioeconomic status (Brozo, Shiel, & Topping, 2007), and reading interests (Stahl, 2004, in Cunningham, 2005). This research will include finding effective ways to motivate and engage students in reading to foster higher reading achievement.

Definition of Terms

Accelerated Reader (AR): A program within the Renaissance Learning computer based reading package where students read books and take comprehension quizzes on each book read to earn points within the program (Biggers, 2018).

Author Recognition Test (ART): A test that lists 65 real names intermixed in random order with 65 foil author names where participants are simply asked to check the names that they recognize to be authentic authors in real life (Mano & Guerin, 2017).

Motivation: The general term that covers wants, desires, needs, urges, and interests, and is also the activation of internal energy towards achieving certain objectives (Cuceloglu, 2004, in Baki, 2020).

Reading engagement: The time that students report reading a diversity of material for pleasure and their interest in and attitudes toward reading (Brozo, et al., 2007).

Reading volume: The combination of time students spend reading plus the number of words they actually consume as they read (Allington, 2014).

Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR Reading): A computer based assessment that generates reports to provide educators with a simple and accurate means to determine student reading levels (Biggers, 2018).

Purpose of the Study

“Reading is an acquired skill that requires practice” (National Reading Panel, 2000, in Mano & Guerin, 2018). Lesnick, et al., found that, “With the knowledge that a student’s reading level in third grade is a significant predictor of his or her future educational performance, researchers and early-elementary educators alike must apply the best instructional practices and interventions to increase students’ reading readiness” (2010, in Gentilini, 2020). Motivation and reading volume must be examined to see if they are significant in the reading readiness of a student. The purpose of this study is to research the effects that motivation and reading volume have on reading achievement.

Significance of the Study

“Regular and sustained independent reading fuels reading development” (Anderson, et al., 1986). “American commercial core reading programs only provide 15 minutes of daily reading activity” (Brenner & Hiebert, 2010, in Allington, 2014). The focus on reading needs to be one of

the highest priorities for the facilitation of learning for all students. “That means that in too many classrooms children have 75 minutes daily to listen to the teacher or to complete low-level worksheets instead of actually reading” (Allington, 2014). Educators need to incorporate more time for independent reading within their instructional planning on a daily basis.

As a result of my experiences, I sincerely believe that reading engagement can benefit all students. This research will provide methods and strategies on how to motivate and engage students in higher volumes of reading in order to foster higher reading achievement.

Delimitation of the Study

I used the Universities of Wisconsin databases and EBSCO host, an educational database to find the majority of my sources, both primary and secondary. The following words were used while searching for the effects of motivation and reading volume on reading achievement: “motivation,” “reading engagement,” “reading volume,” and “reading achievement.”

Methodology

The research compiled for this seminar paper includes sources relevant to the understanding of the effects that motivation and reading volume have on reading achievement. Several articles, dissertation papers, case studies, and journals were gathered, synthesized, and documented. Primary and secondary sources were obtained through the Universities of Wisconsin databases, EBSCOHOST, on the effects of motivation and reading volume on reading achievement.

Chapter II Review of Literature

Research on the Effects of Motivation and Reading Volume on Reading Achievement

The purpose of this study of literature was to investigate whether motivation and reading volume have any effects on reading achievement. Pat Cunningham noted, “If you teach children to read, then you know the amount of reading children do is important” (2005). Research has indicated that motivation and reading volume have a direct correlation with a student’s reading achievement.

Motivation can be divided into two parts, intrinsic and extrinsic (Girmus, 2012). Girmus explains that intrinsic motivation would be any inner drive that pushes you to excel in a particular pursuit, while extrinsic motivation would include a reward from others for obtaining a goal (2005). “Successful teachers motivate their students through high interaction, offer challenging literacy activities, and engage students in discussion about what they read” (Varuzza, Sinatra, Eschenauer, & Blake, 2014). Motivation can affect, positively or negatively, all aspects of an individual student’s education, such as their reading volume.

As defined above, reading volume is, “the combination of time students spend reading plus the number of words they actually consume as they read” (Allington, 2014). Fisher & Frey found that, “One measure of reading volume is print exposure, which begins with book sharing with young students and progresses to measures of independent reading, leisure reading, and knowledge of book titles among conventional readers” (2018). Unfortunately, reading achievement and motivation continue to decrease as students’ ages increase (Anderson, Maehr, & Midgley, 1999; Cummins, 2001; RAND Reading Study Group, 2002, in Brozo, et al, 2007).

