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A Mixed-Methods Evaluation of the Pilot Program

Paws for Reading in a Midwest Public Library

by

Marie T. Baine

A Dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of


Doctor of Education

School of Education

A Mixed-Methods Evaluation of the Pilot Program
Paws for Reading in a Midwestern Public Library

by
Marie T. Baine

This dissertation has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
Doctor of Education
at Lindenwood University by the School of Education


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Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

Full Legal Name: Marie T. Baine

Signature: Marie T. Baine Date: 4/5/19

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Abstract

This was an evaluation of the pilot program Paws for Reading along with other children's programs ages 5-11 or Kindergarten through fifth grade, according to their mission in a Midwest public library setting. Public libraries were incorporating more programming into the schedules for the benefit of the patrons and growing communities. In this mixed-methods study, the researcher created instruments including a survey, questionnaire, and observation form to evaluate library programming. The library patrons, staff, and managers gave their opinions about the children's programs provided by the library and the Pilot Program Paws for Reading. Questions included preference in library schedule, program visitation, and if the programs were developed with the library's mission in mind. Growing concerns stemmed from understanding if the programs were following the Midwest public library's mission, and liked by both patrons and staff. Additional concerns were centered on finding best timing of presentations, whether that was time of year or day. Another concern was understanding how the patron received news and updates from the library. No distinct study has been done in regards to the evaluation of a pilot program and the evaluation of similar children's library programs.

To answer the researcher questions the investigator created evaluation tools for managers, staff, and patrons to respond to after attending the programs. A researcher created observation tool was used to examine the presentation, patrons, and staff during set up, program time, and clean up. The groups evaluated can help determine the usefulness, quality and longevity of the program presented. Multiple themes were represented during the evaluation and included the Midwest public library's mission for the community, convenience of the program, and if the respondents believed the program

should continue or if there were changes needed. The program evaluation, according to the hypothesis, declared that participation rates for Paws for Reading was expected to significantly increase compared to the other programs implemented during the evaluation period. In addition, perceptions and perspectives of library programs from managers, staff, parents and caregivers were used to determine if the children's programs were successful and aligned with the library's mission. The results did not yield a significant increase in attendance, but positive and helpful reactions from patrons and staff resulted in an evaluation process that was beneficial for the library and community.

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Chapter One: Introduction

The library system was an essential part of the community, as it became a center for enjoyment, learning and improvement. “Public libraries in the United States play an essential role in providing safe, accessible, and 100% free educational resource centers for every member in communities across the country” (Trombetta, 2018, para. 5). Programs were incorporated into the library’s plans as a part of the development process. Expansion of the programs followed with more ideas established as many of them became reoccurring or standard programs, like a children’s story time or an adult computer class. All programs observed the library mission of literacy and advancement of the individual. Even though most programs presented in the Midwest public library adhered to the mission of the system, some did not. Other programs were old or stale, while others did not have a positive response from patrons; and, comprehension of library program limitations was a necessary part of program development. Building the foundation for patrons in programming continued to be important. Bowie (2017) stated, “Libraries provide free, safe environments that offer repeated exposure to positive interactions during critical years” (para. 14). The inclusion of patron and staff opinions in the process of program development allowed for the library to maintain program goals, improve mission-approved programs, and delete the programs that were not developmentally appealing. Metz (2007) indicated, “Program evaluation answers basic questions about a program’s effectiveness, and evaluation data can be used to improve program services” (para.1). As mentioned before, a necessary part of the community was the library, which provided information, enlightenment, and a space to gather for the population in the region. “Although public libraries have come to fill a variety of roles,

recreational as well as educational, they were originally conceived as part of the nation's broader educational movement, and it was their educational function that provided the principal justification for public support” (Kevane & Sundstrom, 2014, p. 118). Public library systems enhanced its presence within the community and developed programming that encouraged patronage with participation and involvement.

Some of the first programs created for the library were story times introduced in the early 20th Century (ALA, 2014). Over time, programs expanded into other areas for the betterment of the patrons. Program engagement promoted commonality among groups of people. Library programs contributed positively to the efforts and supported the systems growth and directive. Asu and Clendening (2011) implied the foundation of the library system promoted and developed a stronger community with a sense of consistency and presence. In addition, this foundation acknowledged the importance of the library and justification of programs and program improvement. Encompassed in the development of the library programs was the evaluation and included in the library curriculum, which eventually enhanced or eliminated programs. This included recognized evaluations as a legitimate measuring tool that promoted growth and connections (Bundy, 2002). Evaluations of library programs encouraged the advancement and development of the library and examined the usefulness of the created plans. “Evaluations can be designed to answer a range of questions about programs to assist decision-making by program managers and policymakers” (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2012, p. 4).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to evaluate programming in a Midwest public library, specifically the pilot program Paws for Reading. This study examined the perceptions of librarians, library staff, volunteers, and parents on the development and delegation of future programming, using a survey. Furthermore, the researcher created an instrument to evaluate Paws for Reading, a pilot program at this specific public library, and other library programs offered during the same period (June-August of 2017). Results of these evaluations compared the success of Paws for Reading versus the other summer programs, and determined if Paws for Reading should continue at the library; the researcher-developed instrument used for the evaluation of future programs. Furthermore, a second instrument, a program evaluation used by librarians, issued to library staff, volunteers, and administrators.

Using a program evaluation, librarians reviewed the success of library programs during the summer of 2017, but from the library staff's perspective and included: library assistants, clerks, youth services, and managers. In addition, the program evaluation instrument for librarians was used for the evaluation of future programs. The researcher used attendance data by comparing the attendance (an observable count) of Paws for Reading to that of other programs offered during the same summer months (June-August of 2017). Personal reflections and observational data evaluated library programming overall and specifically the piloted program Paws for Reading at this specific public library. Information from this study provided the researched public library with insights into library programs, and specifically the need for an evaluation process that provided detailed feedback for library administrators and staff, and enlightened the creation

process from conception to close. This contributed to the understanding of the perception of success or failure of the program, whether it was from a newly considered program like Paws for Reading or like an essential library program such as Book Club.

Application of the public libraries mission “to provide the resources and services to enrich individual minds, enhance lives and expand perspectives” (Midwest Public Library, 2018, para. 1) expressed throughout program development and implementation. Programs like Paws for Reading, and other library programs introduced into the library system had to maintain the quality of the mission, and be assessed according to perception of the evaluator. Evaluators defined as patrons, such as parents and caregivers, library staff and managers determined the success of the program by its service and quality.

