

Running head: MOTIVATING THE ADOLESCENT READER

MOTIVATING THE ADOLESCENT READER:
ENGAGING THE DISENGAGED

by

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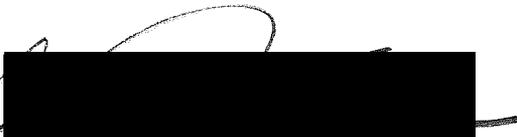
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CERTIFICATION OF PROJECT WORK

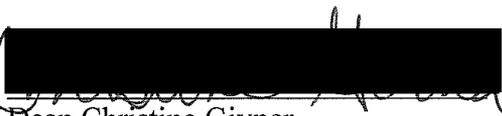
We, the undersigned, certify that this project entitled MOTIVATING THE ADOLESCENT READER: ENGAGING THE DISENGAGED by Sarah M. Bogardus, Candidate for the Degree of Master of Science in Education, Literacy 5-12, is acceptable in form and content and demonstrates a satisfactory knowledge of the field covered by this project.


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Abstract

This Master's thesis project focused on the factors associated with the decline in adolescent reading motivation and the literacy strategies that can be implemented in the classroom to improve reading motivation. In addition, it also includes recommendations for a professional development project that addresses literacy strategies for adolescent students. Results revealed that implementing hands-on literacy strategies in the classroom can have a positive impact on reading motivation. Teachers who offer a variety of texts, offer student choice, acknowledge home/school connections, incorporate technology, and promote social collaboration help create engaged learners in the reading process. Therefore, all educators should be aware of appropriate and effective hands-on literacy strategies. Results of the professional development experience suggest that professional development opportunities need to be improved in order to help influence literacy outcomes in the adolescent world. It is of critical importance that teachers receive adequate professional development on adolescent literacy because findings indicate that there is a correlation between effective professional development and the reading achievement of students.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement of Problem

“You can certainly ignore motivation if you choose. But if you do, you may be neglecting the most important part of reading” (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010, p. 16). Motivating the adolescent student to read in this day and age seems to be a problem that is quickly escalating in middle and high schools all over the country. As students get older and progress through the secondary grades, reading motivation drastically decreases, especially with students who struggle with reading. Adolescents who struggle with reading “typically bring a history of frustration and failure to their transactions with text”(Casey, 2008, p. 285). When students experience failure in reading, they often develop low self images as readers and tend to avoid reading and all other literacy-related activities. If adolescents do not view themselves as readers, they tend to resist structures where reading is important, which ultimately contributes to a decrease in motivation. Therefore, the problems to be investigated are why adolescent readers become unmotivated to participate in reading and how teachers can attempt to bridge the gap between adolescent motivation and reading. A professional development project, located in Chapter 4, was created to address these issues.

Background

In my teaching experience, I have noticed that many adolescent learners, in the secondary classroom, are turned off to reading altogether. Most students do not realize the importance of reading and therefore do not care about it. Adolescent students tend to view the reading process as boring and inconsequential, and they simply do not understand the importance, magnitude, and complexity of this skill in regards to their professional and personal lives. These students

will need advanced levels of literacy in all areas because “adolescents entering the adult world in the 21st century will read and write more than at any other time in human history” (Moore, 1999, p. 7). I have observed that many students simply are not interested in the topics they read about or the activities that surround reading, which in turn, creates disengaged and unmotivated readers. Most adolescent readers are unsure of how to actively interact with a text and relate reading topics to their own lives. In my opinion, it is the classroom teacher’s responsibility to make the reading process fun, engaging, appealing, and hands-on. This can be achieved by providing choice and having students direct their own learning (Casey, 2008). Through the use of literacy strategies that address these components, adolescent motivation for reading can improve and thrive in the secondary classroom.

As a local General Education Development (GED) teacher, who works with dropout students, I have recognized a common characteristic amongst my students while working with them and getting to know them on a personal level. Each one of my students struggles with reading, and this factor has ultimately led to his or her decision to drop out of high school because most of these students have experienced literacy difficulties in almost every content class. Due to their lack of skills associated with this process, many of these students fell significantly behind in school and determined that getting their GED (grade equivalency diploma) was the best option. Since the majority of the GED exam is structured around reading comprehension, it is important for me to know how to motivate adolescent readers, especially readers who have experienced failure incessantly and continue to still struggle with this process today. In order for adolescents to obtain personal and professional success in today’s society, it is of critical importance that teachers understand how to motivate adolescent readers and mold them into lifelong learners.

Terminology

The following defined terms are used throughout the literature review and are pertinent in reaching a full understanding of the forthcoming issues that will be addressed:

- *Motivation*- providing a reason to perform a certain way; the beliefs, values, needs, and goals that people have
- *Literacy Clubs*- “a grouping system teachers use to organize active learning events based on student-selected areas of interest (Casey, 2008, p. 285)
- *Strategy*- “a plan selected deliberately by the teacher to accomplish a particular goal or a desired learning outcome” (Ambe, 2007, p. 633)
- *Cooperative Learning*- an approach to organizing classroom activities into academic and social learning experiences
- *Disengaged Reader*- to release, withdraw, detach, or become not interested in the reading process
- *Adolescent Literacy*- reading and writing development of young adults which includes a variety of social and intellectual practices in various formats- print, digital, hypertext, hypermedia, and other technologies

Rationale and Theoretical Stance

Even though adolescent literacy has evidently become a concern in schools across the country for the past decade, there has not been much press on this topic or adolescent reading until recently (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999). Researchers Moore et al. indicate that the problems surrounding adolescent reading are a direct result of multiple factors including the constant decrease in funding at the state and federal levels in secondary schools, the lack of hired reading specialists to work with individual students and other teachers in secondary schools, and

because of the lack of reading instruction being provided across content areas and curriculums. Many teachers place this responsibility solely on the English teacher and fail to realize that it is every teacher's responsibility to be an effective teacher of reading. Another main area of concern surrounding adolescent reading is the major disconnect between student reading interests and reading expectations (Hopper, 2005). Because there is an existing gap between what adolescents choose to read and what teachers provide as reading material, this creates tension between students and teachers and therefore produces resistance towards this process. Even though adolescent reading has been considered a "hot" topic amongst educators, and in educational policy, there has not been an increased emphasis placed on it as a priority until now. Adolescents deserve "increased levels of government support" including funding for intervention services in the upper grades in order to help all adolescent students meet reading success (Moore et al., 1999, p. 13)

With the advent of the new Common Core Standards across the country, there is now an increased focus on literacy instruction, critical thinking, and expository text comprehension at the secondary level. The Common Core standards take sole responsibility off the English teacher as the only teacher of literacy, and now place this responsibility on teachers across the other content areas of Math, Technology, and Social Sciences, therefore creating an environment conducive to literacy-based instruction. With the future implementation of these new standards, teachers will be held accountable for incorporating literacy skill instruction in their content area classrooms, which will ultimately help reinforce reading amongst the adolescent student population. These standards are proof that the issues surrounding adolescent literacy are being recognized and that appropriate action is being taken to help correct the deficiencies in this field.

“Race to the Top” can also help provide the necessary resources needed for adolescent literacy in the near future (Cassidy, Valadez, Garrett, & Barrera, 2010).

The topics of reading and motivation relate to the socio-cultural and socio-constructivist learning theories because these theories recognize that learning is an active, social process in which the learner constructs knowledge based on their own prior knowledge and previous experiences. The ability to read is directly related to past experiences and the learner brings these experiences and their culture into each learning situation because the background and culture of the learner is extremely important. Because student background is so important, “socio-cultural views of learning suggest adolescents’ literacy development is related to the unique social communities they inhabit” (Casey, 2008, p. 285). Under this view, in order to note adolescent’s literacy development, one must understand the school community, recognize the multiple social systems that exist, and understand the unique needs and interests of the students.

Literacy is constantly evolving and changing and is not just print-based text anymore. It now includes technology, culture, gender, and language, and each of these components play a crucial role in the reading process. This theory emphasizes that reading is and should be a group and cultural experience (Hopper, 2005). Because the learner is constantly interacting with their experiences and ideas, this promotes active learning and “learning by doing,” which is an instructional strategy used by educators to place the responsibility for learning on the learner themselves. Teachers become “facilitators” in the learning process and help each learner gain understanding of content in their own, unique way. Under this learning theory, teachers ask, support, provide guidelines and dialogue, and adapt learning experiences to meet student implications. Instruction includes cooperative learning opportunities or social interaction between the learner, instructor, and class.

