Families and Literacy: Lending Libraries in Nicaragua

by

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Approved by__________________________ Date ________________
Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents who taught me all things are possible, and also to the warm, caring people of Nicaragua who graciously helped make this study possible through their inspiration.
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Abstract

Research studies have highlighted two factors as vital to the development of a child’s language and reading skills. The first is access to reading materials within the community and home. The second is reading by parents to children at an early age and encouraging literacy focused activities. The purpose of this study was to examine the literacy-related impacts of the first lending library in Nicaragua on individuals and families who reside in the community of San Juan del Sur. More specifically, the study investigated the relationship between having direct access to reading materials, reading, and other literacy outcomes. Based on existing research, the expectation was that the accessibility to a lending library within the community would have an identifiable influence on literacy behaviors within the family. Using both quantitative and qualitative data sources, the study found that having access to reading materials influenced the frequency of reading activities among individuals and families. Factors that have been identified as influential in literacy development were found to be present among the study participants.
Chapter I

Introduction

Rationale of the study

The importance of basic literacy for sustainable development and reduction of poverty in developing countries is an enormous and challenging issue being addressed globally. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has designed strategies and programs such as the Education for All movement, Literacy Initiative for Empowerment and the Decade of Literacy (2003-2012), to address the challenge of providing literacy and educational opportunities with significant emphasis in developing countries. In the year 2000, world leaders came together at the United Nations Millennium Summit and unanimously agreed that primary education is one of the essential priorities in achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals (see Appendix B for description of goals). The goals, to be achieved by 2015, are meant to focus the efforts of the world community on achieving significant, measurable improvements in people’s lives. Indicators were established for each goal to demonstrate measurable results. Millennium Development Goal #2 states that all children will have the opportunity for a universal primary education, with the sub-category of basic literacy as an indicator. As articulated by United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette:

"Literacy remains part of the unfinished business of the 20th century. One of the success stories of the 21st century must be the extension of literacy to include all humankind . . . There is no time to lose if the world is to meet the Millennium"
The Millennium Declaration was adopted by 189 nations in September 2000 and emphasized citizen responsibility and the need to eliminate illiteracy worldwide (see Appendix C). The following excerpt from the Millennium Declaration established a fundamental premise for this literacy based study:

We recognize that, in addition to our separate responsibilities to our individual societies, we have a collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level. As leaders we have a duty therefore to all the world’s people, especially the most vulnerable and, in particular, the children of the world, to whom the future belongs (United Nations, 2000, ¶ 2).

Literacy is a lifelong requirement, vital for survival and advancement in a changing world society. Literacy development research indicates reading is a fundamental skill necessary for academic success, employment and daily life in general (Boyce et al., 2004; Haney et al., 2003; Valdez-Menchaca, M.C. and Whitehurst, G.J., 1992). Children who do not learn to read or overcome difficulties in reading tend to carry this disadvantage with them into adulthood. Poor reading skills invariably lead to academic struggles and limits all learning. Unemployment, underemployment, crime, welfare, poverty and high dropout rates of students are associated with low levels of literacy (Boyce et al., 2004; Cronan, 1996; Goldenberg, 2001; Valdez-Menchaca, 1992; Valladares, 2003).

While there is no disagreement on the value of education and literacy among our world leaders and educators (United Nations, 2003) the question remains: what will it take to encourage and provide a primary school education for all children in the world?
Current literature reveals early exposure to print was associated with increased frequency of reading behaviors, which was also associated with improved academic success thus supporting the probability of completing a primary school education, Millennium Goal #2. Education experts agree it takes involvement by both the people and the government, in addition to an understanding of which fundamental components support a positive outcome. Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners is an organization that provides an avenue for people to carry out international community development projects (see Appendix D for organization description). In seeking ways to work towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the country of Nicaragua, the author discovered through direct observation and research that the population had limited access to reading materials. When introducing the concept of creating a lending library for the residents of rural communities, the concept was met with much hesitation by community leaders (see Figure 1).

*Figure 1: Introducing the lending library concept for the first time.*
The primary objective of creating a lending library was to help improve access to reading materials. Contrary to this objective, in much of Central America it is not customary to remove a book from an institution, whether it is a school, university, or public library. This social norm explains why the lending library concept was met with much hesitation. If there was a lending library, what impact or implications would result?

The need for providing literacy opportunities for the people of Nicaragua became apparent when reviewing information from United States Aid for International Development (USAID, 2005): on average, Nicaraguans complete fewer than five years of schooling and nearly 500,000 children, aged three to twelve, remain outside the formal education system. These literacy based statistics are further amplified when observing young children in Nicaragua regularly selling various merchandise at the stop lights, repairing pot holes in roads and tending to grazing animals at the expense of not attending school.

Facilitating a literacy study in a foreign country requires a supportive relationship with the indigenous population. The cross cultural connection for this author has been the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners, a chapter of Partners of the Americas. Since 1964 Wisconsin and Nicaragua have maintained a partnership as a method for building unique bilateral exchanges between both cultures. This partnership enables volunteers on both sides to work together on self-help projects in community and economic development projects while fostering inter-American friendship and understanding. An ongoing goal within the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partnership is to provide opportunities for people from both chapters to work together. The Partners philosophy is that citizen participation is
essential to strong and healthy communities in both Wisconsin and Nicaragua (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Mutual planning and citizen participation.

Partners has not sat back waiting for governments to solve problems. Instead, you’ve taken the initiative and shown leadership. You’ve been in the vanguard of people-to-people diplomacy. You’ve chosen sectors where you can touch peoples’ lives and make a real difference – and you’ve done that.

John Hamilton, US Ambassador to Guatemala

Another important philosophy within the Wisconsin and Nicaragua Partnership is the concept of working together to not only identify challenges, but also to come up with viable solutions. The counterparts in Nicaragua asked for assistance from the Wisconsin volunteers to help meet the challenges of the growing illiteracy level in their country’s children. Poverty, limited educational systems, limited access to reading materials, and the lack of
educational materials and books in the schools are the primary factors that contribute to the literacy challenges faced by people living in Nicaragua.

Research indicated the skill of reading can be a powerful factor when attempting to improve one’s economic situation. Reading proficiency is a self-perpetuating skill developed both in an academic school curriculum, and in the community or home environment. The dramatic growth and success of Wisconsin Nicaragua Partners Learning Centers in Nicaragua from one to over 90 throughout the country in twenty-five years, clearly illustrates the need and desire among Nicaraguans for further education and skill development. A W/NP Learning Center in Nicaragua is a place within a community that organizes and offers training in developing vocational skills. An appropriate conduit for increasing access to reading materials would be the W/NP Learning Centers. The expansion of including a lending library within a Learning Center would be a natural progression (see Appendix E for the W/NP Learning Center model). Combinations of effects that make a difference are more effective than individual methods. This concept reinforced the idea that having a lending library would be a natural extension of the existing Learning Center. Learning Centers were already associated by members within a community as a place to increase their knowledge and gather resources, thus an excellent location to provide access to reading materials.

Current and past literacy studies universally agree on the importance of introducing and exposing children to reading materials at an early age for the further development of linguistic abilities. To achieve maximum reading benefits, optimal conditions require access to reading materials within a community facility and the availability of a lending
system. Although lending books was a standard practice in the United States, this was not the case in Nicaragua or many Central American countries.

In order to expand the Learning Centers to include a lending library, the first step was to study an existing lending library model. In Nicaragua, the single lending library was the San Juan del Sur Biblioteca Móvil. The Biblioteca Móvil library began in 2001 in the lobby of the Hotel Villa Isabella, subsequent to the owner, Ms. Jane Mirandette learning of the severe lack of books and reading materials for people who reside in this community. Ms. Mirandette researched various book lending models prior to developing a borrowing library system, and found that none of the 142 libraries registered with ANIBITA, the national library organization in Nicaragua, loaned books. Over and over, the explanation was that to loan a book was to loose a book. The overriding thought process communicated by those living in Nicaragua concluded that books would be stolen if they left a building. Six years after the introducing the lending library concept to the community of San Juan del Sur, the Biblioteca Móvil, has a lending collection of over 12,500 books written in Spanish and English. In addition, a mobile library projected started in 2003 brought about an additional 8,000 books to 27 rural outlaying communities once a month. The community of San Juan del Sur, being the first location in Nicaragua to implement a permanent lending library, was selected as the research setting for this lending library study. The existence of the Biblioteca Móvil has provided an ideal setting to examine implications of having access to reading materials. Further review of general research on literacy in developing countries may serve to illustrate how engaging children in reading at an early age encourages and supports academic success and improved quality of life (Goldenberg et al., 1992).
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine, through means of semi-structured interviews and direct interactions with Nicaraguan adults, the implications of having access to reading materials on literacy events and behaviors in a developing country. In addition, the investigator was seeking more information on the relationship between having direct access to reading materials through a lending library and the reading activities that are present in a Nicaraguan culture. Most literacy research has focused on Caucasian middle and lower social class United States children. Although these findings have provided a critical knowledge base for studies in literacy, the need for research including international populations is viewed as fundamental to the success of attaining the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.
Chapter II

Literature Review

*Early exposure to print and story*

Current and past research has unanimously demonstrated the importance of introducing and exposing children to reading materials at an early age. Research has suggested a positive relationship between the home environment that encourages parents and young children to read together and the development of linguistic abilities that lead to the skill of reading (Boyce et al., 2004). The complex process of forming the foundation for literacy begins at birth and is fostered by the family and community environment that surrounds the child. Considerable literacy-related development occurs before children receive formal reading instruction. The skills that allow children to understand language, whether listening or reading, are developed during the early years of life. The major predictor of being a good reader or listener is the development of good language skills. Research has indicated that integrating a child’s personal experiences into conversations, having reading materials available and reading aloud, aids in the development of pre-literacy skills (Bates; 1999; Dickinson and Smith, 1994; Goldenberg et al., 1992; Leseman and Jong, 1998; Valladares, 2003).

Early childhood literacy events impact academic development. Related literature has identified specific factors that prevail in a child’s life that reveal significant differences in their future academic success. In a longitudinal study of children from age fifteen months to five years, the frequencies of events were tracked that had anything to do with reading or writing. In summary, there was a tendency among the children who scored well academically to have had a high volume of experiences with print materials. In
explaining the difference between the children’s academic success, Wells research has established the importance of sharing stories. Stories allow children to learn to make sense out of their own lives (cited in Cullinan, 2000).

Similar results have been found on home literacy in regard to the associations between early introduction to books, a child’s participation in literacy-related interactions with parents and later academic achievements. After controlling for effects of early language level, the findings compiled from 89 participates indicate that home literacy, measured by frequency or exposures to print materials, was found to determine improved school literacy achievement. The degree of opportunity for literacy interactions at home is also an important factor for improved literacy learning, or word decoding academically. The action of a parent introducing their child to books, and interacting with the child in a variety of ways, was seen as a most important factor in preparing children for reading and writing in school. Reading and listening skills will ultimately determine their academic success (Leseman and Jong 1998).