After the implementation of programs, Paws for Reading included managers were responsible for the continuation or halting of a program with consideration of the program planning, delegation and appraisal. Decisions included in the finality of the programs stemmed from the alignment of the library’s mission and the statistical data representing the number of people who was represented at the program. Perceptions of a library program from a variety of people was valued and used to increase new programming and appraise other reoccurring programs. Therefore, the researcher used the following research instruments to gather results: a program evaluation for the library staff, parent/caregiver evaluation for library programs, attendance count, personal reflections, and observational data. The collection of this specified data helped compare programs and participation when comparing Paws for Reading to other specifically created programs presented in the summer of 2017 for ages 5-11. The projected outcome

stated Paws for Reading, a program that united highly trained therapy dogs and children in a library setting, and the children would read to the dog would promote an increase in participation when gaged against programs like Discovery Club, Construction Art, American Girl Book Club, Food Architecture, LEGO Construction, Wacky Workout and World in Jar. The evaluations and observations of these programs resulted in the comparison and determined if the programs presented should continue.

Rationale of the Study

The Midwest Public Library had many programs that evolved and changed, and some that were consistently providing the best events for the public library community. Staff included the preparation and attempted programming vicissitudes while they worked to incorporate the most popular and necessary programs for patrons. The programs implemented within a library setting were identified as educational, beneficial and social. The American Library Association (ALA) described the educational benefits of the programs adapted by the library and stated, “Children also benefit from the rich literacy experiences afforded by the many special events and organized programs the library offers” (ALA, 2018, para. 3). Stabilized programs in the library curricular encompassed of a previous researcher noted “that the presence of a friendly dog, not necessarily your own pet, or even a dog you’ve met before, can lower blood pressure and reduce stress when reading” (Melson, 2013, para. 3). Essentially, the incorporated platform Paws for Reading as a pilot program into this specific branch of the public library setting allowed for the researcher (a youth services specialist) to create an evaluation instrument for the program and a future instrument of evaluation in a public library setting. Paws for Reading, a conception of the Support Dogs, Inc. (SDI)

establishment brought children and dogs together in the community. SDI believed “dogs are viewed as a non-threatening entity to promote reading, writing, and increased interaction and social skills in the child” (Support Dog Inc. [SDI], 2016, para. 1). Time and preparation were required at length for any program creation and demonstrations. The researcher noted even some of the most thoughtful presentations were not received well, at this specific library. Some programs, like story time, lap time and a few others, are programs expected by the patrons and guests in the library community, while some programs inspired by what is popular at the time like American Girl Book Club. The devised program platform was encouraged to grow and extend to multiple aged patrons. The need progressed for a new and improved evaluation system that deciphered the good programming and time spent productively, versus programming that should be discarded. The decision to implement a program like Paws for Reading stemmed from articles and research from other resources that described many positive attributes influenced by the animals on people involved during the programs. Melson’s (2013) article mentioned, “Children say they enjoy the sessions, parents are enthusiastic, and teachers who incorporate reading to dogs in the classroom say they are helpful” (para. 4); since there were positive responses in the classrooms, the researcher decided to incorporate Paws for Reading into programming in this branch of the public library. Popular or heavily attended programs noted in the audience statistics decided the fate of numerous programs future, or reoccurrence. Opinions gathered from the community and staff with help the program development and continued influence on the formation of popular, appropriate and significant plans.

SDI and similar organizations developed programs with therapy animals. “Across the nation, dogs are lending their ears, and thousands of children who need extra help with reading and interpersonal communication couldn’t be happier” (Stone, 2016, para. 1). The benefits have been identified and the results shared, while Sloat (2017) explained that the researchers in this particular study wanted the children to read to dogs which improved attitudes towards reading implied by a condensed study that only lasted a few weeks. Observations and studies like these persuaded others to participate in the programs similar to Paws for Reading. Others have proclaimed the importance of therapy dogs or animals in a variety of settings (Kirnan, Siminerio, & Wong, 2016), and this practice encouraged participation by others who were interested. McPherson, the leader of Good Dog Foundation, helped to change the New York State law, and by doing so, allowed animals into schools and institutions (Stone, 2016). Therefore, the changed law influenced more research on therapy animals, and those involved persevered and develop the programs. Focused on literacy and improvement as the main use of the therapy dog for schools, McPherson said, “Reading levels have tripled. Every child walks down the school hall and knows the freedom of reading with these ‘cool’ dogs” (as cited in Stone, 2016, para. 11). A small amount of confidence accrued when working with support dogs, and more benefits accrued over time. Perez (2018) reported that survivors from a school massacre in Florida received therapeutic help and attention from dogs as they returned to classes. The dogs became a go-to in stressful situations, and the therapy animals in those situations benefited the users. Pherson also pointed out, “Therapy animals consistently demonstrated that when we respect and care for other species, they have great gifts of connection, joy and healing to share with us, and we with them” (as

cited in Stone, 2016, para. 14). The understanding established a sense of hope and an optimistic look at future platforms that involved the therapy dog. Aiken (2012) described how Yale University's Law School Library developed a program with a therapy dog that related to Stone and McPherson methods. The school's library, with the health of the students in mind, provided a therapy dog named Monty for students to check out for a session during the term (Aiken, 2012). This program provided a moment of peace in what was stressful conditions for the students. House, Neal, & Backles (2018) described the effect of being with the dog as positive and a more contented and restored individual emerged. Furthermore, this influenced others to continue work with therapy animals and encouraged more to consider them as a possibility for aides. Studies have proven dogs are "a highly social species" (University of Lincoln, 2016, para. 11). Comprehension that dogs, verified as social creatures, benefited the therapists in their work with the community. Dogs wanted to be around the people and that natural need created a sense of safety and stability for anyone that worked with the animal.