Adolescent reading and motivation connect to this theory because many educators do not view reading as a “cooperative learning” task, but rather an individual one. In order for a reader to become actively involved in a text, one must relate the text to their prior knowledge and past learning experiences. Under this theory, the teacher doesn’t “teach” each student how to read, but rather facilitates the teaching of reading through the use of strategies that promote active learning, interaction, and dialogue, which in turn, ultimately helps improve adolescent reading motivation.

As previously mentioned, until recently, adolescent literacy has not been a “hot topic” in education. However, recent research has shown that there are some major problems in the field of adolescent literacy, including the lack of motivation to read amongst adolescents. This lack of motivation not only creates disengaged readers, but can also create struggling and resistant readers as well. Secondary teachers have the responsibility to motivate adolescent readers throughout the entire reading process from start to finish. I intend to research the reasons why adolescent readers become disengaged and unmotivated, and find useful strategies that can help promote reading and improve and increase student motivation. This topic is extremely important in the field of literacy and education because there is a desperate need for professional development on this topic. Many secondary teachers “come to believe that teaching students how to effectively read and write is not their responsibility” (Moore et al., 1999, p. 8) and are not educated on literacy strategies and activities that can make the reading process fun, engaging, appealing, hands-on, and motivating.

Because adolescent reading and motivation are two relevant and applicable topics in secondary education today, and because there are many concerns surrounding these same topics,

the research addressed in this professional development project will answer the following questions:

- Why do adolescent readers become disengaged and unmotivated?
- How can secondary teachers engage and motivate the adolescent reader in the classroom?

The next chapter will address and answer these two questions. The first research question will address the subtopics of reoccurring failure amongst adolescent students, “ancient books,” the disconnect between home and school interests, technology and multi-literacies, and state assessments. The second research question will address the subtopics of access to a variety of reading materials, student choice, home/school connections, teacher modeling and passion, student interest and backgrounds, technology and multi-literacies, physical environment, and social collaboration. The following instructional strategies will also be addressed: graphic novels, book displays, learning clubs, reading profiles, literacy trailers, audio-books, classroom libraries, and book-talks. These subtopics and strategies will be addressed in the professional development project described in Chapter 4.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The literacy needs of the adolescent reader are far different from the literacy needs of primary readers. In today's society, it is extremely hard for teachers to encourage students to be motivated to read when there are so many other entertainment options available to adolescents. However, secondary students can meet success if they are offered a range of motivating activities that promote and encourage reading through the use of instruction that is tailored to their own unique needs and interests. Motivation is a powerful tool in all classrooms and it is directly linked to reading engagement and reading success. In order for a teacher to understand how to motivate the adolescent reader, they must first understand why the adolescent reader becomes disengaged and unmotivated in the first place. Because motivation is driven by individual beliefs, values, needs, and goals, if literacy activities align with these components, student interest will increase throughout all literacy experiences. Adolescents do have many literacy-related capabilities and motivations, and teachers can excite the minds of all students through the use of hands-on literacy activities.

Why do Adolescent Readers Become Disengaged and Unmotivated?

Reoccurring failure. Attitudes toward reading are a direct result of reading achievement and these attitudes tend to decline as students enter and progress through the secondary grades. When students are used to experiencing failure in reading, they sometimes “lack the motivation to continue reading because they do not experience success when they engage in literacy activities” and therefore, develop low self-images as readers (Ambe, 2001, p. 634). Many students begin reading as confident learners but as the texts become more involved, students become disengaged or frustrated as the rules they have come to learn seem not to apply

(Wilhelm, 2001). Furthermore, “adolescents who struggle with literacy are often dismissed as lazy or lost- both descriptors doing little to empower these students to independently navigate a text” (Casey, 2008, p. 291).

Reading difficulties stem from early literacy skills that were never developed or from a disinterest in reading (Lenters, 2006). Secondary students become resistant to reading because there is a need for more specific skill instruction. Students who believe they are struggling readers often become disengaged in the reading process and fall behind due to their lack of confidence. Experiencing a lack of success early on can take the meaning and enjoyment out of reading. In order for students to be successful at reading, educators should address student self-perception as it is a large contributor to lack of motivation amongst the adolescent student population. When students observe success and gain confidence in reading, they become motivated.

“Ancient books” and teacher recommendations. In many secondary English classrooms, “ancient books” are still assigned and required. The majority of adolescent student’s have a difficult time relating to them and become turned-off and frustrated as they try to make connections to them, but realize that they are unable to do so. Several books that are required to read in English classrooms are “strange worlds described in alien words” (Moore et al., 1999, p. 4). Preferred books, titles, and authors do change significantly and many teachers simply choose to ignore this and fail to take this into account (Hopper, 2005).

In the mind of an adolescent, academic genres of texts are boring, as are books that were written centuries before they were born. Limited availability and exposure to interesting texts in the secondary English classroom “leaves student with three choices: reading something outside of their interests, obtaining their preferred materials themselves, or not reading at all” (Lenters,

2006, p. 138). If teachers do not provide students with texts that they can relate to, they in turn create readers who either read because they have to or simply don't read at all.

Rebecca Capen (2010) indicated that many teachers lack knowledge on a variety of authors and therefore cannot make appropriate recommendations to their students to promote reading or encourage reading development. Likewise, Hopper (2005) agrees that "many teachers' knowledge of teenage fiction is too limited for them to make recommendations that will enable school students to progress in their reading" (p. 118). This factor also contributes to a decrease in adolescent reading motivation. If teachers are unable to give proper reading recommendations to students, students can become frustrated and disconnected to reading altogether.

Disconnect between home and school interests. When students "judge reading and literacy activities to be unrewarding, too difficult, or not worth the effort because they are peripheral to their interests and needs, they become nonreaders or alliterate adolescents who are capable of reading but choose not to do so" (Pitcher, Albright, DeLaney, Walker, & Seunarin Singh, 2007, p. 379). The disconnect between home and school interests is one of the largest contributors in creating disengaged and unmotivated readers. Because adolescents are "meaning-makers," they attach meaning from in-school learning to out-of-school contexts. If teachers do not make the effort to make a connection between both environments, a major disconnect develops in the classroom.

Students are only motivated to read when they have authentic purposes to do so. However, "all too often teachers don't take the time to ensure that curriculum is presented in a way that highlights what makes it interesting. They generally assign texts and tasks that are isolated from students' interests or background knowledge" (Wilson & Kelley, 2010, p. 107).

Unfortunately, teachers do not always take student background into account, nor their interests and motivations, when planning their curriculum. By acknowledging these things, teachers can empower students because adolescents tend to respond to teachers who value their interests and help establish personal connections.

Many students do not perceive reading as meaningful, so they therefore do not value it. Most of the reading completed by adolescents is done outside of school in various formats and on various topics. Because schools and teachers do not seem to acknowledge reading done outside of school inside the classroom, schools directly contribute to turning adolescents off to reading by “devaluing adolescents’ out-of-school reading and by not stocking the kinds of texts students want to read” (Lenters, 2006, p. 138).

Technology and multi-literacies. Another main reason that adolescents become unmotivated and disengaged to the reading process is because schools devalue the types of literacy activities that adolescent have come to appreciate and can relate to such as media-text, electronic-text, and visual productions (Pitcher et al., 2007). In this technology-driven day and age, schools and teachers should be embracing these formats as a means to motivate students. However, many schools and teachers are still valuing print-based and content-area texts more so than other multi-media formats. In doing so, they are failing to take into account what truly motivates adolescents to read.

Out-of-school reading encompasses a range of multi-media these days and traditional texts “limit the possibility for multiple discourses in the classroom” (Pitcher et al., 2007, p. 379). Research has proven that adolescents do, in fact, read many hours during the day in multiple ways and formats, yet many students do not identify themselves as “readers” because their teachers do not acknowledge the reading they engage in outside of the classroom. In order for

adolescents to become motivated and engaged in the reading process, teachers need to expand their definition of what a “text” is and incorporate electronic-based media into their classrooms that relate to student interests.

Rosemary Hopper (2005) agrees with the notion that technology and multi-literacies have affected adolescent students’ motivation to read. She claims that “it is popularly believed that there is a drop in reading habits amongst the youth with television, mobile phones, computer games, videos, DVDs, and all other new and current distractions” (p. 113). In this day and age, teachers need to take into account the patterns of computer use and modern technology and recognize these as the new literacies of today and use it as a driving force for teacher instruction. If teachers incorporate technology and multi-literacies into reading instruction as much as possible, adolescent motivation can continue to elevate.