Shany and Biemiller evaluated reading achievement based on two experimental groups and one control group (1995). Shany and Biemeiller explained that reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and reading speed and accuracy were significantly higher with the two

experimental groups due to an extra thirty minutes a day spent on reading activities (1995). “If educators hope to improve either the oral reading fluency or the reading comprehension of struggling readers then expanding reading volume, it seems, must necessarily be considered” (Allington, 2014). Mano and Guerin reported that students being exposed to multiple texts is important for reading development (2017).

Students from thirty-two different countries took part in an international study, Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). One outcome noted that girls outperform boys in reading achievement in all thirty-two countries that were assessed (Brozo, et al, 2007). They determined that the girls’ reading engagement exceeded the boys’ reading engagement (Brozo, et al, 2007). Asselin states that girls choose to read more fiction, while boys tend to read nonfiction (2003). This promotes a problem in the school setting with fiction being a main focus in the reading curriculum. “Unfortunately, the deficit perspective is dominant and boys are faulted for not being willing to engage in fiction, choosing to participate in sports instead of choosing to read” (Asselin, 2003). Reading books that are of interest to you makes you want to read more (Cunningham, 2005).

Krashen positions that, “successful sustained silent reading programs do not use extrinsic motivators, do not test students on what they read, provide a wide variety of books, and typically meet for a short time each day over a long period” (Krashen, 2004). Stahl reinforces that meeting with a student about their reading interests and giving them ““oohs and aahs” about their reading choices is a surefire motivator” (2004, in Cunningham, 2005). Teachers that encourage students to choose their own books and read what is of interest to them saw an increase in reading motivation (Varuzza, et al., 2014).

What can students, teachers, and parents do to increase student motivation and reading

volume?

The Impact of Socioeconomic Status

“The number of books in the home is a powerful and significant predictor of children’s reading achievement” (Schubert & Becker, 2010, in Allington, 2014). If there is little to read in your house, you are less likely to read (Fisher & Frey, 2018). Children who are starting school who live in a poorer household that do not have the ability to read any books, or very few books, start school at a much lower reading ability compared to students who have had the ability to read at home (Dolean, Melby-Lervag, Tincas, Damsa, & Lervag, 2019). Dolean, et al, realized that students who do not have the capability to have books at home had a much slower subsequent development of their reading skills throughout their academic career (2019). As students continue their educational careers, the gap between the higher and lower socioeconomic groups continues to widen (Gullick, Demir, & Booth, 2016).

Making time for a robust reading life is challenging. Children have lots of activities that they are involved in and responsibilities that take their time. Some children are involved in sports, music, and other activities that are of interest to them. Some children have the responsibility of chores and watching younger siblings when they are not at school (Ward, 2017).

“The correlation between reading volume outside of the school day and measures of reading achievement is striking” (Fisher & Frey, 2018). Students who have the means to read at home have an advantage over the students who do not have the means to read at home. Students who read for one minute outside the school day were projected to only read around 8,000 words a year. Therefore, these students tested around the 10th percentile on standardized tests. The students who read for an extra 21 minutes outside of the school day were projected to read more than 1.8 million words per year. These students scored around the 90th percentile

on the standardized tests (Fisher & Frey, 2018).

Gullick, et al, conducted research to see why students in a lower socioeconomic status did not achieve as well as students with a higher socioeconomic status. They tested 42 developing children whose parents were classified as low socioeconomic status. Their research found that lower socioeconomic students demonstrate stronger skills in the right hemisphere of their brain, which entails relying on supplementary visuospatial processing (Gullick, et al, 2016). Therefore, “The identification of brain structure and function underlying skill in lower versus higher socioeconomic children could potentially lead to different educational techniques that emphasize visuospatial versus verbal strategies” (2016).

The Impact of Time allotted to Independent Reading

“In long-term studies (those longer than one year), sustained silent reading students performed better in 8 out of 10 studies” (Krashen, 2004). Research suggest that reading aloud is not nearly as effective as reading silently (Mano, 2018). Allington noted that every time a student comes across a word, they have had a useful “instance’ in the effort to expand their vocabulary. “It only takes very few “instances’ of correctly pronouncing a word before it becomes readily recognized when next encountered” (2014). Thus, the more words a student reads, the easier it will be for student to comprehend the information given to them the next time they encounter the word.