The information provided by the studies and increased the understanding of the uses of therapy dogs in programs that included reading improvement. Tufts University (2017) described the improvement of second graders reading when they participated in the program. The children were encouraged by involvement in the program. This was beneficial especially when working with children who are full of anxiety or socially awkward. Therapy Dogs International (TDI) reported, "The child relaxes, pats the attentive dog, and focuses on the reading" (Therapy Dogs International [TDI], 2016, para. 2). The researcher believed children would have a positive perception of Paws for Reading after attending the program due to the current literature collected. The current

literature focused on the results from participants involved in the programs “research found an increase in fluency rates, but also an increase in children’s overall reading abilities” (Beck, 2015, p. 7). The previous research was collected and demonstrated the growth in literacy skills, but not the program itself or the evaluation of the program from the staff or caregivers point of view. In addition, there was not data collected from the implementation of Paws for Reading program in a public library compared to other programming in the system. Data gathered reflected on the participation comparisons of the pilot program and other programs created for the specific age range. Specifically, the researcher used a sample of the library’s population and evaluated the program, focused on children’s participation ages 5 through 11 (attendance and observation only), used attendance data of Paws for Reading compared to other library programs offered during the same period, parent and caregiver surveys, library staff and manager program evaluations, personal reflections, and secondary data. Paws for Reading was not implemented previously in the researcher’s current branch of the public library; therefore, the researcher used feedback from parents, librarians, and staff, which evaluated the program. The study supported and extended the body of literature on the program Paws for Reading, and created an evaluation tool that was used in other library programs that summer.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1: How do the library managers and staff perceive current programming at their library?

Research Question 2: After a program has been created, produced, and performed, how do the library managers and staff perceive the program’s success or failure?

Research Question 3: How do library managers and staff perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library's mission?

Research Question 4: After participating in the Pilot Program Paws for Reading, how do the managers and staff perceive the preparation and implementation of programs at the library?

Research Question 5: How do parents/caregivers perceive the program Paws for Reading overall?

Research Question 6: How do parents/caregivers perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library's mission?

Research Question 7: How do parents or caregivers perceive the success of Paws for Reading versus other library programs?

Alternate H1: There be a difference in participation rates for Paws for Reading when compared to other library programs: American Girl Book Club Construction Art, Discovery Club, Food Architecture, LEGO Construction, World in a Jar, presented in summer 2017, specifically for ages 5-11 (K-fifth grade).

Definition of Terms

Animal-assisted activities (AAA): "Opportunities for motivation, education, or recreation to enhance quality of life. Animal assisted activities are delivered in a variety of environments by specially trained professionals, paraprofessionals, or volunteers in association with animals that meet specific criteria" (American Veterinary Medical Association [AVMA], 2016, para. 7).

Animal-assisted education (AAE): “A planned and structured intervention directed and/or delivered by educational and related service professional with specific academic or educational goals” (AVMA, 2016, para. 6).

Animal-assisted therapy (AAT): “A goal directed intervention in which an animal meeting specific criteria is an integral part of the treatment process” (AVMA, 2016, para. 5).

Caregiver: For the purpose of this study, “anyone providing a wide range of unpaid care to dependent children, spouses, parents, siblings, relatives, friends or neighbors” (Hope Grows, 2018, para. 4).

Paws for Reading: “A program that allows children to read aloud to a therapy dog (or cat, or bunny!) in order to improve reading and communication skills” (Paws for People, 2016, para. 1).

Pilot program: “A feasibility study or experimental trial is a small-scale, short-term experiment that helps an organization learn how a large-scale project might work in practice” (Rouse, 2016, para. 1).

Program evaluation: “A practical, non-prescriptive tool, the evaluation framework summarizes and organizes the **steps** and **standards** for effective program evaluation” (Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2016, para. 2).

Summer Reading Club: “A library summer reading programs utilize a variety of techniques to encourage reading, such as reading games or challenges, discussions of books, book related crafts, author visits, storytelling, rewards and incentives for reading, and more” (Goss, Gilroy Inc., 2006, pg. 2).

Youth Services Specialist/Programmer: “Assists with all aspects of developing, implementing, and evaluating library services for children and families including customer service, collection development, and provision of programs” (Ames Public Library Youth Services Librarian, n.d. para. 1).

Summary

The Midwest Public Library has incorporated programs for the patrons into their daily schedules. Programs are developed to enhance the patrons experience with the public library. Only the programs that are approved, attended and appreciated by the community are renewed by managers and finally allowed to continue. Some programs developed do not produce desired results and no longer occur in the library setting. The evaluation tool created by the researcher to decipher the programs and their validation and enhanced dedication to proper program development. Fortified with a plethora of responses the evaluation tool refreshed questions about programs, their creation, execution, and opinions on their development and foundations. Programming was an integral portion of the required services provided by the Midwest Public library. During the summer of 2017, various programs were evaluated and decided upon for future implementation for ages 5-12.

A program that seemed worthy to add to the public library was Paws for Reading. Adding the pilot program Paws for Reading into the library setting at the Midwest county library was encouraged because it gave patrons an opportunity to interact with the trained therapy dog in a safe environment. Throughout the process, while the patrons read to the animals it encouraged growth in multiple areas. Staff, parents, and caregivers then evaluated the pilot program and managers decided if the program was worthy to replicate

once the library opened in 2019. A review of literature discussing library programming, purpose of youth programs, history of the library, Paws for Reading, therapy animals, and other key pieces of research to set the framework for the researcher's study are discussed in Chapter Two.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Introduction

The Midwest Public Library was a place for patrons to receive services throughout the year. The services provided according to the library's mission was to provide means that enabled the patrons and helped develop a wider perspective (Midwest Public Library, 2018). Libraries provided the programs and services for the benefit of the patron. "If a community needs equitable access to print materials, then the book collection is still accurate, however, this definition also gives credence to lending DVDs, ebooks, CDs, and many materials that alter the traditional paradigm of a library collection"(Gunby, 2013, para 1). Most library programs created for the patrons covered a wide variety of topics and ideas. The evaluation of the programs by managers, staff, and patrons was not an available option, because it was either not created or thought of by the Midwest Public Library administration. Some programs may not have encouraged the library's mission or lingered longer than was needed. Other programs had the perception of success but were not repeated due to various reasons such as a change in theme across the libraries. For example, a changing 'fad' like Angry Birds, or Pokémon Go could cause a library to change themes or the library moved forward with programs without reflection. Evaluation of the children's programs ages 5-11 (K-5) and the pilot program Paws for Reading enabled the patrons and staff to personalize programs. "Most library mission statements or philosophical stands maintain that the library aims to be an important piece of the educational growth for young patrons and a place for continuing education for adult patrons" (Amann & Carnesi, 2012, p. 9). The incorporation and dedication of programs accomplished a large part of the Midwest Public Library's

mission to offer means and conveniences that developed and improved the lives of the patron (Midwest Public Library, 2018).