State assessments. Students also become unmotivated to read as a direct result of state assessments which “rarely indicate specific teaching-learning experiences that foster literacy development” (Moore et al., 1999, p. 10). Adolescent students are also sensitive to the fact that reading is something they constantly get graded on through administered local and state assessments. This takes the pleasure out of reading because there is a greater emphasis placed on reading performance and results, rather than enjoyment and satisfaction, which decreases motivation to read (Lenters, 2006). Greenleaf and Hinchman (2009) agree that too often teachers have to “teach to the test” and this creates an “impoverished curriculum” in which adolescents do not receive literacy instruction that is suited to their needs. Moore et al. (1999) emphasizes this point by acknowledging that “using tests simply to determine which students will graduate or which type of diploma students will receive disadvantages adolescents” and it “wrongly those most in need of enriched educational opportunities” (1999, p. 10).

How Can Secondary Teachers Engage and Motivate the Adolescent Reader in the Classroom?

Access to a variety of reading material. Providing adolescents with accessibility to a wide variety of reading material is a potential solution to help engage and motivate adolescent readers. As students age increases, the time they spend reading decreases (Moore et al., 1999). If teachers provide students with the opportunity to read what they want to read, the likelihood of reading success will increase, and student attitudes towards reading will improve. Adolescents deserve opportunities to select genres they prefer to read because “choosing their own reading materials is important to adolescents who are seeking independence” (Moore et al., 1999, p. 9). Magazines, newspapers, and electronic literacies are popular genres of reading among the adolescent student population, as is reading material that relates to “popular culture” (Pitcher et al., 2007).

There are some gender differences and patterns when it comes to preferred student reading genres. While girls gravitate towards the genres of animals and romance, boys tend to shift their focus on books that showcase adventure and violence (Hopper, 2005). Hopper also recognizes that the genre of magic and fantasy has become increasingly popular in the secondary classroom. Issue-based books that address the teenage concerns of bullying, prejudice, relationships, and appearance are popular as well because “young readers are responsive to the world they inhabit” (p. 118).

It is of critical importance to expose adolescents to a wide range of texts, especially texts pertinent to their interests because “young people reject literacy tasks that are lacking in purpose and interest” and “when reading is limited to text-books and whole-class literature, we limit ourselves as teachers and our students as readers” (Pitcher et al., 2007, p. 395). Teachers can set

students up for success by making sure that texts are user friendly and differentiated in order to meet the needs of the ever-changing, diverse adolescent student population.

Graphic novels. One particular instructional strategy that highlights offering a wide-range of texts is the use of graphic novels. Reading graphic novels can be “motivating for struggling students and reluctant readers, and can also support the development of the multimodal literacy skills needed for school and workplace success in the 21st century” (Hughes, King, Perkins, & Fuke, 2011, p. 601). Graphic novels not only provide students with a pop culture appeal, but also provide a text in an alternative and interesting format that includes spatial elements and visuals, which also appeals to adolescent students. Hughes et al. (2011) describes that even though the “simple appearance is deceptive; the stories told in graphic novels are just as complex and thought-provoking as any traditional text” (p. 603). Because research suggests that students achieve greater success when they are offered a wide-range of texts that fit their unique needs, graphic novels provide a form of expression that can reach all students.

Student choice. Offering student choice seems to be a favorite motivator for both teachers and students (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010). If teachers use “adolescents’ preferred reading materials and modes of instruction,” this will lead to “increased motivation and perhaps to improvements in reading outcomes” (Pitcher et al., 2007, p. 378). By allowing students to select the topic, format, and genre of a text, students will not only begin to appreciate reading, but will also grow, develop, and progress as independent readers.

Home/school connections. According to Deborah Jensen (2007), the importance of developing a connection between home and school environments cannot be underestimated or ignored since the affiliation between schools and families are seen as the “keys to student achievement” (p. 167). Likewise, Erin Hamel (2003) takes a closer look at home language and

literacy experiences that students bring into the classroom and then further examines the role that these home literacies play in teacher instruction. Hamel recognizes that “the language and literacy experiences found in some children’s homes are very different from the language and literacy experiences in which they are expected to participate at school” (2003, p 11). It is important that teachers recognize these differences so they can include components of both environments in their instruction and across their curriculum.

Nancy Bailey (2009) approached her qualitative research study in an effort to connect home/school literacies. She focused on how to incorporate new literacies into the secondary English classroom to make learning more “real.” Bailey conducted a year-long case study and documented the experiences of a ninth grade English teacher who implemented a year-long revision of curriculum to reflect her changing views on literacy by incorporating “new literacies” into her classroom of 28 students. Bailey defines “new literacies” as “a belief that literate practices are deeply embedded in social practices, social contexts, and social identities” (p. 208). Previous research conducted on similar topics proved that integrating new literacies into content provide opportunities for more active learning, increase critical thinking, and create positive roles for instructors. Bailey’s study yielded similar results. Because lessons were designed around real-life experiences and included collaborative activities, personal knowledge, and new forms of digital technology, self-expression increased, and final exam scores improved to an all-time high.

During a similar qualitative research study, Linda Bausch (2003) embarked on a journey to document everyday literacy events that she observed within her community to develop an understanding on how to incorporate the outside/home world into her local classroom. During a two month time period, she took photographs during all times of the day and from a diverse

group of people who lived within her community. Bausch documented literacy events from local newspapers, collected pieces of text, and examined different discourses and concluded that, “learning does not consist of just an individual, but it includes the situation, the activity, and the participants in it” (2003, p. 218). Her rationale behind this study was based on the notion that she understood her own world, but not the worlds of her students and wanted to build a bridge to connect the two very separate worlds of home and school by celebrating students’ community identities. Findings suggest that honoring student interest, background, and intelligence will enable students to stretch themselves as learners and help them discover the connections between their social situation and school environment and ultimately improve literacy motivation (Bausch, 2003).

If teachers want adolescents to become motivated to read, adolescents need to be able to make a connection to what they are reading about. Texts need to be engaging and a teacher must connect the content and skills they are teaching to real-life experiences. “Bringing students’ out-of-school knowledge and experiences into the classroom can help adolescents meet in-school expectations,” as well as allow teachers to create lessons based on relevance (Lawrence, McNeal, & Yildiz, 2009, p. 484). Using this approach in a classroom setting will address the demands of adolescent readers as well as help motivate adolescent readers to engage in the reading process.

According to Langer (2000), it is vitally important that all lessons connect content with real life lessons that allow students to build connections between their real life experiences and those of the required content. Doing so will allow for more effective instruction and allow students to direct their learning. Consequently, as students continue to grow “in awareness of how reading connects to them, their value of reading expands in breadth and depth” (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010, p. 26).

Teacher modeling and passion. Adolescents deserve teachers who create classrooms in which the desire to read is promoted. Research has proven that one of the most powerful influences on adolescent reading motivation is when teachers talk about books and authors in their own classrooms (Pitcher et al., 2007). Teachers that place an importance on reading and “show enthusiasm for sharing this love with their students” are both central aspects in “motivating students to read” (Capen, 2010, p. 21). If teachers are enthusiastic and passionate about reading, this can have a remarkable impact on their students. Modeling and embracing personal reading passions and demonstrating how reading can make a difference in your life, can inspire students to share their thinking while reading.

McKool and Gespass (2009) conducted and administered a survey to local reading teachers in order to determine if these teachers were modeling good reading habits and practices in their classrooms, as well as to verify if these same teachers were passionate about reading. Their hypothesis for conducting this survey was “if teachers serve as role models, then modeling or demonstrating their own reading preferences, passions, and puzzlements most likely will affect how their students respond to reading” (p. 264). Results of the survey indicated that teachers’ own personal reading habits do actually influence their instructional practices, as well as the reading habits of students in their classroom. When students observed good reading habits demonstrated by their teachers, they became inclined to reveal the same positive attitudes and dispositions that inhabited and encompassed their teacher.

Capen’s research also illustrates that students demonstrate increased levels of engagement in classrooms where teachers demonstrate reading passion themselves and lower levels of reading achievement in classrooms where teachers do not model good reading habits.

By explicitly modeling good reading habits, this places an emphasis on how reading can enhance and enrich each student's life.

Book displays. One strategy that promotes teacher passion and enthusiasm about reading is for teachers to have a laminated display of the current book they are reading in their classroom (Capen, 2010). Teachers should update this display as they read throughout the school year in order to help attract the curiosity of students and gain their attention. This strategy will help increase and arouse student interest and motivation because if students observe that their teacher is constantly reading, they will be more inclined to engage and interact in this process more frequently as well.