It is interesting to note on examining literacy studies that evaluate reading behaviors, the interactions measured often revolved around books and also included other activities. For example, a child’s construction of knowledge from print does require some contact with print, but this can be present in a variety of ways including the continual observation of a parent’s behavior of reading or writing throughout their daily normal activities. Some of the most common literacy events that are consistently measured include: parents reading books or newspapers in the child’s vicinity, reading story books to the child at bedtime, reading environmental print (e.g., advertising) with the child present, writing letters, making shopping lists, and the parental acknowledgment of a child’s pretend
reading and writing. Children who grow up in print-rich environments begin to assign meaning from exposure to print at an early age, the very essence of reading. Whether parents realize it or not, establishing positive attitudes and feelings about books and reading is often a result of an open display of their own behavior showing enjoyment of reading. Making literacy skills and behaviors familiar will foster positive attitudes towards literacy learning.

*Parental Involvement*

Parental or caregiver involvement is the most common theme in current literacy studies, demonstrating the necessity for a parent to take an active role in providing opportunities for early exposure to print which will contribute to a child’s literacy development (Cullinan, 2000). It follows that the experiences children have at home will strongly influence their academic achievement. A home environment that encourages early literacy development includes the following: the availability of various reading materials, someone in the home who frequently reads to the child and opportunities for conversations or discussions about the written text (Goldenberg et al., 1992). Reading to a child has many benefits, among them being the reinforcement of the oral language that occurs simultaneously. Having good oral language skills is one of the most valuable and basic tools a child will need for understanding and developing reading skills (Allor and McCathren, 2003). It is not uncommon for children who do not have good oral language skills to have difficulty reading.

An infant responds much like a sponge, absorbing all that surrounds them, finding meaning in experiences and observing responses from others. As toddlers, the process of learning about their environment continues with the exploration of their world by
hearing, touching and seeing all that is around them and making connections with each new experience.

Finally during the pre-school years a child will make the association with meaning and letters and the arrangement of letters. Although seemingly menial, all of these childhood experiences prepare the mind for making sense of written text. The information that is cumulatively gained from birth is used throughout the process of learning to read. Stimulating environments both at home and in preschool encourage a readiness for formal school instruction (Immroth, 1997). Families and teachers who share the goal of making reading a positive experience for children, assist in their literacy development, from learning to read to reading to learn. The study mentioned earlier by Leseman and Jong, concluded that a parent’s own literacy practices appeared to be associated with the frequency that their children’s activities would include literacy-related interactions (1998). Educational background, occupation, and ethnicity are factors relevant to a parents own literacy behaviors. This is consistent with the research findings that indicate literacy is one cognitive skill among many related to success in school (Zigler, 2004).

In summary of parental involvement, children need adults to bring books and other reading materials into their lives and to help them discover that books and reading are fun. The parent or adult is the vital link between children’s potential for literacy development and their lifelong habit of reading that can flourish when nurtured.

**Cultural Populations**

The majority of research conducted in the field of literacy has included samples consisting of primarily white, middle class study participants. Going a step further, studying low-income and how cultural differences may be important in determining
literacy success. Latino literacy research reveals several studies that indicate having books readily available to children and reading to children in the home is not a common or highly valued activity. In fact, nearly 50 percent of Latino parents surveyed reported never reading to their pre-school age children (Boyce et al., 2004). Statistics such as these provoke one to ask whether parents are aware of current available information in regard to literacy development. Is there a lack of reading material in the home? Is reading to children simply not considered a culturally valued activity? It has not been established if the absence of reading to children in the Latino home is due to cultural differences or lack of reading material. Consideration of the literacy level of parents, in addition to parental beliefs and attitudes regarding reading to children is another important factor. Latino parents reported dependence on the school system to educate their children. They reported having a desire to be involved in their child’s education but felt inadequate in how to be of assistance (Evans et al., 2004).

In a yearlong study of ten Hispanic kindergartners (five year olds) living in the United States, it was found that not only does the school have a large impact on home literacy experiences by providing much needed reading materials but also that the parental view of literacy development greatly impacts how these materials are used in the home (Goldenberg et al., 1992). The parents in this study placed greater emphasis on having their children first learn letters and sounds and then blending them together for the formation of words. Book sharing between parent and child or reading together was not seen by the Hispanic parents as an activity that actually teaches children to read. All the parents in Goldenberg’s study were born in Latin America and generally had low levels of education. The findings from the Goldenberg study support the fact that in a Hispanic
population, children are less likely to experience text-based literacy-learning opportunities in the home environment equivalent to the United States.

Factors contributing to the absence of these parent-child types of reading opportunities may be related to access to literacy materials at home and how they are used if available. It was found that low-income Hispanic homes contain few children’s books or other books in general. Hancock (2002) explained inexpensive books and other reading materials written in Spanish text are not readily available for Spanish speaking families living in the United States and Hispanics generally work at lower paying jobs. Therefore, the frequency with which Hispanic children from these homes would have fewer opportunities to read meaningful written text. However, it is important to consider cultural diversity of the study sample. Some minority, low-income and immigrant families may support home literacy in culturally different ways using less traditional methods, such as the oral sharing of history (Morrow and Nueman, 1995). The concept sharing oral history may be an important point as other literacy related activities that take place within families e.g., book sharing and reading aloud.

Reading aloud and storytelling

The national Commission on Reading indicates reading to children is the single most important factor in reading success (Armbruster et al, 2003). Historically, researchers have known that shared book experiences are an important factor in the foundational development of reading. Reading aloud with children is a valuable endeavor, and its worth in the literacy development of young children has been undisputed. Extensive research, specifically in the field of reading, has revealed that regardless of geographic location, racial background, or income level, a child who learns to read before starting
formal instruction, is ready to read at the onset of formal instruction, has been read to at home (Strickland, 2000).

Although limited, additional research has been conducted on the effects of reading to children in low-income family populations who are at-risk for academic deficiencies. A study conducted at the Utah State University examined book sharing among low-income, Spanish-speaking, immigrant Latina mothers. The participants included 47 three year old children and their mothers. The research focused on determining what interactive behaviors occurred during the book sharing, and the effect this had on the child’s vocabulary. Results concluded that reading together enhanced the child’s attention to the printed text and promoted conversation about the content of the printed text (Boyce et al, 2004). Children can look at books on their own, but sharing story books together gives parents and children an opportunity to explore commonplace events as well as extraordinary happenings.

Storytelling without the aid of printed text is consistent with the findings on parent-child sharing experiences. Storytelling is identified in the literature as a very ancient art used to entertain and education children through the sharing of tales from adult to child passed on orally (de Vos, 1991). As reported earlier, some cultures have traditional methods of promoting literacy developmental behaviors in their home environment, and storytelling would be one example. Based on the review of literature, it is incorrect to suppose that there is one simple or single action, which if followed correctly, will immediately allow a child to read. The results from the review of literature established that reading development is attributed to no single factor, and that certainly there are some skills and behaviors that effectively promote and advance the likelihood of literacy
development. Similar to reading aloud, storytelling cultivates the mind for future growth and development in many ways. The following list details how storytelling can aid in development (1991):

- in the search for identity
- in developing value systems
- in establishing a sense of belonging
- for individual contemplation
- to encourage emotional release
- in entertaining
- in the creation of bonds
- in developing listening skills
- in preservation traditions
- in remembering cultural stories
- to exposing children to oral language
- in developing discrimination

Not only does reading aloud and storytelling produce long lasting effects on literacy as a whole, it attributes to behaviors attributed to being an effective parent as it tends to soothe a sick child, reduce fear, and ease a fretful child into sleep. The poem below provides a glimpse of what a child may experience while being read to. In this particular example, it is important to note the potential bonding and satisfaction that can develop from the time spent together, while on Grandpa’s lap.

**When Grandpa Reads to Me**

I love to climb in Grandpa’s lap  
To hear my favorite books.  
He reads the words and talks about  
The pictures as I look.  

Adventures flow from every page  
When Grandpa reads the tales  
Of pirates roaming on the seas  
And ships with golden sails.  

The characters can spring to life  
Like Peter Pan and Pooh,  
Madeline and Curious George  
And Peter Rabbit too.  

Grandpa even does the voices.  
I laugh until I’m weak  
When I hear Grandpa’s deep, low voice  
Do Piglet’s high-pitched squeak.  

There’s nothing I can’t do through books.  
There’s nothing I can’t see.  
The whole world opens up its arms  
When Grandpa reads to me.  

@2000 by John Micklos, Jr.


**Literacy programs**

Literacy programs have been promoted extensively in North America generally as a response to well known documented cases of illiteracy. The Department of Education has recognized the importance and need for universal literacy and supports intervention projects such as *HeadStart, Title 1* and *No Child Left Behind* that will help children, especially in the low-income population meet the high standards that are expected in contemporary schools (Goldenberg, 2001; Sanders, 1996). Given the option of participating in these and other programs encouraging literacy, researchers continue to investigate the rising illiteracy rates despite the existence of programs and knowledge of multiple factors that may be associated with this problem. As the Hispanic population continues to grow in the United States more research is being initiated in an attempt to examine the suggested correlation between poverty and low levels of literacy. Findings suggest that the chances of a poverty cycle being broken are very limited unless education begins at an early age. A comment from Tom Still’s editorial below illustrates well the importance of early childhood education (see Appendix F for complete article).

An economic case for investing in early childhood education was presented at the recent “Strongest Links” conference in Madison, which was attended by about 200 people and sponsored by about 20 organizations and state agencies. Speakers agreed that dollars spent on teaching kids before they reach kindergarten are wise investments, especially by the time those children are grown and ready to enter the workforce. The business base for societal investments in early childhood education is strong. Current evidence shows it’s the least expensive way to
create the largest number of productive citizens. And with demographic
trends pointing to huge worker shortages, it might be to our advantage in
Wisconsin to see that all kids get a head start now (Still, 2006).

Children who experience academic failure early in their education career increase their
risk of dropping out of school, and often are faced with low paying employment options.
In addition to literacy programs specifically for children, there has also been an emphasis
to educate parents on the significant role families play in early childhood education. The
United States continues to struggle with illiteracy despite the numerous resources
available to families, therefore magnifying the literacy challenges endemic in developing
countries.

The educational systems in most third world countries currently do not support the
number of school age children needing education. In Nicaragua, 26% of males six or
older and 24% of females have no formal education. Among members of both sexes, the
percentage of those with a primary education of between one to three years varies
between 22% and 28%, excluding Jinotega and Managua (ENDESA, 2001). This
condition exemplifies the need for families everywhere to maximize the chances of
having their children succeed academically when given the opportunity. As previously
reported, people living in Nicaragua have very limited access to reading materials.
Research has revealed that exposure to reading materials early in life as well as through
the school age years is a critical component not only to contributing to improved readings
skills, but also continuing and succeeding in school. Numerous studies have reported the
advantages that an early childhood education brings whether in a preschool setting or a
stimulating home environment (Allor and McCathren 2003; Arnold et al., 1994; Bates, 1999; Boyce et al., 2004; Goldenberg et al., 1992; Leseman and deJong, 1998).
Chapter III
Methodology

Sample

The population selected for this study consisted of low-income Hispanic adults, between the ages of 19 and 50 years who reside in the city of San Juan del Sur, in the country of Nicaragua. Twenty study participants were randomly selected from a list of sixty interested individuals willing to participate in a lending library study on literacy. The list of participants was obtained in collaboration with a research assistant, a resident of San Juan del Sur, who randomly selected residents in the community of San Juan del Sur, with the task of inquiring into their interest and eligibility for participation in a research study. All participants were residents in the same community and had access to a lending library, but were not necessarily defined as users of the local library.