Library Programs

The researcher, a youth services specialist at the Midwest Public Library, created, developed and, presented multiple library programs for the library system. “Of all the elements contributing to the positive library experience, programming is high on the list of the most important” (Kieserman, 2014, para. 15). Programs valued by the customers are a positive way to keep patronage consistent. “Public libraries play an important role in the provision of free, interactive, community-based learning opportunities that build the capacity of parents/caregivers to support the development of their children's early literacy skills” (Graham & Gagnon, 2013, p. 103). Many programs were carefully created and implemented for the benefit of the customers and the needs of the patrons that required the service. The St. Louis County Library system developed services and programs that opened the library to more than just checked out books, “we offer free programs and services including computer classes, small business assistance, job help, story times, STEM programming, summer and winter reading clubs” (St. Louis County Library, 2017). The programs’ preparation required time, and effort. “Any youth services librarian can attest that story time programs, a favorite of young children and their caregivers, can require hours of planning for less than an hour of program” (Fulwood & Antell, 2014, p. 59).

Some of the library’s first programs for patrons were children’s story time, “From the reading readiness concept that began in the 1920s to the emergent literacy theories of the 1980s, early literacy has been a constant concept in public library

services” (Albright, Delecki, & Hinkle, 2009, p. 14). Offered programs like story times were expected by the patrons, and the programs delivered, “should be an effective presentation of early literacy skills and activities, it should be entertaining and heart-warming, and it should promote interaction between adult and child” (McNeil, 2014, p. 13). Programming, concentrated on the requests of the patron, “We continue to learn what our patrons need based on questions and issues that arise in each class, and we are constantly adapting the format and content of the classes to make sure we are addressing our patrons' needs” (O’Connell & Haven, 2013, para. 13). Programs ranged in multiple categories, and reached all ages of library patrons. “Youth services curricula typically include elements similar to adult services: collection development, reference services, programming, outreach/collaboration, advocacy, management, and technology” (Welch, 2013, p. 221). The public library is more than just a place to read and Parrish and Schmidt (2017) believed the library was more than perceived and identified multiple programs and concepts could be combined that gave the community a fresh new way to look at the library. “Ultimately, the relationships we want young children and their families to develop with reading and the library requires intentional cultivation by the library and all members of the community” (Parrish & Schmidt, 2017, p. 32).

The library offered many different programs for multiple age levels, and created ways of implementing the programs for the community to enjoy. Forsyth (2012), a consultant in public library services, envisioned gaming would be would be beneficial for others to gain and access information. Some libraries generated spaces for the community to enjoy; Acerro (2014) developed a special area for the patrons to create art

openly, while the community and staff enjoyed the work on display, while other libraries offered programs geared to another type of audience. These patrons are more tech-savvy and benefited from programs developed to the patrons' likes. Fraser and Vernola (2014) encouraged libraries to create maker programs, and implied the process of making is the most important part including; programs built for the mind to explore, "makey, makey inventions, LEGO construction, or robot design" (pp. 33-34). Programs were developed to help the student excel or promote learning by emphasizing academic infused topics. Kliman, Jaumot-Pascual, and Martin (2013) deduced the continued need for math curriculum to be incorporated in the public library programs. The researchers believed the created activities established a firm foundation and emersion of a topic many were once reluctant to integrate. The public library developed the programs according to a community need, a valid reason why summer reading and programming were developed. Sanchez (2014) described the library as an institution that goes out into the community and delivered more than just a story time; it was a place that children would have continued growth outside of the school setting.

Popular options offered by the library and in demand programs are incorporated into the summer schedule for most library systems because the community had availability to attend more events. For example, coding in schools became increasingly popular and according to Martin (2017) libraries became prominent in using and promoting technology programs. Informational programs on technology, robotics, and computer-based programming became increasingly popular, not just with the young patrons. Free programs that increase knowledge or interest are developed in library settings are fundamental in patron advancement and took place in the summer reading

club programming, that has adapted technologically, allowing the library to focus on the effects after the programs finished (Couri, 2015). The perspective of the library changed, and this adjustment helped to deliver the best possible programs for the community.

Purpose of Youth Programs

Patrons of all ages visited the library because of the many opportunities and programs provided by the library for entertainment or learning purposes. Some programs created are for adults, children, and even babies. Literacy engagement was a popular topic for the enhancement of the patrons learning and because of this, the libraries focused on development at a young age. The ALA stated that story times started with advancement of the children's section in the library in the early 20th century. The ALA also said, "Anne Carroll Moore at the Pratt Institute Free Library had introduced a story hour at the Pratt Institute as early as 1896, and the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh started a weekly story hour in 1900 under Francis Jenkins Olcott" (American Library Association [ALA], 2014, para. 1).

McKenzie and Stooke (2012) studied and observed library programs for young children; spoke to parents and caregivers, learned the significance of "raising a reader" and discovered that the programs they attended positively affected every aspect of their children's social, emotional, and educational growth. The connection of the children with the library increased as communities discovered the more time spent in active programs with the library. Mills, Bayo Urban, Campana, and Nelson (2014) suggested that focused concepts and literacy ideas transformed story times, also the addition of activities created beneficial results seen in the children who attended. This proved what

librarians have been saying about the benefits of story time and other early literacy programs provided by the libraries for years. Evaluation of children's programs by staff opened up the concept and stated, "With this broad context in mind, libraries will be in a better position to understand—and to advocate for—a place in the diverse array of programs for young children" (McKenzie & Stooke, 2012, p. 52). Children's programs helped in the development process and created a foundation for literacy skills in participants. In addition, the significance of literacy skills taught to caregivers enforced the libraries efforts at home (Von Dresek, 2018). Early literacy skills provided by the library through programs and resources encouraged participation, and patrons valued the efforts of the library.