Acknowledging student interests and backgrounds. Adolescent readers deserve teachers who value and understand individual readers and their own unique needs. Students speak different languages, come from different backgrounds, and have different experiences. It is extremely important for teachers to respect these individual differences and take into account how family, ethnicity, language, and socio-economic status affect reading performance. Teachers should honor and embrace the diverse backgrounds that students come from and acknowledge that these backgrounds exist outside of the classroom. A centralized, one-size-fits-all-approach to literacy will only set students up for failure because this approach does not acknowledge adolescent preferred learning styles (Pitcher et al., 2010). Cassidy, Valadez, Garret and Barrera (2010) acknowledge that the "one size fits all" mentality is no longer effective as adolescent readers are more diverse than ever before.

Because the period of adolescence is marked by discovering identity, students have the "desire to read books about issues relevant to their own adolescent experiences and concerns" (Hopper, 2005, p. 118). The fictional world can offer guidance and solutions to their questions

surrounding this period of their lives. An effective educator will develop lessons that combine stimulated and integrated activities which encourage students to relate new learning to previous experiences which makes reading “more meaningful” (Langer, 2000, p. 4).

Teachers who acknowledge student interest and who design meaningful projects around these interests address the greatest motivational needs of the adolescent learner. It is possible to provide enjoyment and promote pleasure in the classroom through reading by honoring and recognizing student interest. Adolescents will engage in material and issues that are relevant and relatable to them and these students “can be remarkably perceptive about the texts that they enjoy” (Hopper, 2005, p. 114). Using effective strategies and materials that appeal to student interest and backgrounds can improve reading abilities and motivation. If teachers want students to be able to read more “efficiently, critically, and habitually, the keystone must be the development of the individual’s personal reading interests” (Hopper, 2005, p. 119).

Learning clubs. One specific teaching strategy that directly acknowledges student interest is the formation of “learning clubs,” or clubs organized around student interests and needs. Quite often, this strategy is often referred to and used interchangeably with “literature circles.” These clubs help offer a supportive atmosphere to engage adolescent readers through active learning based on student-selected areas of interest (Casey, 2008). Casey explores how the formation of “learning clubs” can have an impact on the learning environment and engage students who are turned-off to reading. The purpose of this strategy is to engage students in active reading through collaborative or cooperative learning- a social learning opportunity for students to engage in the learning process together.

Students form small groups based on shared interests, themes, or areas of inquiry to help encourage active reading. Teachers guide this process by structuring these groups, involving all

students, deciding on areas of inquiry, and being the facilitator of communication. This strategy can be used with any genre or format of a text including the internet, magazines, fiction, literature, videos, and photographs. By allowing such a variety of texts into these “learning clubs” and “positioning the struggling adolescent learner within this paradigm,” it offers an “alternative lens that traditional remediation structures resist” (Casey, 2008, p. 285). Because students are grouped based on their personal interests, this strategy allows them to participate in facilitated conversations about common texts and to react to their reading experiences by discussing their own interpretations and experiences with the text. Because this strategy is “dialogue intensive,” it “requires students to be active constructors of meaning as opposed to passive recipients of information” (Casey, 2008, p. 289).

During this strategy, teachers may also ask students to bring in their favorite book, share it with the class, and explain why they chose that particular book. By allowing each student to be in control of book choice, this helps promote reading to resistant and disengaged students. Casey (2008) claims that “students are engaged because they have the opportunity to make choices about their reading and their participation while sharing responsibility for learning with their peers and their teachers” (2008, p. 286). This strategy helps intertwine reading, motivation, engagement, and literacy development. Results show that “learning clubs” help increase motivation in disengaged readers, as well as meet the diverse needs of all students. This literacy strategy has the potential to “be a powerful vehicle for motivating engaged and interested learners across content areas to use literacy to build learning” (2008, p. 293).

Motivation to read profile. Another literacy strategy that can be used to help increase adolescent reading motivation is by administering an interest inventory to each student at the start of the school year. Pitcher, Albright, DeLaney, Walker, and Seunarinesingh (2007) revised

the “Motivation to Read Profile,” previously developed by Linda Gambrell for elementary students, to be used with adolescents. The purpose of this study was to develop different questions for secondary teachers to ask adolescent students in order to gain authentic insights on student reading experiences, motivations, and attitudes. This strategy includes two parts- a reading survey and a conversation interview to help assess adolescent self-concept as a reader and their value of reading as well. The survey was designed in a multiple choice format and only takes ten minutes to be administered. In order to be effective, teachers should use this assessment at the beginning of the year to gain an understanding on their students’ feelings and interests that surround reading and gear instruction towards these results.

Technology and multi-literacies. Another tool that can be used to increase student motivation is utilizing multimedia in the classroom. Teachers need to “recognize the multiple literacies in which students are engaging in outside of the classroom and find ways to incorporate them into classroom instruction” (Pitcher et al., 2007, p. 394). Research has proven that in doing so, students become more engaged, which in turn allows them to increase their literacy skills, self-perceptions, and attitudes toward reading. These new technologies are significant as the internet is now a “rich source of relevant and attractive information about books for teenagers” (Hopper, 2005, p. 118). Technology should and can be used in many ways with adolescent readers. If technology is used properly, it can expand student learning (Pitcher et al., 2010).

Adolescents demonstrate multiple literacies because “they interact with multiple forms of nontraditional texts and different sources of information, have access to popular culture and mass media, and communicate with people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives through the use of new technologies (Lawrence, McNeal, & Yildiz, 2009, p. 484). Educators need to use multi-media in a manner that addresses relevant situations for the student and also addresses literacy

achievement. In order to effectively use multimedia, teachers must create lessons that are student focused and address the standards of literacy. When used in conjunction with traditional academic practices multi-media can be an effective tool to help bridge the gap between motivation and student deficiencies in reading.

Literacy Trailers. Borgia and Owles (2010) discuss the successful implementation of “literacy trailers” into the secondary classroom in order to instill excitement amongst adolescent readers. Literacy trailers are a great way to integrate technology and literature. Literacy trailers are just like movie trailers, but instead of students previewing a movie, they preview a book. This instructional strategy includes a series of photographs, visuals, music, and key concept words important to the novel, in a 1-2 minute clip created on a computer. This strategy is a great technology option for teenagers since they are visually and technologically focused and is a reading response activity that will “promote active involvement” that will ultimately “heighten students’ emotions and lead to greater absorption in a story” (Borgia & Owles, 2010, p. 47).

Audio-books. Another technology and multi-literacy strategy that can be used to help engage adolescent readers in the secondary classroom is the inclusion of audio-books. Wolfson (2008) discusses the advantages of using audiobooks in the secondary classroom with adolescent readers, which includes a general increase in motivation. The main purpose of incorporating audio-books in the classroom is to engage disengaged and motivated readers in the reading process through the use of technology. Listening to audio-books may be a literacy experience that many students find worthwhile. A positive component of using audio-books is that adolescent students still continue to learn the same literacy skills with the only difference being a shift from visual understanding (print-based text) to auditory understanding (audio-based text). Through the use of audio-books, students are able to focus on the intended meaning of the

author's words and do not have to stress about decoding and word-recognition. Because of this, audio-books provide a medium for students to be immersed in the reading experience (Wolfson, 2008). Listening to audio-books can help promote the habit of reading as "students who listened and followed the printed text often were motivated to read ahead and focus more on the actual book" (Wolfson, 2008, p. 2010). This technologically driven strategy can help create lifelong learners by helping students develop positive attitudes and associations with reading.

Classroom environment and social collaboration. Linda Gambrell (1996) summarizes the classroom environment's influence on motivation as follows:

Motivation and reading development are fostered when children are immersed in a book-rich environment; exposed to many demonstrations of how books are used; engaged in interactions with others about books; given the responsibility for making decisions about what, when, and how they read; provided with opportunities to approximate literacy activities; and supported by interactions with adults who have high expectations for their success (p. 17).

If teachers create environments with high expectations and encourage students to refine their reading abilities, then they are encouraging their students to take the necessary risks in order to grow as readers (Moore et al., 1999).