Instrument used

The research method used in this study collected data through a case study instrument formulated as a series of questions. The information for the study was to be gathered through an informal interview process in the form of a questionnaire. The design of the study was based on a semi-structured interview, with a series of questions that would serve as a guide for investigation of what local people believed and felt about the activity of reading and libraries. Based on a review of current literature, a series of questions were developed that would provide reliable estimates in determining reading behaviors, and assessing whether access to reading materials influenced the frequency and patterns of reading behaviors. The series of questions were reviewed, refined, and then approved by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at the University of
Wisconsin – Stevens Point (see Appendixes G,H, I and J). The questionnaire requested information that would illustrate a respondent’s history of literacy, including past and present reading behaviors and actions such as:

- Literacy behaviors and reading activities
- Level of access to reading materials, at home and outside the home
- Story telling history and level of interpretation
- Frequency of parent reading to child
- Frequency of sibling reading to child
- Value placed on the skill of reading by the parent
- Highest grade of education completed by parent

The questionnaires were administered to the study subjects in a consistent and repetitive pattern to assure reliability of the data. There was no deception or otherwise inordinate processes used in gathering the data. Twenty questionnaires were administered, two of which were not included in the data analysis due to insufficient information. Eighteen questionnaires (90%) were used for final data computation to complete the study. In appreciation for participation in the study, all subjects were offered an optional educational support tool that further explained the impact books and reading can have on a child’s literacy development (see Appendix K). The quantitative and qualitative elements of the study are interrelated, therefore quantitative data was reported in four areas listed below and then discussion of the qualitative questions and observations follows.

Quantitative data include:

- Demographic information
- Access to reading materials
- Frequency of reading aloud
- Frequency of storytelling
The results from the open ended questions and observations will be included in the discussion chapter identifying the recurring themes and patterns.

*Procedure for analysis of the data*

This is a descriptive and analytical study that uses quantitative and qualitative data. General observations related to the differences in cultural attitudes and behaviors towards the activity of reading were made over a period of five years (2003-2008) with the research tool being administered in the middle of this time period. After the information from the written questionnaire guide was gathered, the data was compiled and reoccurring themes were charted and identified. Included in the analysis and reporting of the survey results, is information that had been documented in writing and by photograph over the course of the full five-year period. The information was gathered by means of written notes, observations, informational exchanges, and compiled site visits.

*Limitations*

The study participants were all from San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua; thus the data may not be inferred to the general population. Cross-cultural differences may have influence on the study outcomes relative to the condition under which the survey questions were written in English and translated by a native Spanish speaker. The methodology called for data collection to be done through an informational interview, with a series of questions that guided the discussion. The recommended protocol was limited by use of indirect supervision, thus some factors were beyond the investigator’s control. The distance of over 2500 miles between the investigator and the participants, the language interpretation, and indirect supervision were major limitations.
Assumptions

The participants in the study would provide truthful responses to questions regarding their past literacy habits and experiences. No surveys encompassing literacy in a developing country population were available, therefore a series of questions were designed by the investigator to reflect current literature findings that accurately illustrate and measure literacy events and behaviors.
Chapter IV

Results

Demographic information

Demographic and personal characteristics of the survey participants are summarized in Figure 3. Of the 20 families selected, 18 families completed the study survey; two families did not complete the survey due to insufficient data. The participants were between 19 and 50 years old, with the majority being older than 27 years (83.3%). All but three participants had children, and all of the respondents were Hispanic. Marital status was divided equally among the subjects, 50% reported being single. Although 99.4% answered either married or single, no one responded as divorced. All of the participants had attended school, with 34% attending at University level. Similar to the educational system in the United States, a degree can be obtained in approximately four years, additional years of study are required for a specialization. Half of the respondents left the income question blank, one third of those reporting income, are at a level between US$100 - US$200 per month.

Figure 3. Demographic and personal characteristics of survey participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>% of Participants</th>
<th>N=18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 34</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>(11/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 50</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>(6/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(1/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3 (con’t) Demographic and personal characteristics of survey participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>% of Participants</th>
<th>N=18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Children:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>17 (3/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>22 (4/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>40 (7/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11 (2/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 (1/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5 (1/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/Ethinic Group:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>100 (18/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital Status:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>45 (8/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>50 (9/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5 (1/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education Level:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University, level unknown</td>
<td>34 (6/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School, level unknown</td>
<td>27 (5/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some school, level unknown</td>
<td>34 (6/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No data</td>
<td>5 (1/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Income:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>50 (9/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than US$100 per month</td>
<td>17 (3/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US$100 to US$150 per month</td>
<td>11 (2/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US$150 to US$200 per month</td>
<td>22 (4/18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Access to reading materials

The main purpose of this study was to examine the literacy related outcomes of the study population regarding access to reading materials. Of the eighteen subjects surveyed, half had books in their home as a child, and half did not have books in their
home as a child (see Figures 4 and 5). As adults with household and family responsibilities, 16 out of the 18 subjects surveyed (90%) possessed books in their home. 

![Figure 4. Books in the home as a child](image1)

![Figure 5. Books in the home now](image2)

The participants in this study were residents of a Nicaraguan community who had equal access to a lending library. Of the participants who had children (15/18), 100 percent reported their children used the library in the community of San Juan del Sur. Figures 6 and 7 illustrate the frequency of their child’s use of the library and the parent’s presence at the library with their child. Of the 15 families who reported they had children who utilized the library, half of the parents attended the library with their children, and half did not.

![Figure 6. Frequency of children's library use](image3)

![Figure 7. Attendance to library with child](image4)
When asked about personal reading habits as an adult, six of the eighteen subjects (34%) reported reading on a daily basis (see Figure 8).

Figures 9 and 10 represent the final quantitative elements of the study regarding access to reading materials. Less than half of those surveyed (39%) reported that their children acquire books from school. When asked if the parent noted any changes in the reading habits among their family members, 72% reported positive observations of changes in reading behavior since using the library.
Reading aloud

Oral reading as a measurable indicator influencing reading behavior was assessed among the subjects with basic yes/no questions focused on childhood and parental experiences. The data revealed a major shift in oral reading practices from childhood to parental adults (see Figures 11 and 12). The data collected further revealed that the majority (84%) of the participants in this study did not have the experience of parental reading as children (see Figure 11). As adults, ten of the 18 (56%) surveyed were providing parental reading to their children (see Figure 12) and the same amount (56%) reported that their children read to them or other family members. Out of the group of ten who were reading to their children, the participants reported the following data on who initiates the oral reading: Self: 2  Spouse: 3  Children: 5

[Graphs showing data]

When those who were not reading to their children (22%) were asked about obstacles that prevented them from reading to their child, the responses were as follows:

- It is not a habit I am used to
- I do not have any books
- It is not normal or customary
- I do not have any time
The final results regarding reading aloud are presented in Figures 13 and 14. These data represent the frequency of reading aloud that occurred in the home environment. Three of the ten families (30%) who read aloud to their child, did so at least once per week with seven of the families reading aloud between two and seven times per week. Four of the ten families (40%) who have children who read aloud to them, did so at least once per week.

![Figure 13. Frequency of reading aloud to your child](image1)

![Figure 14. Frequency of child reading to you](image2)

**Storytelling**

Sixteen out of the eighteen participants surveyed (90%) reported that they recall oral storytelling as a part of their childhood. When asked if they have continued this tradition with their children, only one of the 15 who have children reported that they did not incorporate storytelling within their family. When asked why or how storytelling was important to you, fifteen out of eighteen responded as follows:

- ✓ It’s important to know things (N=3)
- ✓ Wakes an interest for children to study (N=2)
✓ I don’t do it, but good for intellectual growth & for marriage
✓ To discover things and learn from this
✓ Has become a custom
✓ To help identify concepts
✓ To remember the past
✓ Know history and customs of the past
✓ Familiarize with history
✓ Tradition of the town
✓ Recreation and good habits
✓ Reproduce knowledge and familiarity
Chapter V
Discussion

Environmental influences have been found to be the major determinants of reading and writing skill acquisition in the same manner as children learning to speak through being surrounded by speech sounds and communication. A child’s pre-literacy developmental skills flourish and grow when given opportunities and examples to follow. In order for this to occur, it is necessary for a parent to recognize this condition as being important in their child’s development. This concept was confirmed according to the study outcomes as reported in Figures 4 and 5 (p. 33) where adult parental practices reflected childhood influence in regard to availability of reading material. Recognizing this change, combined with the 100 percent of the survey population that reported the skill of reading to be valuable, supports the premise that the presence of books in the home is a priority for the parents in this study. Through the course of interview conversations and investigator observations, parents consistently reported the common desire of wanting to improve conditions for their children, compared to what they had experienced as a child.

When asked where the parents learned the skill of reading, 15 out of 18 respondents reported schools as the source of their reading skill. Two respondents did not know and one reported acquiring their reading skill was learned from their parent. As mentioned earlier, Hispanic parents reported placing the responsibility for the skill of reading on the school system (Evans et al., 2004). When asked about the origin of their reading skill acquisition as a child two responded that parental encouragement was important in
helping to develop reading skills, while eleven responded simply that reading was an important skill to know, not identifying a support system.

Based upon responses from parents in the current study, the view of who is responsible for the development of a child’s reading appears to be changing away from the school. The parents communicated a desire to have a more active role in the process of helping their children learn to read, and also providing an environment where there is access to reading materials. Lack of financial resources was indicated as the primary reason for not having books in the home. It was not that they did not feel it was not important, they simply did not have the luxury of being able to purchase books.

Importantly, the total surveyed, all who had children were accessing the local lending library. Nearly 50 percent indicated their children visit the library weekly and half of the parents attend the library with the child (see Figures 6 and 7, p. 33).

Eleven of the 18 surveyed, reported on the questionnaire the adult section of the library is important and they utilized it regularly by checking out the following types of books: car help, psychology, dictionaries, personal care, social, magazines, cooking, fiction, history, novels, manual, science fiction and literature. Figure 8 p. 34, illustrates the frequency of reading among the study participants, with 34 percent reporting daily reading. When asked the main reasons for reading, the responses were as follows; to specialize (N=3), to know, to learn more (N=2), to be informed, distraction, children, to increase vocabulary, and to increase knowledge (N=3).

Having access to books through the lending library has impacted the study participants and their families. Some of the more common impacts reported included:

- We can begin a custom we did not have.
- Yes, it is very important for to learn.
- Of course, we have seen a change and read more
- My daughter likes to read books and my relationship with her is better from us reading together.
- In making the habit of reading
- For me it’s personal
- Now my family is learning many things.