Another important aspect of children's programming was the incorporation of the summer reading program into the curricular of programs for children. Summer reading programs implemented more than 100 years ago, inspired children to develop a personal relationship with reading, and provided motivation for participation in the programs (Small, Arnone, & Bennett, 2017). Summer was considered a time when children were more available for involvement in programs and libraries became the place to provide such programming. Potter and Johnson (2017) explained that an educational slide occurred during summer break and library programs provided during this time was a non-pressured time that children could learn with and still have fun. Summer reading included incentives and programs that encouraged learning and fun at the same time. Libraries afforded children the opportunity to learn more than just reading and this included arts, crafts, "STEM" and many more opportunities during the summer (Von Dresek, 2018). Over time, opportunities grew for schools and libraries to

work together and promote educational growth, not just in summer, but also all year round. Youth programs provided by the libraries encouraged educational growth and benefited the participants.

Theoretical Framework

The library was a community center that believed in the betterment of the patrons and individuals, which mirrored the Midwest public libraries mission. Theorists determined children's advancement happened in a myriad of ways, and included social, emotional and self-development. Vygotsky, a Russian researcher known for theories surrounding social development thought community was key (McLeod, 2018). The library was a center of community growth and progression that promoted interaction and progression. Culatta (2018) described Vygotsky's theory, "Full cognitive development requires social interaction" (para. 8), as a principle in development. McLeod (2018) said, "Vygotsky states cognitive development stems from social interactions from guided learning within the zone of proximal development as children and their partner's co-construct knowledge" (para. 10). The library was a place that encouraged progression and enabled the patrons, especially children to improve in a variety of ways. "Children and imitate a variety of actions that go well beyond the limits of their own capabilities" (Vygotsky, 1980, pg. 88). Providing a safe place that delivered programming and improvement in the life of children was instrumental in the development of the public library system.

Servant Leadership was another theory that was used to describe the library's mission in helping the community. Creating and forming relationships built a better community, and in following the servant leadership theory, the library took the time to

empathize and forge communal goals. In some cases, in order for positive change to occur trust, understanding, and formation of relationships was the only way transformation was accomplished. Studies were created comparing the effects of servant leadership on institutional principles and discussed positive outcomes, “Servant leadership can thus be seen to exert a high level of impact on school culture and student achievement” (Saglam & Alpaydin, 2018, p 110). Servant leadership was taking a more personal approach to guidance to those around in a better and more influential direction. Chughtai (2016) implied that while demonstrating this strategy, the need for others to seek more information and gain more insight on the whatever the focus is on, is highly desirable because “servant leadership has received some critical review on the grounds that it overlaps with other leadership styles such as, transformational leadership, authentic leadership and ethical leadership” (p 868). Servant leadership was a theory that portrayed sacrifices in order to get the best outcome. Burkus (2010) reminded others that servant leadership could become unsuccessful if the focus faltered and some groups including the main organization suffered. Others thought the opposite, and described this theory as being beneficial for the betterment of self and community. Many organizations followed the servant leadership practices, and the Midwest Public Library’s mission seemed to emulate the theory’s ideals.

History of the Library

The earliest libraries kept records secure and organized in ancient civilizations. “A temple in the Babylonian town of Nippur, dating from the first half of the 3rd millennium BC, was found to have a number of rooms filled with clay tablets, suggesting a well-stocked archive or library” (Haider & Francis, 2017, para. 1). Most

of the ancient libraries were destroyed because of wars, and time Haider and Francis (2017) explained, with collections from Alexandria, Greece, and Asia became the most noteworthy.

The first notable library in America was not a public library, but a group of donated materials from a collection (History Magazine, 2001). A clergyman, “Thomas Bray from England, established the first free lending libraries in the American Colonies in the late 1600s” (History Magazine, 2001, para. 26). The Library Company, the first subscription library created by Benjamin Franklin in the mid 1700’s had a constitution and lending laws fashioned for the “Library Company’s membership library” (The Electric Ben Franklin, 2017). The wealthy had small private libraries in residences, but the public library was available for members and non-members to check out material. “Members could borrow books freely; non-members could also borrow books — if they put up a surety, something of value that could be sold if the book was not returned” (The Electric Ben Franklin, 2017, para.11). Books became more available to the wealthy, and were purchased and donated to the libraries, thus the system shifted. “It wasn’t until waves of immigration and the philosophy of free public education for children that public libraries spread in the US. The first public library in the country opened in Peterborough, New Hampshire, in 1833” (Sturgis Library, 2017, para. 5). The library in New Hampshire was more of the free library institution that people have become accustomed to, free because of incoming taxes (Sturgis Library, 2017). “School district libraries set important precedents, establishing the legitimacy of taxation in support of free public library service and linking libraries and public education” (Keavan & Sundstrom,

2014, p. 127). Growth for the libraries of America became inevitable. Kieserman (2014) believed many factors made the library satisfactory, and the production of a positive experience was the undertaking of everyone involved with the library community. The library became a valuable service to the community and growth was inevitable. The library system was dependent on the type of library created by the state and the voters. “Public libraries in Missouri are organized under chapters 182, 137, and 70 of the Missouri Revised Statutes” (Owens & Kindel, 1996, p. 26).. Owens and Kindel (1996) examined the importance of the organization, like the county library districts, funded by taxes and grants and governed by a board by a board (p. 26) and said “These districts are formed by petition of voters to the county governing body, and approval at referendum” (Owens & Kindel, 1996, p. 26). Libraries noted the growth and difficulties with funding. Goodman (2014) remarked that during the 2000’s, the downturn in the economy libraries reconfigured their missions, and everyone, patrons and staff, included adjusted according to their needs. Changes encouraged more innovation and influenced the patrons to explore the growth in the libraries.

Over the years, an increased population authenticated the need for competent and efficient library staff. The public library as an organization demonstrated its ability to adjust procedures with the ongoing development of the library structure. Positions created benefited the community and included growth in staff and expansion in community development. The library infrastructure was similar to the arrangement of administrators and staff of a public school system. Parents of Healthy Kids (2018) mapped out the public-school authority ladder, and exhibited the ranked officials from

the “school board, superintendent, district administrators, district advisory teams/school improvement teams, principle school leaders, parent committee, teachers, and support staff and parents” (para 2). Hierarchy Structure's (2017) website defined the library systems both large and small, and placed people in multiple levels, fewer managers and staff for smaller libraries and more for the larger municipalities. The universality of the organization's format allowed for accessibility and uncomplicated transitions within the library system.