Likewise, social collaboration also has an enormous influence on adolescent students' development as readers. Cambria and Guthrie (2010) emphasize the importance of social relationship between classmates and teachers because when "students see that teachers are supporting their active collaboration, they become more cooperative and dedicate themselves to reading more conscientiously than if they are continually required to toil in isolation" (p. 27). By

providing opportunities for partnerships, team efforts, and group projects, social collaboration can help motivate students and increase reading achievement

Classroom libraries and book talks. Having a classroom library not only enhances a literacy-rich environment, but it also entices readers. Books displays and organization can arouse student curiosity and “curiosity is acknowledged to be a driving force for motivation” (Capen, 2010, p. 23). Teachers can capture the adolescent reader’s interest by having a classroom library in which book covers are visible. If teachers preview a small selection of books each day, students will be exposed to reading material that is available and accessible to them, thus creating opportunities for social collaboration.

Teachers can also have book talks in small groups or in whole-class discussion in which they preview characters, look at the cover, and read short excerpts from the book, all in an attempt to arouse student interest. This strategy is beneficial because “sharing and talking with others about books is an important factor in developing engaged, motivated readers and supports the contention that social interactions have a positive influence on reading achievement” (Gambrell, 1996, p. 22). This strategy also provides adolescent students with the opportunity to become familiar with books they may not know exist (Tilley, 2009).

Conclusion

In conclusion, there are two aspects of reading. According to Cambria and Guthrie (2010), the first aspect of reading includes the skills of phonemic awareness, phonics, word recognition, vocabulary, and comprehension. The second aspect of reading includes motivation, also known as the “will” to read. Adolescent readers need both “skill” and “will” in order to be successful at reading because “a student with skill may be capable, but without will, they cannot become a reader” (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010, p. 16). In the past, motivation has usually been the

neglected part of reading, especially in the adolescent classroom. However, realistically, this component is the most important aspect of reading and teachers do have the means to motivate the adolescent reader by understanding the factors that cause a decrease in reading motivation and by implementing appropriate hands-on literacy activities that encourage reading.

Chapter 3

Methods

Data Collection

A professional development experience has been designed to help all secondary content teachers learn appropriate hands-on and engaging reading strategies to help motivate adolescent students to read across the content areas. Various sources included in the professional development experience were discovered via library research. All journal articles and studies were obtained through online research from the online databases of Education Research Complete and ERIC and many articles were found in the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* and *International Reading Association*. Each of the selected articles explores and answers the research questions pertaining to adolescent reading, motivation, and literacy strategies.

During the selection and collection of research and resources for this professional development experience, the following words were used as topics and keywords: “adolescent readers,” “reading,” “disengaged readers,” “student engagement,” “adolescent motivation,” “literacy strategies,” “social collaboration,” and “cooperative learning.” The criteria used to obtain sources used throughout this paper and for the professional development experience consisted of peer-reviewed journals found online. Articles focused on adolescent reading, motivation, and reading strategies to help increase reading motivation. I also searched for articles on adult learning, literacy coaching, book clubs, and ongoing professional development.

Data Analysis

After articles were selected, they were read, reviewed, highlighted, and then categorized and organized on an extensive outline. They were analyzed, explored, and evaluated for relevance to the research topics. Each selected article provided insight on the two main research

questions and helped answer these questions as well. This information will be used to teach educators about strategies to implement in their classrooms in order to improve adolescent reading motivation during the professional development experience.

The intended outcome of my project is a professional development experience based on literacy strategies that can be used to improve student reading motivation. This professional development experience is ongoing and takes place in the form of monthly seminars to ensure that all teachers implement what they learn into best classroom practice. Details of the professional development experience are included in Chapter 4. It is important to present my findings because many secondary teachers face the same problem of motivating the adolescent reader in the secondary classroom. This professional development experience will be beneficial for secondary teachers because it allows them to learn about hands-on literacy strategies that promote reading. It also provides insight to teachers on how adolescent students learn best and what keeps them engaged in content reading material.

Chapter 4

Results and Application

Introduction

Because the literacy needs of the adolescent reader are complex and intricate in today's society, it is extremely difficult for teachers to motivate students to read. However, if teachers know how to implement and offer a variety of instruction that meets the needs and interests of their students, then secondary students can experience success in reading. Promoting and encouraging reading through motivation is a powerful tool that can directly assist students in reading success.

The first step in understanding how to motivate the adolescent reader is discovering why adolescents become disengaged and unmotivated. Once teachers understand why adolescents become disconnected from their reading experiences, instruction and literacy learning can be designed to align with student interests, beliefs, values, and goals in order to stimulate the minds of all adolescent students. By incorporating the use of hands-on literacy activities, teachers can not only help engage adolescent readers, but they can also help attempt to bridge the gap between adolescent motivation and reading. Because motivation is realistically the most important aspect of reading, it is of critical importance that teachers become educated on how to motivate the adolescent reader through the implementation of appropriate hands-on literacy activities.

Results of the Review

The two research questions in this project attempted to discover why adolescents become disengaged and unmotivated in the reading process and the strategies teachers can use to help engage and motivate adolescent students to read. The results of the literature review indicated that the main reasons why adolescent students become disengaged in the reading process in

because of reoccurring failure, “ancient books,” a disconnect between home and school interests, lack of technology, and state assessments. The results also indicated that adolescent motivation to read can improve if teacher’s provide access to a variety of reading material, offer them choice, acknowledge home/school connections, model reading passion, acknowledge student backgrounds, incorporate technology, and promote social collaboration. Therefore, a professional development experience was designed to help teachers learn and discover new, research-based literacy strategies to help increase student motivation to read.

Professional development. Hilda Borko emphasizes that “teacher professional development is essential to efforts to improve our schools” (2004, p. 3). Educational reform movements in our country are setting ambitious goals for student learning and consequently requiring change in classroom practices, with the responsibility ultimately falling on teachers. Because of these changes, there is an ever increasing need for professional development opportunities to assist teachers in enhancing their knowledge and developing new instructional techniques (Borko, 2004). No Child Left Behind states that high quality professional development should be made accessible to all teachers. However, “the professional development currently available to teachers is woefully inadequate” (Borko, 2004, p. 3). As a result of this, teachers have “limited personal investment in their professional development” and “ideas that are conceptually and physically removed from individual classrooms become difficult to implement” (Burbank, Kauchak, & Bates, 2010, p. 57).

Borko (2004) claims that there is evidence that suggests that professional development can and will foster improvements in student learning and that “high quality professional development programs can help teachers deepen their knowledge and transform their teaching” (p. 5). In addition, it is essential that professional development programs provide an “explicit

focus on subject matter” to help “engage teachers as learners” (p. 5). Professional development opportunities should provide activities that model similar collaborations and conversations that students have in the classroom.

It is important to remember that “no single approach, no simple solution will lead all students to success as readers and writers” (Raphael, Florio-Ruane, & George, 2001, p. 159). This same philosophy can be applied to teachers. If we as teachers have to create a curriculum that is responsive to student diversity and their needs, then as professionals, we should also create and design professional development with this in mind. Burbank, Kauchak, and Bates (2010) explain this concept further:

The value of differentiated experiences among learners is significant and practicing teachers are no different. Among groups of teachers, collaboration allows teachers from across the experiential continuum to work in tandem in their professional investigations. Equally significant are professional development experiences that are consciously structured in ways that meet the development needs of teachers. Differences in how teachers approach their teaching, their understanding of learners’ needs, and professional goal setting simply vary and must be considered when creating professional work experiences for educators.

It is apparent that not all students learn the same and consequently, not all teachers do either. Niederhauser and Wessling (2010) explain that “just as students need to have meaningful and authentic work that drives them to inquiry, creativity, and intellectual risk, so must teachers have those same kinds of learning environments” (p. 39). In order to inspire teachers, professional development needs to be structured around teacher needs, just as classroom instruction needs to be structured around student needs.

Literacy coaching. Teaching today is far more complex than in the past, especially with incorporating literacy instruction into the classroom. Literacy coaching is a form of professional development that can help teachers add new strategies to their current practices and consequently take more responsibility of their learning. This type of professional develop also helps facilitate and reinforce best practices in all classrooms, and is “a current trend meant to broaden instructional repertoires and student engagement” (Gross, 2010, p. 133). Since literacy these days is not only how students comprehend or convey meaning through reading and writing, but also through speaking, viewing, listening, and using technology, teachers can create and design instruction around these needs (Gross, 2010).