The collective responses listed above are consistent with the review of literature that confirms book reading and book sharing between parents and children as being a positive experience. The frequency of reading appears to be increasing with improved access to reading materials, and also family members report they are learning new things and sharing more time together. The results from this study indicated the activity of storytelling as a tradition is still being carried on today. Ninety percent of the study participants recall story telling as a child, and 94 percent of this same group, report they are continuing this activity with their own children. The responses indicated storytelling remains an effective way to communicate history as well as to enhance knowledge and familiarity with customs.

As illustrated in Figure 6 on p. 33, the children of the study participants are visiting the library weekly. The parents reported the children are taking advantage of the many services the library provides including opportunities to take books home, attend story hours, make arts and crafts, participate in computer education, and joining school study groups. The success of the lending library has dispelled the myth that loaned books will be stolen. According to Ms. Mirandette, the patrons are very grateful for the project and take excellent care of the books. This respect for books and diligent compliance with book lending rules has allowed the library to have a return rate, nearly 100%, that is
much higher than most public libraries in the United States. Success may be attributed to an added incentive to return books. Once a month, a dress up party and celebration is planned for the community children with the single requirement that they must have no outstanding books in order to attend (see Figure 15).

Figure 15: Face painting is part of a monthly celebration for children who use the library and are in good standing, (no overdue books).

In Nicaragua, it is not uncommon for only the teacher to have a textbook, requiring the students to depend on listening or writing down on paper the subject information being taught. Figure 9 on p. 34 summarizes the school based resources for reading material. Less than half (39%) of the parents surveyed reported their children bring home books from school. Limited access to books was a major factor that contributed to the opening of a lending library in San Juan del Sur. Once the library was established, the directors of local schools, knowing the school system could not provide textbooks for all the students, requested the practice of including textbooks from the local school curriculum in the library lending collection. Students could then have experiences studying with school textbooks at the library. There are now regular study groups that take place in the library after school hours. Studying in groups has been found to be beneficial and is a new, fun and effective way of learning information for the children in San Juan del Sur. In addition
to the children sharing their enthusiasm for attending school, local teachers and
administrators have reported observing positive changes as well (see Figure 16). The
following is a quote from a local school administrator in San Juan del Sur that details
what changes she has observed in the students who are using the library:

I would like to have the rest of the schools that I supervise incorporated into your mobile
project as well. The teachers at the Las Pampas school have told me about the change in their
students, which began after the Mobile Project’s first visit. Now, their students are more
interested in their studies and their education. They wait excitedly for the Project’s next visit to
their school so that they can exchange their books and take out new ones. However, the same
enthusiasm stays with these students in their daily studies. Before the Project, there were some
children who could not read. Now, they are reading. They are fascinated by books. Their
imaginations are growing as is their desire for more education. Your Project affords these
students with a very special and unique opportunity. They are doing better as a result. I am here
to ask you if it would be possible to incorporate four more schools that I supervise into your
program so that more children can have the same experience and benefit from the Mobile
Project.

- Melania Vardes, Supervisor of the Las Pampas School District

Figure 16: San Juan del Sur elementary school students using available books
Each year the San Juan del Sur library has an annual celebration to commemorate the presence of the lending library within this community. Children are invited to share what the library means to them. Figures 17 and 18 two examples of their responses:

**Figure 17**

With balloons of colors  
Ribbons and streamers  
There is festivity in our hearts  
On this 4th anniversary of our library.

From her there is joy  
and to us a better future  
For this we celebrate on this day  
With soul, life and heart.

Coming to us are one thousand books  
to read with our attention  
And coming to her, 100,000 niños  
To celebrate this day with love.

Library, from you I have the total of my wisdom  
and so this poem is for you  
and because you have illuminated my days  
Today I give you my gratitude.

**Figure 18**

Six years ago you were a cocoon.  
You were only that, yet you breathed.  
Whispers were heard and.  
Your people were happily awaiting you.

Six years ago the story might have been different  
But destiny and goodwill wanted  
You to belong to this city and not to another.  
To be from here without regard to nationality.

This is why on your sixth Anniversary  
I personally pay you homage.  
I promise to visit you everyday.  
And to defend you with courage.

*Figures 17 and 18: Student responses regarding feelings on the San Juan del Sur library*

*Figures 19 and 20: Examples of using a lending library*
In addition to the noticeable changes reported by adults regarding the reading activities in relation to the use of the library among the school age children in San Juan del Sur, a number of adults shared their changed interest in reading. The desire to be informed and to increase ones vocabulary and knowledge were the main reasons reported for reading changes by the adult participants. Fishing is one of the primary industries in San Juan del Sur. In researching who in the community uses the library, it was interesting to note one of the local fishermen is estimated to have checked out more than 3,000 books, while wearing out several library cards in the past six years. The competitive fishermen go out to sea for 10-15 days at a time, fishing independently during the day, but anchoring in the same place at night, sharing fuel so they can all read.

Discussions with survey respondents suggest the presence of a lending library in the community of San Juan del Sur has been a positive experience, providing books and resources to people who have not had that privilege in the past. As one patron of the library states, “The library is to write and to read and to study, and to learn many things. I like to use the library as a resource and we use the library to help us analyze things.” The library itself has become an integral part of the community and is currently serving as a model for the development of other lending libraries for Central America.
Chapter VI
Summary and conclusions

A survey of 20 family residents of San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua was conducted to determine the implications of having access to reading materials, and how access to reading materials influenced the habit of reading. Data were obtained by a questionnaire which requested literacy history, current reading habits, access to reading materials, and general impressions on literacy. The participants were all from the same community, exclusively of Hispanic descent, both married and single, with all having some level of formal education.

The results from this research study clearly indicate that having access to reading materials has an identifiable and observable impact on the reading habits and literacy behaviors of people who live in Nicaragua. The following reoccurring themes were observed as a result of access to reading materials through a lending library:

- increased frequency of books in the home
- increased frequency of reading both individually, and together within the family
- parental raised awareness in the development of reading skills
- eagerness to expand ones knowledge and improve themselves
- continuation of oral storytelling within the family as a traditional method for acquisition of knowledge, both in history and intellectual growth

The socio-economic condition of limited access to reading materials for the residents of San Juan del Sur has fueled the desire to seek out means for providing literacy development opportunities, such as utilizing the lending library in San Juan del Sur. It is evident from this study that the need exists for additional research focused on
international populations. The Millennium Development Goals were created as a guide to help communities improve and encourage development of programs that will foster increased literacy and subsequent improvement in quality of life. This research study examined reading behaviors in relations to having access to reading materials, and the results suggest a positive link between the importance of literacy and reading as a first step in the long range goal of helping children in the world to complete a primary school education. With limited resources developing countries like Nicaragua will invariably have a greater challenge meeting world literacy goals.

Citizens all across the globe are taking action to provide opportunities for working together and the introduction of lending libraries have the capability of helping communities grow and make progress. Reading is a basic life skill, and is important for societal development as well as individual achievement. The San Juan del Sur research project affirms that access to reading materials influences the frequency and types of reading activities among both individuals and families.
Postscript: Applications from the lending library research study.

The results from this research study have had substantial implications upon further literacy opportunity development in Nicaragua. Over 2,000 books have been collected and five lending libraries subsequently inaugurated due to requests from Nicaraguan community members for reading materials. The planning and implementation of each lending library was a cooperative effort by many people and organizations, both in Wisconsin and Nicaragua. The following photographs and comments speak for themselves. Through this project, reading materials are now available and being used regularly by thousands of adults and children. The expectation is with continued support and raised awareness on the value and importance of access to reading materials, the lending library concept will experience a domino effect.

- April 2006, 1st W/NP Lending Library opens in Tipitapa, Nicaragua
- August 2006 2nd W/NP Lending Library opens in Chinandega, Nicaragua
- October 2006 3rd W/NP Lending Library opens in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua
- March 2007 4th W/NP Lending Library opens in Juigalpa, Nicaragua
- February 2008 5th W/NP Lending Library opens on Ometepe Island, Nicaragua
May 2006 update from Tipitapa Library

My friend I want much to tell you that we are working with the library that you all appointed to me. To the day already we have children with interest taking advantage of the books, to this day, we have 16 children, among them young children and ladies and they have carried the books to their houses and in 4 days they are returning them in good condition, they have read over 70 books and they would like more. We have established the hours on Saturdays from 2 to 4 in the afternoon for them to exchange their books. My daughter Karen is heading this program and I.

Amy, thank you very much for everything and for always remembering to help me and my community; I’m not going to disappoint and guarantee to make this all a success. My farewell to you, health to my dear friend and also much to Sherin and your father and all of your family.

I hope you write to me soon and always to be in communication with you,

Rosa from Tipitapa

June 2006 Update

Hello my dear friend Amy,

I'm very touched to know we were in your thoughts and in your heart at the convention. I want to tell you, Amy, that my daughter Karen is doing a good job at the library. She waits on the kids every Saturday afternoon from 1-4pm. Presently we have 40 kids who come every Saturday to read and afterwards they take 2 books home which they turn in the following Saturday. They're very punctual. There are Saturdays when we're left without any books, we can't keep up.

Amy, we have a little problem. There are kids from the public high school who come in with the hope of finding books on literature or history. There are also a lot of kids in 3rd, 4th or 5th year of high school who tell me that they need a computer with a printer in order to do their assignments. They come from families of scarce economic resources and can't afford to be going to a cyber café. If some day you could find us even a used computer it would help these young people.

As far as the little kids are concerned, we need many, many more children's picture books. They have read and reread our books and they're asking for the following:

Dora the Explorer    Disney stories    Sesame Street
Barney              Etc, etc

I want to let you know that it's been a success because there are many more kids who want to read. Karen loves her job and it gives her a lot of pleasure. When Dr. Martin was at my house he gave me a lot of stuffed animals and I will pass them out to the kids.
next Saturday as a reward for good behavior. They have taken good care of their books and they’re very poor, they’ll be so glad to get them.

Thank you, my friend, for thinking of us. Greetings to Miss Sherin and your dad--tell them my kids and I send a big hello. Your friend who thinks highly of you,

Rosa (Liliam Gomez)

I like to be in the library because this is where I like to spend the time, it is educational and everyone likes it and it’s fun to be at the library. Thank you for sending us books because it makes us happy, and thank you for your support and attentions because that makes us feel good.

- Nester Bonilla Brenes

We come here everyday from 2-4, we share books with my parents, my grandparents, my brothers and my uncles. My favorite books are animals, comic books and novels. We read twice a week for 1 hour.

– Maryuri Gissell
Comments from the users of the Tipitapa Lending Library, the first W/NP library to be implemented after the research study in San Juan del Sur:

Nestor

I like to be in the library because this is where I like to spend the time, it is educational and everyone likes it and it’s fun to be at the library. Thank you for sending us books because it makes us happy, and thank you for your support and attention because that makes us feel good. I want to Thank Dona Rosa and Karen for their attention to us and because they have given us the support to keep coming to the library and having fun at the library.