Library and Technology

Technology is ever evolving and the library has made technology an available resource, adapted communication, and offered programing to keep up with the changing landscape. “From the early 90s the internet has become a well-established resource for public library users” (Steed et al., 2011, para. 3). Research proved “approximately one-third of Americans ages fourteen and older are using that technology to improve their lives” (Nishi, 2011, p. 37). Growth in social media platforms are incorporated into the libraries’ activities and “librarians are using [Social media sites]to communicate with their users whether for promoting library services, posting pictures of special events, or using tools like LibGuides and YouTube to provide online instructional aides” (Pesch, 2013, p. 160). Positive technological growth occurred in social, economic and academic practices acknowledged, “Libraries hope to continue to be the great facilitators of information, they are playing an increasingly active role in advocating digital literacy and technology-related skills” (Baumgartner, 2013, para. 5). Practices of free technology and the integration of technology resources was observed by the researcher, and concluded that the library free technology and training were essential to

the community's needs and sustainability. "They are centers for lifelong learning and provide access to the tools needed to adapt to a changing world" (Reid, 2012, para. 8). Technology transformed a major part of the library system of today, affirmed by Bertot, Jaeger, Wahl, and Sigler (2011). The researchers believed the early adoption of the Internet in the public library was an integral part of the growth and helped successfully adapt the primary procedures and technology. Bertot et al. (2011) stated, "One can no longer separate the public library from public Internet access" (para.31). Technology has become essential; Nishi (2011) Deputy Director of U.S. Libraries and Special Initiatives at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation put forward that "People of all ages, incomes, races, and levels of education go to the library for Internet access, whether they have a connection at home or not" (Nishi, 2011, p. 37). However, it is much more than the Internet; Gerding (2011) said "We now support the vital need for digital literacy, often being the only place with free public computer and Internet access and, moreover, free technology training" (p. 43). Library services developed and grew expansively over time for the community and their needs especially technologically. "The 21st century library is no longer just about books or solely a place for kids" (Beyond Access, 2012, p. 3). The addition of technology resources for the community became imperative per Beyond Access (2012). "Public libraries reach those who otherwise lack access to technology and need guidance in maximizing its benefits" (Beyond Access, 2012, p. 16). Pesch (2013) expressed that libraries adapted to the needs of the community, and changed what was considered old, and unused, "But they are being replaced by buildings with offerings such as open study areas, collaborative spaces, and private study rooms wired with the latest technology" (Pesch, 2013,

p. 156). Community needs were fulfilled, Technology is also becoming increasingly important for reaching the community the library serves” (Pesch, 2013, p. 159). Bertot et al. (2011) believed that the addition of technology has expanded the public libraries reach in the present and continued future, “ particularly as the public access that libraries provide their communities takes on increasing importance in supporting a range of services such as e-government, jobs and employment, health information, and education”(para. 21). Shrestha and Krolak (2015) advocated for continued learning: “In general, libraries have been shifting from being repositories of books and information to being proactive service providers” (p. 403).

Some library communities provided opportunities for video game use and expanded their collection. Video game nights delivered and expanded another occasion for patrons to increase knowledge of the library and its changed setting and expansive collection (Bishoff, Farrell, & Neeser, 2015). Libraries increased their presence in the community with the usage of social media. Young and Rossman (2015) deemed the use of social media a relevant tool to increase the public library’s subsistence within the populace, and the convenience of social media enabled any library system to extend their reach within the public domain. The acceptance of social media and the popularity of the instant information were suitable for the library, and elevated the interest and attentiveness of the user. “Today’s information environment face rapid change in technologies which compel the libraries to provide various electronic information resources and developing user friendly services” (Jessy, & Rao, 2016, p. 15). Technology and the need for the instant information expanded the libraries’ material base and necessities for the patrons that use the library’s services.

Many libraries contributed to the needs of the customer and offered multiple tools and gadgets that contributed to technological growth. The opportunity to check out Chromebooks at the library gives the patron a chance to learn, work and have fun while the customer used a wireless computer instead of a desktop in many places like the Denver Public Library (Stacey, 2017). More technology components became available for customer use. Rosales (2016) described the multiple libraries that collaborated with phone companies and allowed customers without access to the Internet to check out wireless hot spots for a period. Vercelletto (2017) described the program as an advancement in the betterment of the community. Over time, libraries changed with the technological needs and serviced the community.

Technology transformed the library in multiple ways and that included how the patrons heard about programs either from website or through social media. Libraries converted most of its materials for customer relevance, and became a hub of technological learning and information.

Collaboration

Over time, the library has changed and incorporated the needs of today's community. Hill (2013) explained that the developed strategies created by forming partnerships and growing the community are relevant. "By partnering with local organizations, the library demonstrates that it offers more than books and standard public services" (Hill, 2013, p. 14). Partnerships built a convenience and awareness of the library and surrounding neighborhood. Programs were essential for the growth of the library and its patronage, but some of the programs needed the help and collaboration of outside presenters to push forward ideas to create memorable and

pleasing programs for the community. “Public librarians are looking for active partners to brainstorm events, find resources, and share knowledge” (Couri, 2015, p. 74). Cooperation between the community resources and the library created a positive connection, not separated or removed from the neighborhood, but joined in similar intentions. The St. Louis County Library (2014) started programs to conquer the lack of food children consumed during the off-school months, and it helped the children become acquainted with the library and all it offered. St. Louis County Library (2014) explained, “Every summer hundreds of kids come through our doors—this new partnership with Operation Food Search will allow us to reach those who are hungry, while also introducing them to library resources (para. 2). Collaboration was purposeful and affected the lives of many younger patrons. The St. Louis Astronomical Society (SLAS) became an integral partner in the partnership of educational resources for patrons in the library system. SLAS, according to La Capra (2014), designed and created telescopes for the patrons to check out and use. The telescope included easy to use guides, and maps, and SLAS established programming called “star parties,” which included hands-on training and discussion. The collaboration between SLAS and the public libraries encouraged the patrons to explore astronomy and science related topics. Collaboration was encouraged by the libraries and promoted the information by the organizations. Libraries worked together with agencies and informed patrons of the multiple benefits received by the community. Midwest Public Library participated in numerous alliances; “Midwest public library partners with a number of community organizations to provide innovative programming and services” (Midwest Public Library, 2018 para. 1). The