Patricia Gross (2012) describes literacy coaching as a “form of staff development and school improvement that combines teacher knowledge, constructivist situated learning, and collaboration” (p. 201). She continues to explain that the “intent of literacy coaching is to support and engage teachers in employing literacy strategies across academic disciplines to increase the literacy levels and, therefore the active learning of students” (p. 201). In an earlier study, Gross emphasizes again that the primary role of a literacy coach is to “offer literacy strategies to enliven student interest in all subjects” (2010, p. 133). In other words, literacy coaches have a huge responsibility to assist in the learning of all students and teachers.

According to Liz Hanson, who is a literacy coach from Minnesota, there are five components of literacy coaching. These components consist of walk-throughs, literacy team meetings, formal coaching opportunities, professional learning communities, and administration involvement (Hanson, 2011). Walk-throughs are completed to observe classroom instruction. Literacy team meetings require all teachers to meet in small groups to discuss their current literacy practices. Formal coaching opportunities allow literacy coaches to assist teachers that are

unsure of how to implement literacy instructional strategies into their classrooms, including demonstrations. Professional learning communities allow teachers to attend meetings to discuss and ask questions about literacy instruction. And finally, administration involvement allows the literacy coach to collaborate with the principal and come up with district expectations and goals to ensure success. It is important that literacy coaches have a balance between these five components and realize the connections between them. Hanson explains that “days are filled with different ways of supporting teachers in the ever-evolving practice of literacy instruction” as demonstrated above (2011, p. 78). These practices fall into two categories: working with teachers in their own classrooms and assisting in the professional development of literacy instruction either one on one or in a small or large group setting.

Book clubs. Because the issue of professional development is receiving negative attention, it is important to explore ways in which literacy coaches can make professional development purposeful and engaging. Structuring “book clubs” in a small group format is one way to accomplish these goals. Teachers can “use book club activities as a central component of their professional development activities” because it “provides opportunities to examine issues” (Burbank, Kauchak, & Bates, 2010, p. 56). Book clubs allow practicing teachers to become actively involved as active participants in professional development opportunities. Personal value can be gained from all activities associated with book clubs such as debating, dialoguing, journaling, and experimenting because these are all activities that go beyond “simple skill acquisition” (Burbank, Kauchak, & Bates, 2010, p. 57).

“Book clubs” provide teachers with the opportunity to take a closer look at their own feelings, thoughts, and ideas and share them with one another in a social setting (Burbank, Kauchak, & Bates, 2010). By reading and discussing professional literature in a small group,

teachers not only get to share their views on different reading strategies and instruction, they also get to hear alternate perspectives to broaden their knowledge. Benefits of this type of professional development include the realization of new strategies, having teachers take ownership for their own classroom practices, and providing teachers with the opportunity to engage in professional conversations and dialogue concerning different reading strategies to promote and engage adolescent readers.

When anybody, teacher or student, interacts with a text, the ideal, ultimate goal of the reader is to create a personal response and have a personal reaction to what they are reading (Burbank, Kauchak, & Bates, 2010). Book clubs focus on this goal by maximizing the opportunity for teachers to share their personal responses and experiences to what they are reading and how they are implementing a specific strategy into their own classrooms.

Burbank, Kauchak, and Bates (2010) conducted a study in which veteran and novice teachers participated in “book clubs” once every two weeks. They used qualitative methods to gather data utilizing a seminar format in the form of open ended survey questions, written reflections, and book club discussions. Findings include that all teachers agreed that the “book clubs” gave them the opportunity to think about and reflect on their current classroom practices and that it also gave them the opportunity to discuss new strategies and explore alternate views and opinions. Teachers also found that they were able to extend what they were learning in the “book clubs” to other teachers in the building. Teachers also agreed that it allowed them to “agree or disagree without trying to change the opinions of others” (p. 64). Overall, the majority of teachers agreed that the “book clubs” provided a forum for healthy sharing and debate and allowed time for reflective thinking to apply to their professional lives.

Conclusion

There is an increasing need for professional development that encourages teachers to develop their own classroom instruction in ways that are “sustained and supported over time” (Burbank, Kauchak, & Bates, 2010, p. 58). Literacy coaching and professional “book clubs” accomplish this goal and provide hands-on opportunities for all teachers. As teachers, we are educated and told to make lessons as “fun” and “hands-on” as possible. Shouldn’t professional development be the same? Professional development should be made more personal, relevant, and fun. Book clubs also give teachers a fresh, new look at new instructional techniques to help promote reading to the adolescent population while interacting on a sophisticated level. They provide the opportunity to work with teachers who have different levels of experience, which in turn, will help broaden individual horizons and foster learning in one another.

This type of format is also effective because it allows teachers to discuss their ideas over time and not in a rushed setting without follow up or reflection time. Realistically, most professional development is lecture-based and is often irrelevant because it doesn’t require putting what teachers learn into practice. The biggest benefit about this format is that it allows teachers to actually practice what they learn.

Gross suggests that literacy coaching could improve teaching and learning of both teachers and students. Because of this, “if content teachers would teach their students to read and write more effectively, it is likely that content learning would increase (Pressley, 2004, p. 426). Literacy coaching in a small group setting via “book clubs” provides ongoing professional development opportunities and continuous support for literacy instruction. Obviously, literacy coaching “requires an openness to change,” but there are many benefits to be gained through the

use of it (Gross, 2010, p. 136). Strong professional learning communities can cultivate teacher learning and instructional improvement. However, we “cannot expect teachers to create a community of learners among students if they do not have a parallel community to nourish their own growth” (Borko, 2004, p. 7).

Application of Results to a Professional Development Project

Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky’s constructivist theories state that individuals need to be socially engaged in learning and create knowledge from existing knowledge, beliefs, and personal experiences (Hackmann, 2004). Prior knowledge impacts the learning process because a learner must be able to connect new information to existing information for meaningful learning to occur. Since constructivists tend to emphasize the depth of understanding and become learning facilitators that act like the “guide on the side,” learners must be active participators placed in authentic problem solving situations during professional development experiences (Hackmann, 2004, p. 697).

Literacy coaching and “book clubs” operate “as a constructivist approach for coaches, teachers, and students throughout the process of experimenting with literacy strategies in content areas” (Gross, 2012, p. 203). “Book clubs,” used as a small group approach in literacy coaching, are a “hands-on” strategy to promote active engagement in teacher-centered professional development. In using this type of approach to professional development, teachers are placed in authentic problem solving situations in which they will become active participants in implementing new reading strategies in their own classrooms to help reach the ultimate goal of increasing adolescent reading motivation.

Overview of Professional Development Project

During the professional development experience, monthly seminars will take place the first week of each month for one hour and each session will have a “strategy of the month.” The professional development experience will take on a “book-club” approach. Each seminar will allow time for teachers to learn a new literacy strategy, watch a demonstration of a new strategy, and read a peer-reviewed journal article about the same strategy. Once teachers learn this new strategy, they each will have an entire month to implement it into their classroom and get some hands-on experience with it. During the next monthly seminar, the teachers will have time to reflect on their experience with the previous strategy, share their opinions, and offer suggestions to improve the strategy. This ongoing professional development experience will allow teachers to put what they have learned into practice. It will also help educate teachers on hands-on literacy strategies that will assist in the improvement of reading in their classrooms. Most importantly, this experience will create a forum in which teachers can discuss their experiences with one another, as well as reflect on their own instruction to ensure that it meets the needs of their adolescent students.

Design of Professional Development Project

Literacy coaching workshop goals and objectives. One goal of my professional development experience is to have motivated, engaged participants by creating hands-on literacy learning experiences. Another goal of my monthly “book club” seminars is to help teachers make the connection between student thinking and their instructional practices in order to help deepen teacher knowledge and improve the teaching of reading in the classroom (Borko, 2004). When participating in the monthly seminars and discussions, I want all participants to feel comfortable, worthy, and not-judged. Therefore, another goal of my professional development experience is

the “establishment and maintenance of communication norms and trust, as well as the collaborative interactions that occur when groups of teachers work together to examine and improve their practice” (Borko, 2004, p. 6). This is important because the stronger the professional development community, the more likely the improvement in classroom instruction. Ultimately, the main goal of this experience is to improve reading instruction by increasing student interest and motivation to read. I want to be able to “assist content area teachers in addressing the reading comprehension, writing, and communication skills that are particular to their disciplines” through this professional development opportunity (IRA, 2006, p. 7).

Based on the goals above, the objectives of my professional development experience are as follows:

- The teacher will be able to demonstrate growth in literacy knowledge by utilizing various literacy strategies in their classroom effectively
- The teacher will be able to promote student engagement in the adolescent classroom and increase student motivation to read through the use of hands-on literacy strategies

Proposed audience and location. The proposed audience for this professional development experience is secondary high school teachers in a small group setting. The location of this experience will take place in the high school and in each teacher’s individual high school classroom.