The library means a lot to us, we use it to read, and it’s very educational because you makes us learn about the environment. We use our books for our past time and also we use it for school research. We would like a bigger library, with AC, I would like to have more chairs and tables to read at the library. We come here every Saturday, from 2-4. The type of books that I like is solar system, animals and the environment. I read books once a week for 1 hour.

Jerri

I like to read at the library with my friend. I like books and I like to read, the library is pretty. I like the library because they have more books, I like to read every Saturday with my father and my mother everyday.

Fernando

The library is to write and to read and to study, and to learn to many things. I like to use the library as a resource and we use the library to help us analyze things. We would like the library to be bigger, to have more books, and to have more tables and chairs. I shared the books with my father and my mother.

Cesar

I like to read a lot, we always come here to play and read, and I like to be read to. I like that I can borrow books from the library.

Josseling

The library means reading, learning how to read. We want the best for our library, we want to take care of our books and our library, we want our library to have more books, computers, AC and would like to fix the library. I come here every Saturday. I share the library with my parents. I read books everyday and I love math and English.
Guissel

I like to read books with happiness. We do a lot of things at the library, I like to come here every Saturday. And I share books with my family, books that I like are history books.

Keyling

I like to read a lot of things like novels. I like to read with happiness to learn a lot I would like to have a bigger library with PC’s and a camera. I read every Saturday, I share my books with my parents and grand parents. I read 5 times a week.

Obeda

The library means to me a place where I can read and learn and spend time playing with the library. I use the library to learn and play with my friends, and to borrow books from the library. I would like to have a bigger library with more books.

Mar

We come here everyday from 2-4, we share books with my parents, my grandparents, my brothers and my uncles. My favorite books are animals, comic books and novels. We read twice a week for 1 hour.

Francis

The library is important for us and we love the books and we have to treat them with care. This is for all of us who make this library possible. We all feel very content and happy because you brought us books because they are all very important for our life because we can learn from them and thank you very much.

Anonymous

The library is used to read and write and also to learn stories that I did not know. I would like to have a lot of books so I can read. We come here every Saturday and I share books with my parents and my uncle. I like to read stories, novels. I read once a week.

The library means to me that I can read, learn and have a past time with games at the library. We use the library to learn, to enjoy good times, and to research for questions I have in my mind. I would like to have better library, with computers, more books, AC, tables, chairs and a bigger space. I come to the library once a week from 2-4. And I read with my cousins and my uncles.
References


Cullinan, B. (2000). Read to me; raising kids who love to read. New York; Scholastic Inc.


Appendix A

Definitions
Definitions for the purpose of this study

Basic literacy: early exposure to the skills of reading and writing.

Hispanic Population: Individuals from various races that share the commonality of having a Spanish background.

Latino: A person who comes from a country of Latin America.

Literacy: The ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning to enable an individual to achieve his or her goals, to develop his or her knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in the wider society (UNESCO, 2000).

Literacy events: For purposes of this study, any behaviors or activities that encompass reading or writing, e.g. reading a book, making a shopping list, being read aloud to, watching others read, . . . etc.

Primary education: The first stage of compulsory education, achieving literacy is one of the major goals of a primary education.

Reading: the ability to decode a set of symbols into speech.

Youth literacy rate: The percentages of people ages 15-24 that can, with understanding, read and write a short, simple statement on their everyday life (UNESCO, 2000).


USAID: United States Agency for International Development.
Appendix B

Millennium Development Goals
What are the Millennium Development Goals?

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight goals to be achieved by 2015 that respond to the world’s main development challenges. The MDGs are drawn from the actions and targets contained in the Millennium Declaration that was adopted by 189 nations—and signed by 147 heads of state and governments during the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000.

The 8 MDGs break down into 18 quantifiable targets that are measured by 48 indicators.

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality
Goal 5: Improve maternal health
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

The MDGs:

- synthesize, in a single package, many of the most important commitments made separately at the international conferences and summits of the 1990s;
- recognize explicitly the interdependence between growth, poverty reduction and sustainable development;
- acknowledge that development rests on the foundations of democratic governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights and peace and security;
- are based on time-bound and measurable targets accompanied by indicators for monitoring progress; and
- bring together, in the eighth Goal, the responsibilities of developing countries with those of developed countries, founded on a global partnership endorsed at the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico in March 2002, and again at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in August 2002.
Appendix C

Millennium Declaration
Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/55/L.2)]

55/2. United Nations Millennium Declaration

The General Assembly

Adopts the following Declaration:

United Nations Millennium Declaration

I. Values and principles

1. We, heads of State and Government, have gathered at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 6 to 8 September 2000, at the dawn of a new millennium, to reaffirm our faith in the Organization and its Charter as indispensable foundations of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.

2. We recognize that, in addition to our separate responsibilities to our individual societies, we have a collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level. As leaders we have a duty therefore to all the world’s people, especially the most vulnerable and, in particular, the children of the world, to whom the future belongs.

3. We reaffirm our commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which have proved timeless and universal. Indeed, their relevance and capacity to inspire have increased, as nations and peoples have become increasingly interconnected and interdependent.

4. We are determined to establish a just and lasting peace all over the world in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. We rededicate ourselves to support all efforts to uphold the sovereign equality of all States, respect for their territorial integrity and political independence, resolution of disputes by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, the right to self-determination of peoples which remain under colonial domination and foreign occupation, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the equal rights of all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion and international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character.
5. We believe that the central challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world’s people. For while globalization offers great opportunities, at present its benefits are very unevenly shared, while its costs are unevenly distributed. We recognize that developing countries and countries with economies in transition face special difficulties in responding to this central challenge. Thus, only through broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future, based upon our common humanity in all its diversity, can globalization be made fully inclusive and equitable. These efforts must include policies and measures, at the global level, which correspond to the needs of developing countries and economies in transition and are formulated and implemented with their effective participation.

6. We consider certain fundamental values to be essential to international relations in the twenty-first century. These include:

- **Freedom.** Men and women have the right to live their lives and raise their children in dignity, free from hunger and from the fear of violence, oppression or injustice. Democratic and participatory governance based on the will of the people best assures these rights.

- **Equality.** No individual and no nation must be denied the opportunity to benefit from development. The equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured.

- **Solidarity.** Global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice. Those who suffer or who benefit least deserve help from those who benefit most.

- **Tolerance.** Human beings must respect one other, in all their diversity of belief, culture and language. Differences within and between societies should be neither feared nor repressed, but cherished as a precious asset of humanity. A culture of peace and dialogue among all civilizations should be actively promoted.

- **Respect for nature.** Prudence must be shown in the management of all living species and natural resources, in accordance with the precepts of sustainable development. Only in this way can the immeasurable riches provided to us by nature be preserved and passed on to our descendants. The current unsustainable patterns of production and consumption must be changed in the interest of our future welfare and that of our descendants.

- **Shared responsibility.** Responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security, must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally. As the most universal and most representative organization in the world, the United Nations must play the central role.

7. In order to translate these shared values into actions, we have identified key objectives to which we assign special significance.

**II. Peace, security and disarmament**

8. We will spare no effort to free our peoples from the scourge of war, whether within or between States, which has claimed more than 5 million lives in the
past decade. We will also seek to eliminate the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction.

9. We resolve therefore:

- To strengthen respect for the rule of law in international as in national affairs and, in particular, to ensure compliance by Member States with the decisions of the International Court of Justice, in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations, in cases to which they are parties.

- To make the United Nations more effective in maintaining peace and security by giving it the resources and tools it needs for conflict prevention, peaceful resolution of disputes, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction. In this context, we take note of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations\(^1\) and request the General Assembly to consider its recommendations expeditiously.

- To strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter.

- To ensure the implementation, by States Parties, of treaties in areas such as arms control and disarmament and of international humanitarian law and human rights law, and call upon all States to consider signing and ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court\(^2\).

- To take concerted action against international terrorism, and to accede as soon as possible to all the relevant international conventions.

- To redouble our efforts to implement our commitment to counter the world drug problem.

- To intensify our efforts to fight transnational crime in all its dimensions, including trafficking as well as smuggling in human beings and money laundering.

- To minimize the adverse effects of United Nations economic sanctions on innocent populations, to subject such sanctions regimes to regular reviews and to eliminate the adverse effects of sanctions on third parties.

- To strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and to keep all options open for achieving this aim, including the possibility of convening an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers.

- To take concerted action to end illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons, especially by making arms transfers more transparent and supporting regional disarmament measures, taking account of all the recommendations of the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons.

- To call on all States to consider acceding to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and


\(^{2}\) A/CONF.183/9.
on Their Destruction, as well as the amended mines protocol to the Convention on conventional weapons.

10. We urge Member States to observe the Olympic Truce, individually and collectively, now and in the future, and to support the International Olympic Committee in its efforts to promote peace and human understanding through sport and the Olympic Ideal.

III. Development and poverty eradication

11. We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected. We are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want.

12. We resolve therefore to create an environment – at the national and global levels alike – which is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty.

13. Success in meeting these objectives depends, inter alia, on good governance within each country. It also depends on good governance at the international level and on transparency in the financial, monetary and trading systems. We are committed to an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system.

14. We are concerned about the obstacles developing countries face in mobilizing the resources needed to finance their sustained development. We will therefore make every effort to ensure the success of the High-level International and Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development, to be held in 2001.

15. We also undertake to address the special needs of the least developed countries. In this context, we welcome the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries to be held in May 2001 and will endeavour to ensure its success. We call on the industrialized countries:

• To adopt, preferably by the time of that Conference, a policy of duty- and quota-free access for essentially all exports from the least developed countries;

• To implement the enhanced programme of debt relief for the heavily indebted poor countries without further delay and to agree to cancel all official bilateral debts of those countries in return for their making demonstrable commitments to poverty reduction; and

• To grant more generous development assistance, especially to countries that are genuinely making an effort to apply their resources to poverty reduction.

16. We are also determined to deal comprehensively and effectively with the debt problems of low- and middle-income developing countries, through various national and international measures designed to make their debt sustainable in the long term.

3 See CD/1478.

4 Amended protocol on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of mines, booby-traps and other devices (CCW/CONF.I/16 (Part I), annex B).
17. We also resolve to address the special needs of small island developing States, by implementing the Barbados Programme of Action\(^5\) and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly rapidly and in full. We urge the international community to ensure that, in the development of a vulnerability index, the special needs of small island developing States are taken into account.

18. We recognize the special needs and problems of the landlocked developing countries, and urge both bilateral and multilateral donors to increase financial and technical assistance to this group of countries to meet their special development needs and to help them overcome the impediments of geography by improving their transit transport systems.

19. We resolve further:
   • To halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world’s people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger and, by the same date, to halve the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water.
   • To ensure that, by the same date, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and that girls and boys will have equal access to all levels of education.
   • By the same date, to have reduced maternal mortality by three quarters, and under-five child mortality by two thirds, of their current rates.
   • To have, by then, halted, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS, the scourge of malaria and other major diseases that afflict humanity.
   • To provide special assistance to children orphaned by HIV/AIDS.
   • By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers as proposed in the “Cities Without Slums” initiative.