aforementioned programs of Midwest Public Library (2018) are included with some of the following partnerships: “Alzheimer's Association,” “Born to Read,” “ConnectED Library Challenge,” “Gateway Greening,” “Mid-East Area Agency on Aging,” “MU Extension Small Business & Technology Center,” “Recycled Reads,” “Science in St. Louis” and “We Stories.” The collaborations extended the reach of the library and met the needs of the community. The programs included a spectrum of ages, and meant populous amounts of individuals received the benefits from the arrangements. “Community partnerships, though sometimes difficult to forge, reap untold rewards for both the public library and the organization or business that it’s partnering with” (Hill, 2013, p. 13). Favorable sentiment was incontestable. Hill (2013) concluded conversations with the community recognized the collaboration and affected the growth surrounding the library. Zellers (2013) encouraged libraries to reach out and form community partnerships, step out of comfort zones, and emphasized the need for the relationships to be fostered openly and willingly. Libraries have worked with the others and formed relationships since the conception of the library system (MacNeill, 2013). The cooperation formulated between the agencies benefited the public and institutions.

The benefits of collaboration outside of the library also directed popular marketing strategies within the library itself. The strategies created helped to amplify the materials and services provided to the community in an enlightened manner. Thomas (2014) believed that marketing to the patron and making products available and visually aesthetic influenced patrons positively with their perceptions of the library and encouraged more patron involvement. The material and programs

spotlighted invited a new form of customer service for the patrons to experience. Marketing the library was initiated with materials and programming but also with social media's current prevalence. Young and Rossmann (2015) indicated that a formed relationship with the user and social media combined elevated the assets, and when applied correctly, incorporated the library's information to the online communities. The growth in social media usage became another positive marketing tool and intentional collaboration executed by the library to promote materials, programming, and increased relevance within the public. Collaboration between groups promoted more openness in programming at the library, and it influenced organizations to work together for the benefit of the community.

Paws for Reading Program

Patrons and staff welcomed the incorporation of influential and collaborative programs into the library. Programs like Paws for Reading was one of the programs that influenced so many positive relationships. Paws for Reading introduced patrons and staff to a program that allowed children to practice reading to a dog. Programs that foster growth in individuals through engagement in a safe space was important. In a program for example, like Paws for Reading safety was crucial and expected by the handler, library and the participants. "Reading to dogs can boost reading skills in children as well as help with emotional and social skills" (Support Dogs Inc., 2016, para. 1). Beneficial programs were created for the educational setting with increased recognition of the uses of therapy animals. While popular ideas were applied, reading to a dog in the library allowed for parents and children to feel involved while moving forward with literacy goals. "Children who read to dogs also reported a greater enjoyment of reading than

children who did not read to dogs” (Kelly, 2016, para. 1). The program, Paws for Reading, was identified under different names, but the concept has not changed. “The first high profile program to advocate children reading to dogs was established in 1999 by Intermountain Therapy Animals, who announced Reading Education Assistance Dogs (READ)” (Hall, Gee, & Mills, 2016, para. 5). Paws for Reading reinforced the goal-oriented mission created by the library and helped maintain a refreshed outlook on children’s performance scholastically. SDI, a foundation that organized animal interaction relayed “children experience higher reading levels, higher levels of word recognition and well as word comprehension” (Support Dogs Inc., 2016, para. 1). Programs intended for the assistance of children’s literacy helped with more than just reading ability. SDI reported, “Dogs are viewed as a non-threatening entity to promote reading, writing, and increased interaction and social skills in the child” (Support Dogs Inc., 2016, para. 1). Appreciative of the benefits youth programmers in the public library setting implemented similar programs with interest. Growing interest in reading to dog’s programs such as READ is observed in frequent media reports and is reflected in the subsequent development of a number of initiatives around the world” (Hall et al., 2016, para. 5).

Science recognized the human animal bond and validate the importance of animals to human health; it might only be a matter of time until pet therapy becomes part of an established patient treatment plan with concrete health objectives” (Newhouse, 2016, para. 15). The literature review discussed the significance of collaborative and children’s programs brought into the public library setting, specifically Paws for Reading.

Paws for Reading, the program created by Support Dogs, Inc. (SDI) was recognized as a popular literacy program for kids of varying ages in the St. Louis region. Users of the organization reported SDI, “The dogs are great listeners and give the child a sense of comfort while reading” (SDI, 2016, para. 2). According to the program guidelines, many prerequisites and tests were required to be a support dog. SDI followed by a strict guiding principle, agreed the behavior of the animals must be docile and friendly in order to complete the training process (SDI, 2016). The organization Support Dogs, Inc. was started by Maze in the year 1981, after she had trained her own German shepherd, Stormy; to help as her own illness took a toll (SDI, 2016, para. 2). After many years of successful collaboration with the community SDI reported “providing assistance dogs to individuals with disabilities, therapy dog services to at-risk and ill populations, reading assistance to area students, and educational programming to schools and businesses” (SDI, 2016, para. 3). SDI was initially formed to help the disadvantaged and give them autonomy, and then created an additional audience with focus on children’s literacy.

Therapy Dogs International

One of the originators in the support dog organization was a group called Therapy Dogs International (TDI). TDI was created in 1976 in the state of New Jersey, “Therapy Dogs International (TDI) is a volunteer organization dedicated to regulating, testing and registration of therapy dogs and their volunteer handlers for the purpose of visiting nursing homes, hospitals, other institutions and wherever else therapy dogs are needed” (TDI, 2018, para. 1). This particular professional organization has locations across the United States and Canada (TDI, 2018). The volunteered animals must go through a

testing process created by the TDI team. The requirements gauged everything from age to temperament, updated shots, as well as “all dogs must be tested and evaluated by a Certified TDI Evaluator” (TDI, 2018, para. 6). TDI had tremendous success collaborating with agencies and institutions that wanted to implement the program named “Tail Waggin Tutors” (TDI, 2018). The Tail Waggin Tutors created a safe atmosphere allowing children the ability to correlate positive emotions while with the therapy animal, and see learning as hopeful and not frightened. Participation of the reading program encouraged a variety of learners, and included some that had problems with reading. “The program was initially developed for struggling readers, even those who can already read well don’t want to pass up the chance to read to a Therapy Dog” (TDI, 2018, para. 3). Therapy Dog Incorporated, fashioned from a small local group, became the leader and source about the incorporation and introduction of therapy dogs to anyone who required services (TDI, 2018).