“Developing proficient reading skills continues to pose a challenge for millions of students in the United States (Yakimowski, Faggella-Luby, Kim, & Wei, 2016, in Sutter, Campbell, & Lambie, 2019). Sutter went on to note that in 2017, only 37% of fourth-grade students performed at or above the proficient benchmark in reading (2019). “While print exposure has been shown to predict significant variance in broad reading achievement, there

remains a critical need to understand the mechanisms through which print exposure exerts an effect onto reading development” (Mano, 2018). Mano tested 52 different students and had each of them take the Author Recognition Test (ART) to obtain their print exposure level. The Author Recognition Test consisted of 130 names, 65 which were real authors and 65 names that were not authors (2018). “The ART has been shown to be a “remarkably robust and independent predictor of word processing ability” (Stanovich & West, 1989, in Mano, 2018). The results concluded that the students who scored higher on the ART significantly scored higher on phonics decoding efficiency, sight word reading efficiency, and silent reading fluency (Mano, 2018).

Regina Biggers researched the correlation of the Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR Reading) assessment and the number of Accelerated Reader (AR) points that four district averaged per student in 2015-2016. Her findings are as follows: school A averaged 51 AR points per student and had 49.3% of students at or above grade level, school B averaged 27 AR points per student and had 32.2% of students at or above grade level, school C averaged 20 AR points per student and had 30.8% of students at or above grade level, and school D averaged 32 AR points per student and had 43.2% of students at or above grade level (Biggers, 2018). Biggers’s research identifies that the school districts that have students reading more score higher on the STAR Reading assessment.

Educators need to schedule and set aside a substantial amount of time for students to read independently every school day. “Reading volume-the nourishing potion of access, choice, and time to read-is chicken soup for the striving reader’s soul” (Ward, 2017). Reduction or elimination of homework with the combination of enhanced reading time needs to be the main focus teachers strive for (2017).

Print exposure contributes to the development of cognitive and scholastic skills, such as broadening language functioning (Mano, 2017). Therefore, Mano suggests that the more print exposure a student can obtain throughout their academic career, the higher their reading achievement will be (2017).

The Impact of Reading Interests

“Reading interest is suggested to be integral to reading achievement, which affects later academic performances” (Gentilini, 2020). Through personal experience, many students struggle finding the right book to read independently and the motivation to increase their reading stamina. Jignblad and Johansson concluded that students who are demotivated lack engaging reading habits (2017, in Alghonaism, 2020).

It is the responsibility of the educator and parents to help students find books that are of interest to them. “Children are more likely to become motivated and involved in an activity when it means something to them” (Lyons, 2003, in Von Rembow, 2006). This poses a challenge to the educator because not all of the boys and girls in the classroom have the same opinions about reading.

Studies have shown that boys’ and girls’ interests when it comes to reading are typically not the same. Girls tend to want to read fictional books and they feel comfortable and competent about reading (Asselin, 2003). With the focus of schools being primarily on fiction, this gives girls the upper hand. They are more willing to interact positively to literature discussions, be involved in book clubs, and “tend to be more compliant in general with social expectations” (2003).

Asselin goes on to point out that boys like to read nonfiction, but they view reading as difficult and unrelated to their interests (2003). According to Brozo, educators that had a focus

on noncontiguous texts saw an increase in motivation and reading engagement, therefore, scoring higher (2007). “Half the battle in teaching is just getting children to take a chance with their self-esteem and try new tasks. If students feel they cannot be successful, the result will typically be what is termed ‘work avoidance’ (2002, in McCabe 2006). Teachers can use a variety of nonfiction books to motivate boys within their classrooms. Have a focus be on modern and classical literature with male protagonists (Asselin, 2003).

Millard states “schools favoring of book based learning and fiction in particular prevent both girls and boys from becoming fully literate; i.e., able to tackle a wide range of texts in a range of different media, intelligently and critically” (1997, in Asselin, 2003).

Ways to Motivate Students and Engage Students in Higher Volumes of Reading

Linda B. Grambrell (2011) focuses on seven rules of engagement to motivate students to read.

1. Students are more motivated to read when reading tasks and activities are relevant to their lives.
2. Students are more motivated to read when they have access to a wide range of reading materials.
3. Students are more motivated to read when they have ample opportunities to engage in sustained reading.
4. Students are more motivated to read when they have opportunities to make choices about what they read and how they engage in and complete literacy tasks.
5. Students are more motivated to read when they have opportunities to socially interact with others about the text they are reading.

6. Students are more motivated to read when they have opportunities to be successful with challenging texts.
7. Students are more motivated to read when classroom incentives reflect the value and importance of reading.