Proposed workshop format and activities. The proposed workshop format will be monthly “book talks” or seminars, where teachers will meet after school, once a month, for one hour each session. Teachers will meet with their own department at the high school in order to provide a small group personal experience. Each month, the literacy coach will introduce a peer-

reviewed professional journal article that introduces a new reading strategy specifically designed to help motivate adolescent students to read. The literacy coach will also demonstrate this strategy to the small group. After each session, teachers must put this strategy into practice in their own room. Teachers will have one month to implement this strategy into their classroom and must be prepared to discuss and reflect upon their experiences during the next monthly session.

More specifically, the first half hour of each monthly session will be to reflect on the chosen strategy of the month that was implemented into each classroom the previous month. This will be done through discussion in which teachers will share their personal reactions and experiences. Teachers will collaborate and discuss what worked for them, what didn't work for them, what they could change, and the overall effectiveness of the strategy. The literacy coach will lead this "community discussion" and encourage teachers to share their ideas, issues, and opinions. The literacy coach will also answer any questions the teachers may have at this time.

The second half hour of each monthly lesson will be to read the chosen article that introduces a new strategy to be used during that specific month and discuss it. During this time, the literacy coach will also model the strategy to the teachers so they know how to incorporate it into their own classrooms.

This framework allows for new instructional strategies to be introduced slowly. Change can be hard and take some time. Therefore, by having monthly seminars, this ensures that the shift to literacy instruction is not overwhelming and instead, manageable. This also provides the opportunity to use dialogue and research to inform instructional practices. The follow up of this professional development gives teachers the chance to practice what they have learned and get

feedback on how they are implementing what they have learned from the literacy coach and other teachers as well.

Many teachers complain that it is hard to relate professional development to their specific grade and subject area. Consequently, many teachers do not think the professional development they receive is helpful or relevant because it does not meet their individual needs. The organization of this professional development experience allows teachers to work in their own departments with one another (small groups) so they can relate better to one another and share similar experience.

Proposed resources for workshop. Resources for this workshop include the peer reviewed online journal articles outlined in chapter two. Each of these articles provides a hands-on literacy strategy to help promote and encourage reading in the adolescent secondary classroom. One article will be used each month based on the chosen literacy strategy of the month. See *Appendix A* for a detailed chart containing the agenda, outline, and resources for each monthly seminar.

Proposed evaluation of workshop. Programs evaluations will be ongoing and given on a monthly basis during “reflection” time. Time for reflection will take place during the first half of each monthly seminar or “book club.” This evaluation will give teachers time to document and discuss their experiences with the reading “strategy of the month.” The evaluation will give teachers the opportunity to frame problems and identify possible solutions for problems they may have encountered. The evaluation will also allow teachers to share their personal reactions and experiences. They will be able to document and discuss amongst one another what worked for them, what didn’t work, what they would change the next time they tried it, and the overall

effectiveness of the strategy. The literacy coach will lead this “community/small group discussion” and encourage teachers to share their ideas, issues, and opinions both vocally and on paper. See *Appendix B* for an example of a teacher evaluation.

Conclusion

There is obviously a growing demand for secondary literacy coaches. Therefore, there is an increased need to improve teacher professional development in order to help influence literacy outcomes in the adolescent world. It is of critical importance that teachers take professional development seriously because findings indicate that “professional development provided to teachers has been shown to improve the reading achievement of students” (Campbell & Sweiss, 2010, p. 41). Obviously, it takes a lot of time and hard work to develop a strong, teacher community with effective professional development. However, conversations about teaching prove to be a crucial feature of a successful teaching community (Borko, 2004). When “teachers generally welcome the opportunity to discuss ideas and materials related to their work,” then “conversations in a professional development setting are easily fostered” (Borko, 2004, p. 7). Effective professional development must have a vision, model best practices, and give teachers time to reflect and collaborate and this is precisely what the experience above provides. The experience involves “comprehensive, sustained, and systemic learning experiences that are based on identified needs of teachers” with the ultimate goal of improving overall instructional effectiveness and increasing student motivation to read (Reese, 2010, p. 39).

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

Overview of Study and Findings

Overall, the purpose of this study was to explore the research surrounding adolescent motivation, reading, and hands-on literacy strategies. The first research question explored why adolescent readers become disengaged and unmotivated and the second research question offered potential solutions to this problem by discussing ways in which teachers can engage and motivate the adolescent reader in the classroom through hands-on literacy activities. The findings of both research questions provide helpful insights for adolescent teachers and offer suggestions to help promote adolescent reading in the classroom and foster improvement in classroom literacy instruction. Each chosen research article and study included implications for educational instructional research-based practices.

Findings included areas in which students become disengaged in the reading process, as well as strategies teachers can offer to encourage and promote reading and motivation in the classroom. Data indicated that repeated failure, the use of “ancient books,” the divide between home and school interests, the lack of technology and multi-literacies used, and state assessments all contribute to the decline in adolescent student motivation to read. Results also indicated that by offering a variety of reading material, promoting student choice, recognizing student backgrounds, integrating technology and multi-literacies, and allowing time for social collaboration can all influence adolescent reading motivation in a positive manner.

The range of findings concerning professional development included the aspects in which teachers view professional development, the environments teachers learn best in, the multiple roles of the literacy coach, and the overall effectiveness of using “book clubs” as a professional

development forum. Findings indicate that there is an increased need to improve the quality and effectiveness of professional development experiences for teachers. Results also indicate that literacy coaches and “book clubs” have a positive impact on teacher professional development experiences and can improve literacy instruction.

Outcomes of the study also support the constructivist theory of learning in that when teachers and students are socially engaged in learning, meaningful learning occurs and motivation improves. If teacher and student background knowledge, beliefs, and personal experiences are recognized in the classroom and during professional development experiences, teachers and students will become active participants in the reading and learning process. By implementing hands-on literacy strategies and serving as the “guide on the side,” the learner receives authentic instruction, which will ultimately spark reading motivation, inspire overall academic success, and improve literacy instruction.

Significance of the Findings

The topic of adolescent reading and motivation is significant because there is an ever-increasing problem facing the adolescent student population today with concerns to reading. According to the International Reading Association (2006a), “hundreds of thousands of twelfth grade students, who are positioned to graduate from high school, are faced with the reality that they can barely read or write” (Campbell & Sweiss, 2010, p. 39). As if the thought of this isn’t staggering enough, approximately 3,000 students drop out of high school each day largely due to reoccurring failures experienced with reading (Joftus, 2002).

With the implementation of new Common Core Standards across the country, released in June of 2010, literacy-related tasks in schools are only going to get more rigorous as all content teachers will now be teachers of literacy and expected to incorporate literacy-based instruction

into their curriculum. Therefore, students will be held to literacy expectations in every class and develop literacy skills specific to each content area. This is why motivation of adolescent students cannot be ignored because it is essentially the “most important part of reading” and has a direct correlation with academic success (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010, p. 16).

The Common Core Standards are also going to require teacher evaluation, with part of the evaluation based on student documented growth. This ultimately means that teachers will now be held accountable for demonstrating recognizable growth amongst all adolescent learners. Therefore, it is of critical importance that teacher’s understand how to motivate adolescent’s to read, since many assessments and overall academic success revolve around this skill. The professional development project is significant because all teachers need to be educated on literacy strategies and activities that frame the reading process as fun, engaging, appealing, hands-on, and motivating. Professional development is needed in this area because it will drastically help teachers and students prepare for and meet success with the new literacy standards. If all teachers and schools take advantage of this opportunity and redesign “curriculum and instruction in ways that fully engage students in cognitively challenging tasks- the result will be students who are better prepared to succeed in college and careers” (Conley, 2011, p. 21).

Limitations of the Findings

One identifiable gap in my research landscape was my inability to locate research studies with quantitative data on effective reading strategies to help increase student motivation to read. Most of the research discussed provided qualitative data based on participant personal experience, direct hands-on implementation, reflection, and discussion because there is a direct correlation between motivation and qualitative data. Another limitation within the professional

development project was the lack of research available on teacher “book clubs.” While I was able to locate one study on teacher “book-clubs,” other research studies focused on student “book-clubs.” The final limitation of the study was that the professional development project was not actually implemented and is therefore a theoretical solution to the problem. The validity and reliability of the study may be hindered as a result of these limitations.