20. We also resolve:
   • To promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable.
   • To develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work.
   • To encourage the pharmaceutical industry to make essential drugs more widely available and affordable by all who need them in developing countries.
   • To develop strong partnerships with the private sector and with civil society organizations in pursuit of development and poverty eradication.

• To ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies, in conformity with recommendations contained in the ECOSOC 2000 Ministerial Declaration, are available to all.

IV. Protecting our common environment

21. We must spare no effort to free all of humanity, and above all our children and grandchildren, from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities, and whose resources would no longer be sufficient for their needs.

22. We reaffirm our support for the principles of sustainable development, including those set out in Agenda 21, agreed upon at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

23. We resolve therefore to adopt in all our environmental actions a new ethic of conservation and stewardship and, as first steps, we resolve:

• To make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, preferably by the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 2002, and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases.

• To intensify our collective efforts for the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

• To press for the full implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa.

• To stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels, which promote both equitable access and adequate supplies.

• To intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters.

• To ensure free access to information on the human genome sequence.

V. Human rights, democracy and good governance

24. We will spare no effort to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law, as well as respect for all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development.

25. We resolve therefore:


9 A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II.
• To respect fully and uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. ¹⁰
• To strive for the full protection and promotion in all our countries of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for all.
• To strengthen the capacity of all our countries to implement the principles and practices of democracy and respect for human rights, including minority rights.
• To combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. ¹¹
• To take measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants, migrant workers and their families, to eliminate the increasing acts of racism and xenophobia in many societies and to promote greater harmony and tolerance in all societies.
• To work collectively for more inclusive political processes, allowing genuine participation by all citizens in all our countries.
• To ensure the freedom of the media to perform their essential role and the right of the public to have access to information.

VI. Protecting the vulnerable

26. We will spare no effort to ensure that children and all civilian populations that suffer disproportionately the consequences of natural disasters, genocide, armed conflicts and other humanitarian emergencies are given every assistance and protection so that they can resume normal life as soon as possible.

We resolve therefore:
• To expand and strengthen the protection of civilians in complex emergencies, in conformity with international humanitarian law.
• To strengthen international cooperation, including burden sharing in, and the coordination of humanitarian assistance to, countries hosting refugees and to help all refugees and displaced persons to return voluntarily to their homes, in safety and dignity and to be smoothly reintegrated into their societies.
• To encourage the ratification and full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child ¹² and its optional protocols on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. ¹³

VII. Meeting the special needs of Africa

27. We will support the consolidation of democracy in Africa and assist Africans in their struggle for lasting peace, poverty eradication and sustainable development, thereby bringing Africa into the mainstream of the world economy.

¹⁰ Resolution 217 A (III).
¹¹ Resolution 34/180, annex.
¹² Resolution 44/25, annex.
¹³ Resolution 54/263, annexes I and II.
28. We resolve therefore:
   • To give full support to the political and institutional structures of emerging
democracies in Africa.
   • To encourage and sustain regional and subregional mechanisms for preventing
conflict and promoting political stability, and to ensure a reliable flow of
resources for peacekeeping operations on the continent.
   • To take special measures to address the challenges of poverty eradication and
sustainable development in Africa, including debt cancellation, improved
market access, enhanced Official Development Assistance and increased flows
of Foreign Direct Investment, as well as transfers of technology.
   • To help Africa build up its capacity to tackle the spread of the HIV/AIDS
pandemic and other infectious diseases.

VIII. Strengthening the United Nations

29. We will spare no effort to make the United Nations a more effective instrument
for pursuing all of these priorities: the fight for development for all the peoples
of the world, the fight against poverty, ignorance and disease; the fight against
injustice; the fight against violence, terror and crime; and the fight against the
degradation and destruction of our common home.

30. We resolve therefore:
   • To reaffirm the central position of the General Assembly as the chief
deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations,
and to enable it to play that role effectively.
   • To intensify our efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security
Council in all its aspects.
   • To strengthen further the Economic and Social Council, building on its recent
achievements, to help it fulfil the role ascribed to it in the Charter.
   • To strengthen the International Court of Justice, in order to ensure justice and
the rule of law in international affairs.
   • To encourage regular consultations and coordination among the principal
organs of the United Nations in pursuit of their functions.
   • To ensure that the Organization is provided on a timely and predictable basis
with the resources it needs to carry out its mandates.
   • To urge the Secretariat to make the best use of those resources, in accordance
with clear rules and procedures agreed by the General Assembly, in the
interests of all Member States, by adopting the best management practices and
technologies available and by concentrating on those tasks that reflect the
agreed priorities of Member States.
   • To promote adherence to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and
Associated Personnel.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{14} Resolution 49/59, annex.
• To ensure greater policy coherence and better cooperation between the United Nations, its agencies, the Bretton Woods Institutions and the World Trade Organization, as well as other multilateral bodies, with a view to achieving a fully coordinated approach to the problems of peace and development.

• To strengthen further cooperation between the United Nations and national parliaments through their world organization, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in various fields, including peace and security, economic and social development, international law and human rights and democracy and gender issues.

• To give greater opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, in general, to contribute to the realization of the Organization’s goals and programmes.

31. We request the General Assembly to review on a regular basis the progress made in implementing the provisions of this Declaration, and ask the Secretary-General to issue periodic reports for consideration by the General Assembly and as a basis for further action.

32. We solemnly reaffirm, on this historic occasion, that the United Nations is the indispensable common house of the entire human family, through which we will seek to realize our universal aspirations for peace, cooperation and development. We therefore pledge our unstinting support for these common objectives and our determination to achieve them.

8th plenary meeting
8 September 2000
Appendix D

Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners
Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas

Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas, Inc. (W/NP) a 501(c)3 volunteer organization, has fostered people-to-people relationships and activities for more than 42 years building strong cross-cultural ties between citizens of Wisconsin and Nicaragua. W/NP works closely with our partner, Compañeros de las Americas, Nicaragua/Wisconsin (CN/W) and involves a unique working bond of two non-governmental organizations working collaboratively on multi-cultural activities that honor each side of the linkage.

Volunteers on both sides of the Partnership – the north and the south – work together to carry out development and educational projects at the grass roots level. By sharing their skills and mobilizing community resources, they help people help themselves.

The Partnership, long known and respected as a non-political organization, understands the necessity of working with, and respecting each country’s values and culture. The two partnering non-governmental organizations operate on the premise that when activities are centered primarily in Nicaragua, Nicaraguans know best what their country needs. W/NPs collaborative activities strengthen the awareness, respect and understanding of persons in Wisconsin toward cultures very different from our own. W/NP raises this country/state relationship to a higher level, acknowledging that we are linked with a developing country struggling with myriad critical needs.

The strength of the Partnership are the members; professionals who willingly share their expertise and their networks through the implementation of economic and social development projects always with a people-to-people emphasis. W/NP members are caring and interested representatives of their respective communities. In addition to cross-cultural exchanges, they have given technical assistance in civic education, community health, leadership development, environmental conservation, HIV/AIDS education and prevention, small business development, drug abuse education and prevention, emergency preparedness, and agriculture and rural development.

Mission Statement:
Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas, Inc. is a not-for-profit, non-political organization working to enhance the quality of life in both Wisconsin and Nicaragua, through people-to-people programs promoting cultural awareness and sustainable community development.
Appendix E

W/NP Learning Center Model
The Learning Center Model

**Need**
Rural Nicaraguan women needed training that would help them develop skills that would provide meaningful income while enabling them to remain in their communities to care for their families.

**Response**
1983, two women with a common vision secured resources and established the 1st sewing center where women could come to receive training.

**Process**

**Outcome**
2008, 93 Learning Centers scattered throughout Nicaragua = women bringing much needed income into the home.

Citizens from Wisconsin and Nicaragua working together, reevaluating original need, broaden their focus and transition Sewing Centers into Learning Centers.

**W/NP Learning Center Sign**

Measurable Outcomes from a Learning Center participant:

Survey Results in response to how has this project changed your life? I am 36 years old, I have been sewing for 3 years, my life has changed. I now have more money to buy material to make uniforms for my children for school, shoes and school supplies. I have also bought some sand and blocks for a new house. So far we have 1 room. Learning is better than money, nobody can take it away.

- Maritza Artiaga
Appendix F

Early childhood education isn’t fad
Early childhood education isn't fad

ADISON — The numbers are hard to dispute: Kids who attend organized but relatively inexpensive preschool programs are more likely to graduate from high school, to earn more as adults, to stay off welfare and to avoid spending time in jail.

All of that accures huge dividends for society, with long-term economic paybacks for early childhood education pegged as high as $17 for every $1 spent. Study after study, including one that meticulously traced a group of Michigan preschool students through age 40, has reached the same conclusion.

So why isn't the business community in Wisconsin and elsewhere embracing the merits of early childhood education? Most likely, they're fearful it's just another fad. Business leaders have been told too many times — by conservatives and liberals alike — that one educational trend or another is the Holy Grail.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, business was told that eliminating the U.S. Department of Education was the right thing to do. Now it's being told that "No Child Left Behind," a massive federal intrusion on the ability of individual states to run their own educational programs, is the answer. Go figure.

It's not that anyone expected a single reform to cure what ailed public education in America. In fact, a mix of ideas — public and private — might have been the right recipe. Business leaders have been told too many times, however, that one reform or another is the panacea. Private school vouchers were supposed to have turned Milwaukee's underperforming students into mini-Einsteins by now (a conservative idea) and smaller class sizes in Wisconsin's SAGE program were touted as a salvation for at-risk primary students (a liberal idea).

So forgive business leaders if they don't rush immediately to the altar of early childhood education, even if the economic case for investing a few bucks in Head Start, four-year-old kindergarten and improved child care is appealing.

At the same time, a number of business leaders are standing at the church door, listening intently and trying to make up their minds about whether to sit in the pews.

An economic case for investing in early childhood education was presented at the recent "Strongest Links" conference in Madison, which was attended by about 200 people and sponsored by about 20 organizations and state agencies. Speakers agreed that dollars spent on teaching kids before they reach kindergarten are wise investments, especially by the time those children are grown and ready to enter the workforce.

A report on the short-term economic effects of expanding four-year-old kindergarten in Wisconsin concluded that 32,102 extra four-year-olds could take part each year at an annual cost of $207 million. In short order, however, the schools would save $141 million from lower special-education placements, higher teacher retention and reduced pressure on other services.

"For every dollar invested in prekindergarten, the education system should recoup 68 cents (statewide) or 76 cents (Milwaukee schools) in terms of savings from other budgetary outlays," concluded a study co-authored by Clive Belfield of Queens College in New York and Dennis Winters of NorthStar Economics in Madison. "Therefore, the financing burden for investing in pre-k will not be as great as might first be anticipated."

Business leaders are listening to the arguments. They recognize that parents who aren't worried every working day about their kids make better employees. In fact, many businesses take steps on their own to improve employee child care.

The business case for societal investments in early childhood education is strong. Current evidence shows it's the least expensive way to create the largest number of productive citizens. And with demographic trends pointing to huge worker shortages, it might be to our advantage in Wisconsin to see that all kids get a head start now.