Grambrell (2011) informs readers, “Highly motivated students who see reading as a desirable activity will initiate and sustain their engagement in reading and thus become better readers.” In order for success, educators need to have a wide range of material and activities for students to learn from. With these materials, it is important for the educator to help students find value in reading tasks that they partake in.

Grambrell notes that educators need to give choice and reflect on the importance of reading (2011). Classrooms need to be set up in a way that students can comprehend why reading is so important to them now and in the future. Students do not always understand why reading is important, so educators need to entice students with reading activities that they can relate to the real world. “The motivation to read, is the locomotive power that initiates the reading practice, and is constituted by the system of perception and values that maintains this practice (Mullis, Martin & Gonzalez, 2003, in Baki, 2020).

Pat Cunningham found it best practice to model reading when her students were reading independently in her classroom. Looking back at her teaching career, Pat realized that conferencing with students about their individual books would be more beneficial to increase reading motivation during this same time. Holding conversations instead of interrogations while conferencing with struggling readers would increase students’ interests in reading about topics (Cunningham, 2005). Inquiring about students’ choice of books empowers them and gives educators knowledge about the students’ reading history (Ward, 2010). On top of having

students share information about their books with the educator, they need to be sharing books with other students in the classroom. Students can create ‘best read’ lists to motivate other students to read (Von Rembow, 2006).

Forcing students to read the same books is not how educators can get students motivated to read. Instead, educators should give choice and reinforce that reading is pleasurable (Horowitz, 2010). Educators who “have a stack of enticing titles in accessible formats (e.g., nonfiction, graphic novels, series) demonstrate respect for students’ preferences and see notable levels of engagement. This is a way to engage both girls and boys to find something to read of interest to them. Not only should educators give choice in their classrooms, they should also be giving choice to our striving readers in interventions that need extra guidance (Ward, 2017). Differentiating lessons, on top of giving choice, is imperative to improve struggling readers’ motivation and engagement. Not all students’ abilities are the same, therefore, educators need to differentiate to the needs of each individual student. “As educators differentiate, they should focus on the level of learning that will challenge the student and include their learning style and intelligence, adapting and modifying the curriculum for each student with disabilities as needed” (Servilio, 2009).

Educators can easily differentiate and conference with students about all types of books if they have a robust classroom and school library. Most low socioeconomic students don’t have the means to have a mini library at home, so for them to be able to choose from a library that has books that are of interest to them is imperative. Shopping malls, book fairs, and city libraries are not as popular as classroom libraries and school libraries for students to find books of interests for themselves (Biyik, Erdogan & Yildiz, 2017). It is a must for teachers to have multiple genres and books at different reading abilities accessible for students to be able to read

at any point of the day.

A quick read aloud can be a way to motivate students to read. Pat Cunningham noted that, “Teacher read-aloud has been shown to be one of the major motivators for children to read” (2005). In *True Stories From Four Blocks Classrooms*, Deb Smith reads one chapter from different genres each day. She might focus on a fiction book today, but tomorrow is an informational book, and the following day would be an “everyone” book (Cunningham & Hall, 2000, in Cunningham, 2005).

Chapter III Conclusions and Recommendations

After synthesizing and concluding much research, it is evident that reading motivation and reading volume directly impact reading achievement. Some students cannot develop a love for reading at a young age if their family does not have the means for it. Many students face challenges inside and outside of the school setting that impact their ability to read in a productive manner. Teachers, parents, socioeconomic status, time allotted to reading, interests, and many more characteristics can impact a child's motivation for reading as well as their ability to engage in reading. Therefore, reading achievement will be directly impacted.

Teachers' understanding of the students' reading abilities and interests is key to setting a student up for success. The more information the teacher knows about the student, the better they can guide the student to reading materials that will entice the student to read more.

All school systems need to make reading engagement and reading motivation a top priority in order to have success. All students are not created equal, therefore, the school systems needs to differentiate to meet the reading needs of all students. With reading engagement diminishing as students get older, we need to engage in more reading activities. There is not one correct way to motivate and engage students in reading. Different approaches will work with different students. Educators need to take the time to determine what works best for each individual. The ultimate goal is for teachers and parents to motivate and engage students with different reading activities until the readers are capable of achieving success in reading on their own.

In conclusion, students that have a high motivation to read and engage in more reading volume outperform students who have a low motivation to read and do not engage in reading. It will take the effort of both parents and teachers working together in order to foster higher achieving students.

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