Conclusion: Answers to the Research Questions

Why do adolescent readers become disengaged and unmotivated? In sum, adolescent readers become disengaged and motivated because there is an overall existing gap in reading values between adolescents, teachers, and the state. Attitudes towards reading tend to decrease when student’s experience continual failure in reading and consequently develop low-self images of themselves as readers (Ambe, 2001). Student’s also become disconnected from the reading process when they have a difficult time relating to the books assigned to them. Consequently, as a result of this, students are unable to establish connections between book content and real life (Moore et al., 1999). Likewise, the disconnect between home and school interests is a large contributor to the decline in student motivation to read. Many teachers do not make the effort to connect both home and school environments which results in student disengagement. Many schools and teachers also devalue the types of literacy activities that most adolescents appreciate and can relate to within the realm of technology and multi-literacies as well. Finally, state assessments prove to be a major factor in the decline of reading motivation amongst the adolescent student population. State assessments discourage students because they take the pleasure out of reading by placing a greater emphasis on reading performance and results, rather than enjoyment and satisfaction (Lentors, 2006). The professional development project provides teachers with information regarding these motivation factors in order to provide insight into the

complex needs of adolescent readers. If teachers understand why adolescents become disengaged in reading, they will be able to design literacy instruction based on these needs.

How can secondary teachers engage and motivate the adolescent reader in the classroom? By understanding the factors that lead to a decline in reading motivation, teachers can begin to implement appropriate instruction that encourages reading. Students are only motivated to read when they have authentic purposes to do so. It is the teacher's responsibility to structure lessons and instruction based around student interest, diversity, and needs. In order to motivate adolescent students to read, teachers must provide access to a variety of reading material, honor student choice, acknowledge student interest and backgrounds, establish home and school connections, model personal reading passion, incorporate technology and multi-literacies into instruction, design an engaging classroom environment, and allow time for social collaboration.

The days of simple lecture and note-taking are long gone. Teachers these days are expected to provide multiple contexts for learning so students can be engaged and motivated throughout the reading process. By using the instructional literacy strategies of "graphic novels," "book displays," "learning clubs," "reading profiles," "literacy trailers," "audio-books," "classroom libraries," and "book-talk," teachers can promote reading in engaging and interesting ways across all content areas. As a result of this, there can be potential improvement in reading motivation throughout diverse student populations. By participating in monthly professional development seminars, teachers can learn how to implement these strategies into their classrooms. If students recognize that teachers are willing to create engaging, hands-on learning experiences, then reading motivation and achievement can prosper and flourish. After all,

“teaching is our nation’s most valuable profession” and it is important that we give every adolescent student what they need and deserve (Borko, 2004, p. 3).

Recommendations for Future Research

Recommendations for possible future research on this topic include examining the shift in teacher literacy instruction from current practices to future practices with the implementation of the new Common Core Standards. Also, further investigation on how teachers and instructors can integrate new reading literacy strategies in the secondary classroom to increase adolescent reading motivation would be interesting and beneficial as well. Recommendations for future professional development research include the effectiveness of “book clubs” as a professional development forum for teachers and the implementation of the professional development project described in Chapter 4.

In conclusion, “helping our teachers to succeed and enabling our children to learn is an investment in human potential, one that is essential to guaranteeing America’s future and prosperity” (The Teaching Commission, 2004, p. 11) It is equally important for educators to invest in adolescent reading and teacher professional development because literacy is essentially the foundation of our culture and society.

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Appendix A: Agenda/Outline of Coaching Seminars

Each monthly seminar will be held from 3:00-4:00 after school. The first seminar in September will provide an overview and introduction of the professional development experience in its entirety. The literacy coach will address the factors that contribute to a decline in adolescent reading motivation and the kinds of strategies that will help engage adolescent readers. The literacy coach will also review and explain the types of professional research articles that will help support the professional development experience.

The subsequent monthly seminars will be segmented into two parts. The first part of each “book talk” will allow teachers to reflect on their personal experiences with implementing the new literacy strategy of the month. The second part of each “book talk” is dedicated to the literacy coach providing research, demonstrating, modeling, and explaining the next literacy strategy of the month. Therefore, the agenda for each book talk (from October-May) will be as follows:

- 3:00-3:30 – Reflection time
 - Teachers will have time to discuss and document their personal experiences and observations with the implementation of the new literacy strategy. They will reflect on what worked, what didn’t work, and how they can improve instruction for future practice through discussion and a written evaluation. They will also discuss if and how motivation improved as a result of the strategy.
- 3:30-3:40- Introduce new literacy strategy
 - The literacy coach will present teachers with a research article based on a new literacy strategy that can assist in the improvement of reading motivation.
- 3:40-3:55- Literacy coach demonstration
 - After teachers read the article, the literacy coach will model and demonstrate how to effectively implement the new strategy into the classroom.
- 3:55-4:00- Comments, questions, concerns
 - Upon completion of the demonstration, teachers will be able to comment, ask questions, and share concerns amongst one another.

After each monthly seminar is complete, each teacher has one month to implement the literacy strategy into their own classroom. Teachers should be prepared to discuss and reflect on their experiences during the subsequent monthly seminar. The final monthly seminar in June will be used to reflect on the experience as a whole. During this session, teachers will discuss the strategies they benefited the most and least from, how these strategies impacted reading motivation, and provide suggestions for improving the monthly seminar professional development experience.

The following table contains the outline for each professional development monthly session. The table states the literacy strategy of each month, provides the motivation factor associated to each strategy, and also contains the citation of each associated research article.

“Book Club” Schedule

Month	Strategy	Motivation Factor	Article
September	Topic: What types of strategies help promote and engage adolescent readers?	Topic: What factors contribute to a decline in reading motivation amongst adolescent students?	Overview and introduction to the types of research articles that will be used during the professional development monthly seminars.
October	<i>Graphic Novels</i>	Access to a variety of reading material	Hughes, J. M., King, A., Perkins, P., & Fuke, V. (2011). Adolescents and "autographics." Reading and writing coming-of-age graphic novels. <i>Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy</i> , 54(8), 601-612.
November	<i>Book Displays</i>	Teacher modeling and passion	Capen, R. (2010). The role of the teacher and classroom environment in reading motivation. <i>Illinois Reading Council Journal</i> , 38(4), 20-25.
December	<i>Learning Clubs</i>	Acknowledgment of student interest and background	Casey, H. K. (2009). Engaging the disengaged: Using learning clubs to motivate struggling adolescent readers and writers. <i>Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy</i> , 52 (4), 284-294.
January	<i>Motivation to Read Profile</i>	Acknowledgment of student interest and background	Pitcher, S. M., Martinez, G., Dicembre, E. A., Fewster, D., & McCormick, M. K. (2010). The literacy needs of adolescents in their own words. <i>Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy</i> , 53(8), 636-645.
February	<i>Literacy Trailers</i>	Technology and multi-literacies	Borgia, L., & Owles, C. (2010). Creating engaged readers. <i>Illinois Reading Council Journal</i> , 38(3), 43-48.

Month	Strategy	Motivation Factor	Article
March	<i>Audio-books</i>	Technology and multi-literacies	Wolfson, G. (2008). Using audiobooks to meet the needs of adolescent readers. <i>American Secondary Education</i> , 36 (2), 105-114.
April	<i>Classroom Library</i>	Classroom environment	Gambrell, L. B. (1996) Creating classroom cultures that foster reading motivation. <i>The Reading Teacher</i> , 50 (1), 14-25.
May	<i>Book Talks/Clubs</i>	Social collaboration	Raphael, T. E., Florio-Ruane, S., & George, M. (2001). Book club plus: A conceptual framework to organize literacy instruction. <i>Language Arts</i> , 79(2), 159-168.
June	Topic: What strategies worked and didn't work in you classroom?	Topic: Did you see an improvement in reading motivation in your classroom?	What sources, articles, or journals did you benefit the most from? What suggestions do you have for improving the professional development experience?

Appendix B: Evaluation of Professional Development

At the beginning of each monthly seminar, all teachers will be asked to complete the following evaluation during “reflection” time. Please reflect on your “hands-on” experience with the implementation of the new literacy strategy by answering the following questions.

Name of Strategy: _____

What worked well during your implementation of the strategy?

What part of the strategy didn’t work well? Please indicate areas in need of improvement and offer suggestions for improvement.

Did the use of the literacy strategy affect student reading motivation in your classroom? If so, in what way(s)?

How would you describe the overall effectiveness of this strategy? Would you implement the strategy in your classroom again? Please explain.