Still is president of the Wisconsin Technology Council. He is the former associate editor of the Wisconsin State Journal in Madison.
Appendix G

Institutional Review Board Approval
Protocol for Original Submissions

A complete protocol must be submitted to the IRB for approval prior to the initiation of any investigations involving human subjects or human materials, including studies in the behavioral and social sciences.

Send: 11 copies of (1) the completed protocol; (2) project abstract; and (3) samples of informed consent forms to the IRB chairperson. PROTOCOLS LACKING ANY ONE OF THESE THREE ELEMENTS WILL NOT BE APPROVED. In addition, copies of questionnaires or interview questions MUST be attached.

PLEASE TYPE

Project Title: Lending Libraries and Home Literacy Activities

Principal Investigator: Amy L. Wiza

Department: Health Promotion & Human Development  Rank: Graduate Student

Campus Mailing Address: N/A Other: 624 5th Ave, Stevens Point

Telephone: 715-341-7548 E-mail address: awiza360@uwsp.edu

Faculty Sponsor (if required): Dr. Anne Abbott

(Faculty sponsor required if investigator is below rank of instructor.)

Expected Starting Date: February 2006  Expected Completion Date: September 2006

Are you applying for funding of this research? Yes  No

If yes, what agency? Student Research Fund, possible private foundation

Please indicate the categories of subjects to be included in this project. Please check all that apply.

- Normal adult volunteers  - Minors (under 18 years of age)
- Incarcerated individuals  - Mentally Disabled
- Pregnant women  - Other (specify)

(Faculty Member) I have completed the "Human Subjects Protection Training" (available at http://www.uwsp.edu/special/irb/start.htm) and agree to accept responsibility for conducting or directing this research in accordance with the guidelines.

(Signature of Faculty Member responsible for research)

(Department Chair or equivalent) I have reviewed this research proposal and, to the best of my knowledge, believe that it meets the ethical standards of the discipline.

(Signature of Department Chair or equivalent)

****************************************************************************** Do not write below this line – for IRB use only ******************************************************************************

[IRB approval] Date

(Signature of IRB Chair)

Approval for this research expires one year from the above date.
If research is not completed by this date, a request for continuation must be filed and approved before continuing.

Revised form: January 2001
Appendix H

Informed Consent
Informed Consent to Participate in Human Subject Research

Amy L. Wiza, Graduate Student at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, is working on a study to gather information on how access to books and reading materials influences literacy activities. If this is an area of interest to you, we invite your participation, as it will help us to understand and provide documentation on how families are impacted by having access to a community lending library.

As part of this study, we would like to ask you some questions regarding your home literacy activities and your general use of reading materials. Home literacy activities may include, but are not limited to, time spent reading to your child, listening to your child read, reading newspapers/magazines and events that help children with letter recognition and other pre-literacy skills. To gather this information we would like to talk with you and record your responses either on paper or on a tape recorder.

We do not anticipate the study will present any risks to you other than the inconvenience of the time required for you to answer some questions and possibly have a project assistant visit your home. There will be no monetary benefit for you, but through your participation in this study, you will gain information on the process of literacy development in children, how you can enhance this process and what types of parental behaviors can encourage literacy development. You will also be helping to build the body of knowledge regarding how lending libraries impact family literacy activities.

The information that is obtained during the interview process will be recorded in anonymous form. We will not release information to anyone in your community or country in a way that could identify you.

This is a voluntary study so for any reason you may choose to withdraw from the study at any time with no consequence. The information gained from you up to that point would be destroyed and not included in the study results.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me by email:
Amy L. Wiza: abw624@sbcglobal.net

If you have any complaints about your treatment as participant in this study, please call or write:
Dr. Sandra Holmes, Chair
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Department of Psychology
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 346-3952

Although Dr. Holmes will ask your name, all complaints are kept in confidence.
I have received a complete verbal translated explanation of the study and agree to participate.

Name_______________________________________________ Date  ________
(Signature of subject)

Name_______________________________________________ Date  ________
(Signature of translator)

This research project has been approved by the UWSP Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects.
Appendix I

Interview Questions
(English version)
Interview Format

The information obtained for this study will be gathered through an informal interview process. The intent is for this to be a discussion interview, with the following questions as a guide so as to investigate what local people believe and feel about the ideas of reading and libraries.

1. Did you have books in your home as a child?
   a. If yes, what kind and where did they come from?
2. Did your parents read to you as a child? Yes ____ No ___ times a week____
3. Do you feel reading is an important skill to have?
4. Do you know how to read?
   a. If yes, where did you learn this?
5. What do you feel helped you to learn to read?
6. Do you have books in your home now as an adult?
   a. If yes, what kind and where did you get them?
   b. If no, why not? (no need, or no access)
7. Do you read aloud to your child?
   a. If yes, how many times per week?
   b. If yes, who initiates this? (child’s request or your own)
   c. If no, why?
   d. If no, are there things that discourage you from doing this?
8. Does your child read to you?
   a. If yes, how many times per week?
   b. If yes, what types of books are you reading together?
   c. If yes, where do you get the books you are reading together?
9. Do you have older children in your home that read to younger children?
   a. If yes, is this a leisure activity or school related?
   b. If yes, how many times per week?
10. Do your children attend school?
    a. If yes, do they bring books home from school?
11. Do you remember story telling in your family when you were a child?
12. Do you tell stories to your children?
13. What does story telling mean to you?

14. Do you have access to a lending library in your community?
   If yes, do your children go to the library?
   If yes,  1. How often do they go?
   2. Do you go with them?
   3. Do they bring books home and if so, how many?
   4. Is there an adult section of the library?
      If yes, do you utilize it and how?
      1. Do you check out books to bring home?
      2. If so, how many?
      3. Why types of books do you check out?
      4. Who reads them at home?
      5. How often do you read?
      6. What are your main reasons for reading?
      7. Do you see value having an adult section?
      8. Have you observed any changes in your families reading habits since using the library?
      9. Other ways has the library impacted you?

If no, are there other places in the community to get books?

   1. How do you think access to books affects parenting?
   2. If you had a library, would you use it?
   3. How might a library impact your family?
   4. Is there information you want to know about but have no way of getting it? Can you give us some examples?

15. How old are you?

16. How many children do you have?
   a. What are their ages?

17. What is your marital status?

18. What is your average monthly income?

19. Did you attend school? a. If yes, how many years completed?
Appendix J

Interview Format (Spanish)
Formato para la Entrevista

La información obtenida en este estudio se colectará a través de un proceso de entrevista informal. La intención de la entrevista es facilitar un intercambio de ideas para investigar lo que las personas de las comunidades entrevistadas creen y sienten sobre la lectura y las bibliotecas.

Cuestionario:

1. ¿Tenía usted acceso a libros en su propia casa cuando usted era un niño?
   ___Sí ___No
   a. Si su respuesta es “Sí”, ¿Qué clase de libros tenía, y cómo y dónde los obtenía?

2. Cuando usted era niño, ¿Era costumbre que sus padres le leyeran a Usted?
   ___Sí ___No  Numero de veces por semana ___

3. ¿Piensa Usted el hábito de la lectura es importante en su vida? ___Sí ___No.

4. ¿Sabe Usted leer? ___Sí ___No. Si su respuesta es “Sí” ¿Dónde aprendió?.

5. ¿Qué motivación tuvo Usted para aprender a leer?

6. Ahora en su vida de adulto ¿Tiene Usted libros en su casa?
   a. Si su respuesta es “Sí”, ¿Qué clase de libros tenía, y cómo y dónde los obtenía?
   b. Si su respuesta es “No” ¿Por qué no? (___no lo cree necesario, ___no tiene acceso a libros ___ Otra:__________________________

7. ¿Acostumbra Usted leer en voz alta a sus hijos?
   a. Si su respuesta es “Sí”, diga cuantas veces por semana: _____ Quien pidió iniciar esta costumbre _____ Sus hijos _____Su esposo(a) _____Usted. Otro: ___________
   b. Si su respuesta es “No” ¿Por qué no?

8. ¿Acostumbran sus hijos a leer en voz alta para Usted?
   ___Sí ___No  Numero de veces por semana ___
   a. Si su respuesta es “Sí”, ¿Qué clase de libros leen y dónde obtienen estos libros?

9. ¿Tiene Usted en su casa niños mas grandes que le leen a los más pequeños?
   a. Si su respuesta es “Sí”, ¿Qué clase de libros leen y dónde obtienen estos libros?

10. ¿Estan sus hijos incritos en la escuela? ___Sí ___No
    a. Si su respuesta es “Sí”, ¿Traen ellos libros que son propiedad de la escuela?
       ___Sí ___No.
11. Cuando Usted era un niño, ¿Le contaban sus padres o familiares cuentos, historias o anécdotas? ___Sí ___No.
12. ¿Le cuenta Usted a sus hijos cuentos, historias o anécdotas? ___Sí ___No.
13. ¿Qué importancia tiene para Usted la costumbre de contar cuentos, historias o anécdotas en la familia?
14. ¿Tiene Usted acceso en su comunidad a banco de libros o bibliotecas que permitan tomar prestado libros para llevar a la casa?
   Si su respuesta es “Sí”, ¿Van sus hijos a la biblioteca o banco de libros?
   ___Sí ___No.
   a. ¿Cuántas veces por semana? _____ ¿ . . . por mes? ______
   b. ¿Va Usted con ellos? ___Nunca, ___Raras veces, _____A menudo ___Casi siempre ___Siempre.
   c. ¿Traen ellos libros prestados a la casa?___Sí ___No. 
      ¿Cuántos?
   d. ¿Existe en la biblioteca o banco de libros una sección de específica con libros de interés para los adultos?
   Si su respuesta es “Sí”, ¿La Utiliza Usted? ___Sí ___No.
   1. ¿Toma Usted libros prestados? ___Sí ___No.
   2. ¿Cuántos? ___
   3. ¿Qué clase de libros? _______________________
   4. ¿Quién lee esos libros en su casa? _____________
   5. ¿Cuán frecuentemente Usted lee como hábito o por placer?
      _____Diario _____Veces por semana _____Veces por mes.
   6. ¿Cuál es su principales motivaciones para leer?
      ________________________________
   7. ¿Cree Usted que es importante tener una sección especializada en libros para adultos en una biblioteca?
      ________________________________
   8. Ha notado Usted algún cambio en hábito de lectura de su familia desde que usa la biblioteca o banco de libros?
      ___Sí ___No.
9. ¿De qué otra manera ha la biblioteca o banco de libros impactado a Usted o su familia?

Si su respuesta es “No”,

1. ¿Existen otros lugares en su comunidad en donde conseguir libros prestados?

2. ¿Piensa Usted que la falta de acceso a los libros afecta su rol como padre (madre)?

3. Si Usted tuviera acceso a una biblioteca, ¿la usaría?
   ___Sí ___No.

4. ¿Cómo cree Usted que el acceso a una biblioteca o banco de libros podría influenciar a su familia?

5. ¿Tiene Usted o su familia limitaciones para conseguir información que es importante para Usted y su familia?

15. ¿Cuál es su edad? _____

16. ¿Cuántos hijos tiene Usted?___
   a. ¿Cuáles son sus edades?__________________________________________

17. ¿Estado civil? _________

18. ¿Cuál es su entrada mensual? ___________

19. ¿Fue Usted a la escuela? ___Sí ___No. Hasta qué grado llegó? ___________
Appendix K

Optional Educational Support tool

The purpose for this booklet is to act as a guide for parents and child care providers who desire to have a better understanding of the impact reading has on a child’s development and how to nurture and maintain an environment that is conducive to learning throughout the critical early years. The information provided in the following pages details one of the most important developmental skills that begins shortly after birth and remains a vital part of a person’s life until their death; the ability to communicate by language and the process of linguistic and literacy development.
Environment and Child Development

During the past 20 years, there has been an enormous increase in the amount of research focusing on child development – specifically, that which occurs during the early years of life. Much of this quest for more information on the early growth and development of children is due to the changing patterns of families and their need for childcare. With the steady increase of 2 income households, comes the shift of responsibility for child care from primarily parents to other types of caregivers. Because of this, it is more important than ever to understand how a child’s environment and the care they receive in early years of life will impact their social, physical and mental development. In general, parents and child care providers want the best for their children and child development research helps to strengthen the current body of knowledge and provides useful information to families on how they can make good choices that will foster a nurturing and stimulating environment that encourages healthy development in all areas.

Knowledge that the brain is only 25 % formed at birth, it is no surprise that right from the very start a baby’s environment will impact the remaining 75% of the brain development. What a child experiences from birth to 9 years will set the stage for personality type, character, values, social competence and most importantly brain development. Words are essential in building the thought connections that form in the brain. The more language a child experiences through books and conversations, the more advantaged socially and educationally that child will be for the rest of his life. The foundations for learning to read are set from the moment a child first hears the sounds of people talking.
You may have tangible wealth untold;  
Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold.  
Richer than I you can never be --  
I had a mother who read to me.  
   -- Strickland Gillilan

Why is reading aloud to my child important?

Research studies prove that the most important thing adults can do in preparing young children for success in school and reading is to read aloud with them.

Reading aloud to children helps them develop and improve their literacy skills. Our world revolves around speaking, reading, writing and listening. The foundations for each of these skills are set during the early years of life.

A child who has been read to grasps the idea early on that print contains a message. The magic in reading is finding meaning in the words that are heard or read.

Until about junior high level, children listen on a higher level than they read, therefore listening to other readers stimulates growth and understanding of vocabulary and language patterns.

The ability to read is essential to being able to learn any subject taught in school. In our high tech society, proficiency in reading is a must to compete favorably in today’s job market.

As a parent or childcare provider, it is our desire and responsibility to plant the seeds and provide environments that will encourage these skills to flourish.
What am I doing when I read aloud?

Expanding a child’s world

You are opening doors for your children by teaching them about the world they live in and all the types of people that inhabit it. Books can take us to places we could never go in real life.

Stirring the imagination

Listening to a story helps a child develop the ability to imagine. In our world of visual media, this is an underdeveloped skill.

Being a positive model and example

By taking the time to read to your children, they will quickly pick up on the fact that reading is an important part of life. Not only will they learn the overall value of reading, but also you will have opened the door for them to read back to you when they enter the stage of making sounds and recognizing words. When children first begin reading, they do not want to read silently and alone, but rather out loud sharing the excitement of this newly learned skill.

Building family traditions and bonds of love

Reading aloud becomes part of what is important to your family. Children learn by what they see and value the time you have taken to spend reading with them. There is benefit not only from the content of the books being read, but also from the warm cozy time shared together. Chances are if you read to your children, and they see how you value the time together, they will read to their children and the tradition will be carried on.
How does reading aloud benefit my child?

**Provides an educational advantage**
Current and past literature unanimously demonstrates the importance of introducing and exposing children to reading materials at an early age. There is a positive relationship between the home environment that encourages parents and young children to read together and the development of linguistic abilities that lead to the skill of reading. Children who have been read to do far better in school than those who have not and academic achievement is greatly influenced by a child’s reading ability.

**Develops concentration skills**
Your child will have many years of school ahead of them and endless opportunities for listening even as they move through adulthood. Children who are read to early and regularly quickly acquire the skill of listening and the desire to hear stories. They understand what is waiting for them in books and develop the ability to concentrate and relax. Consequently, this also increases their attention span and willingness to listen.

**Contributes to the development of speaking skills**
Children learn to speak by listening to others and being spoken to. The child who has been read to regularly will be leaps and bounds ahead in their language development. Reading and writing is simply talking on paper.

**Provides an avenue for addressing some of life’s issues**
Whether it be a family situation or something as basic as potty training, reading stories together that deal with familiar topics is a great way to open discussion and spark conversation. As children grow, they are constantly seeking answers to questions they have about the world around them. Life gets busy and a regular reading time together gives a child the opportunity to share any concerns they may have especially if it relates to a story your are reading together. Listening to stories, imagining the multiple outcomes and hearing the conclusion brings great satisfaction.

**Increases vocabulary**
Even before children learn the meaning of words, just simply hearing them and seeing them in print will help build their vocabulary as they grow.
What else does early exposure to reading do?

**Establishes lifelong reading habits**
Positive experiences and exposure to reading provides the basis for future habits. The values that are learned as a child will stay with them throughout their life.

**Fosters an understanding of people**
How to see and understand something from another’s point of view can be a difficult concept to teach. Reading together with a child is a wonderful way for them to naturally gain this valuable trait that will give them an advantage as they interact with people around them.

**Helps children learn to express themselves**
Reading is an excellent way for children to see cause and effect in action. Whether a child is reading alone or listening to a story, they have an opportunity to see how characters deal with situations and what the various outcomes can be.

**Aids in the development of problem solving skills**
Reading is key to expanding ones imagination. Learning to think logically and creatively are essential skills for success in school. Reading encourages “flexible thinking”, or the ability to see many possibilities and visualize objects or situations in different ways. Many educators and psychologists believe that books are one of the best ways children learn about right and wrong. Through stories and books you can share the values of honesty, courage and loyalty.
When should I begin reading to my child?

As early as you can! Babies thrive on visual and auditory interaction. Not only will focusing on pictures help develop the eye muscles, but also as words become familiar they are imprinted in the brain. Each time a baby sees, hears or feels anything, brain connections form and this lays the ground works for future skills and knowledge.

Before a child’s first birthday they have already learned all the sounds that will make up their native language and have entered the first stage in learning to read by understanding there is meaning in words and pictures.

What if I’m not good at reading aloud?

What is more important than your reading ability, is that you are taking the time to explore and share books with your child. You can begin with picture books and talk with your child about the characters and make up stories that go along with the illustrations. Young children especially, need to be read to “slowly” so begin with simple stories and move to the more complex ones as time goes on.

There is no “right” way of reading aloud to your child other than using your best efforts to make whatever it is you are reading fun and interesting by being expressive. Sometimes just getting started and setting aside a time during the day can be the hardest part. Just make a point to do it – both you and your child will be glad you did!
Does environment encourage a love of reading?

Most definitely! As parents and educators, we want to surround children with an environment that encourages children to become lifelong readers. Creating an atmosphere in which reading, writing, and talking are a natural part of daily life can encourage language learning.

Newspapers, magazines, books, and other reading materials should be within easy reach. It doesn't matter if reading materials are owned or borrowed, new or used — what's important is that they are in reach and a natural part of everyday life. Let it be obvious that reading is a part of your life!

Keep books handy in all rooms of your home, especially where your child sleeps and plays. Also keep a rotating bag of books in your vehicle; it's a great way for children to pass the time in the car.
What are some age appropriate reading activities?

Infants and babies

Children at this age love books with large, simple pictures. You can snuggle up and point to the pictures with your baby, but don’t be alarmed if they are more interested in exploring and eating the books. Another idea is simply reading aloud, your soothing voice will be calming to them and the rhythm of language is what is being offered rather than an understanding of content during this stage.

Ten Tips for Reading to Babies:

- Start right away. It’s never too early to read to your baby!
- Share books every day. Children who were read to three times a week or more do much better in later development. Even a few minutes can make a difference.
- Hold your baby close. Make reading a loving time for the two of you. Your baby will associate books and that good feeling.
- Point to the pictures, talk about them, and ask questions.
- Make faces and noises that bring the story to life.
- Cuddle, praise, and encourage your baby.
- Keep reading fun. It’s okay to stop if your baby gets restless.
- Let your baby see that you enjoy reading.
- Say nursery rhymes and sing simple songs — over and over again!
- Visit the library often for story times, music, and books for babies.
Here we want to convey the message of, “READING IS FUN!” Try to provide a wide variety of books and also let your child help in the selection if you can. While you are reading together, take turns talking about what the story is about and how the child thinks it might end. This helps in their understanding of sequence, or what comes next. Children in this age group often ask to have the same story repeated over and over. They love repetition of the simple content but also it is the repeated happy experience that comes with the story reading that they are seeking.

During this time of learning about language, it’s also important to provide a child with crayons, markers or pencils. This helps in the understanding that what we say can be written down too. If you have a non-reader, creating books together is a fun activity to get them interested in reading and being read to. Making a simple book by cutting colorful fabric, pasting family pictures or using textured materials are a great way to spark interest and imagination.

It’s never too early to get both you and your child in the habit of an evening story routine. Not only is this a great bonding time, but it also helps the child to settle down and look forward to bedtime.
Make 15 minutes go a long way!

Literacy events can be everywhere....

1. **License to read.** On car trips, make it a game to point out and read license plates, billboards, and interesting road signs.

2. **Better than TV.** Swap evening TV for a good action story or tale of adventure.

3. **Look and listen.** Too tired to read aloud? Listen to a book on tape and turn the book’s pages with your children. You’ll still be reading with them!

4. **Labels, labels, labels.** Label things in your children’s room as they learn to name them. Have fun while they learn that written words are connected to everyday things.

5. **Pack a snack, pack a book.** Going someplace where there might be a long wait? Bring along a snack and a bag of favorite books.

6. **Recipe for reading.** The next time you cook with your children, read the recipe with them. Step-by-step instructions, ingredients, and measurements are all part of words in print!

7. **Shop and read.** Notice and read signs and labels in the supermarket. Back home, putting away groceries is another great time for reading labels.

8. **Your long-distance lap.** Away on a business trip? Take a few books with you, call home, and have your child curl up by the phone for a good night story.

9. **A reading pocket.** Slip fun things to read into your pocket to bring home: a comic strip from the paper, a greeting card, or even a fortune cookie from lunch. Create a special, shared moment your child can look forward to every day.

10. **A little longer?** When your child asks to stay up a little longer, say yes and make it a 15-minute family reading opportunity.
School age children

By this time, your child will be reading independently, but remember this does not have to replace being read to. If it's something you both love to do together, look for ways to keep this activity going.

Reading books with older children is a great opportunity to share books that you remember from your childhood.

Keeping in tune with your child’s interests is especially important at this age, and choosing books together helps to know what is intriguing to your child.

Remember, the few years your children live with you and the experiences they have during that time will greatly determine who they will become as adults.

Make those years count!
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