R.E.A.D. with Intermountain Therapy Animals

A group that remained strong since its conception in Salt Lake City, Utah, was Intermountain Therapy Animals (ITA).

In 1999, an impressive group was formed which supported the need for children’s literacy intervention, named Intermountain Therapy Animals, who then announced the creation of Reading Education Assistance Dogs (READ). (Hall et al., 2016, p. 22)

Intermountain Therapy Animals’ primary focus and mission was to “enhance the quality of life through the human-animal bond” (ITA, 2016, para. 1). Encouraging the love of books and reading to a skilled therapy dog was just a few ways ITA represented

itself as being successful (ITA, 2016). The creation of the Reading Education Assistance Dogs (R.E.A.D.) developed a successful brand for this type of community service.

“R.E.A.D. began in 1999 when Sandi Martin, a registered nurse and ITA board member, contemplated the effect animals have on humans and the need to promote emotionally safe environments for children to develop their reading skills” (Shaw, 2013, para. 7).

Enthusiasts of the program R.E.A.D claimed, “Reading to dogs helps motivate children to read by increasing relaxation and confidence, reducing blood pressure and offering a non-judgmental, safe environment in which to practice reading” (Hall et al., 2016, para. 6).

R.E.A.D claimed reading to a dog lessened the anxiety and fear of reading aloud and focused on the positive experience the animal provided. Being able to support “it is essential that there are evidence-based interventions that increase children’s motivation, enjoyment and frequency of reading” (Hall et al., 2016, para. 4). Volunteerism promoted this program and promoted its survival. According to the volunteer policy, the animals needed to qualify in order to become part of the team, then they were placed accordingly (ITA, 2016).

The three groups: Support Dogs, Inc., who started Paws for Reading, Therapy Dog International who created Tail Waggin Tutors, and Intermountain Therapy Animals who created R.E.A.D. were chosen for their impressive contribution to the curriculum of reading to therapy animals. The construction of the program shifted to the needs of today’s expectations. Many looked for positive change in the literacy community, and this included the International Literacy Association (ILA) and the International Reading Association (IRA) foundation “recognize the importance of working together to drive sustainable change” (International Literacy Association (ILA), 2016, para. 10). There

has been much praise for working with therapy dogs, but some people speculated on the benefits associated with spending time with the animals. Summers (2014), a researcher, reacted “initially expressed skepticism that dogs trained to assist children with reading could help them become better readers” (para. 1). Researchers and program providers recognized the use of animal assistance and introduced the benefits to a needy population. Walsh (2014) acknowledged the use of therapy dogs in a range of locations and situations that included, “Prisons, juvenile homes, hospices, retirement homes, treatment centers, homeless shelters, schools, and hospitals” (p. 2). The uses for the animals and their handlers have grown and once welcomed have become a welcomed part of the routine. Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) encouraged those needing a boost and as assured part of their learning process. Researchers have found along with therapy assistance, reading to AAT animals encouraged the participant to open up and be less anxious, and the learning process to be more constructive. The handler was trained to work with the participants and find ways to speak for the dog in a constructive and non-threatening way (Shaw, 2014).

Another program that encouraged literacy and reading to dogs was called the Shelter Buddies program. Shelters in the Midwest have started programs that promoted reading in children, helping animals, and volunteerism at the same time. “The Shelter Buddies Reading Program is a mutually beneficial experience designed to help shy, anxious dogs feel more comfortable around people by having kids read to them”(Humane Society, 2016, pg. 1). Children have the opportunity to become certified after participation in a program that trains them how specifically work with the dogs. Messenger (2016) declared the program successful because it benefited all types of dogs,

shy or hyperactive and it developed a sense of empathy in the participants. The program provided sympathy, understanding and a compassionate environment where the children improved their reading abilities and the animals become more secure around humans (Humane Society, 2016). The desired outcome from this program was children's practice and participation with reading, and the adoption of the dogs.

Human- Animal Bond

Animals have always played a distinct role in the life of a human being. The role fulfilled a need for many that overshadowed the need for food, served as a valuable companion in civilization, and portrayed a respected role including religious, spiritual, and many more services or needs. Walsh (2009) explained that the human animal interaction defined over 9,000 years ago, cats and dogs were regarded fondly and held in high esteem because of their faithfulness and workability, and around the same time Egyptians defined the human animal bond in life and in death, caring ultimately for the welfare their pets now and the here-after. The human–animal bond defined as “a mutually beneficial and dynamic relationship between people and other animals that is influenced by behaviors that are essential to the health and well-being of both” (AVMA, 2018, para. 1). The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) (2018) acknowledged the thousands of years of the bond and its effect on the wellness of the animals and community, and have defined the benefits to include emotive, mental, and physical exchanges between the parties involved with the connection. Walsh (2009) explored many different philosophies and cultures and noted in Asian traditions that Buddha beckoned 12 different animal forms and educated the animals to delve into the world and communicate to people about progress and development of character, and

self-worth, while the Greeks of the time kept animals for hunting, Judaism and Islam valued appropriate handling of animals because they did not make noises during their flight, and Christians because of St. Francis of Assisi, had the annual blessing of animals. People with animals indulged in the concept of pets as part of the family, or as their own kids especially in the USA (Silvestrini, 2016). Researchers devised that science became disinterested in the animal as a benefit until the 1960's when "American child psychotherapist, Boris M. Levinson, who is often regarded as the father of animal-assisted interventions" (Kruger, Trachtenberg, & Serpell, 2004, p. 5). Levinson appreciated the use of animals in therapy and opened the doors for new and encouraged further research on the topics. Time has moved forward, interests waned, but researchers adapted to a greater and stronger acknowledgement of the human animal bond that was created centuries ago just by being together and working with animals. This bond has encouraged the work that inspired and was created by the individuals who believed humans and animals should be put together and used to create a healthier and happy community. Silvestrini (2016) implied that the relationship of humans and animals now, created by the human ideals and pets are more of an accessory or addition versus the companion of earlier times, and wondered if the adoption process truly protected the saved animal.

Pet and Animal Therapy

Pet and animal therapy was introduced over 100 years ago, and recommended by influential people to help care for the sick and ailing. Florence Nightingale was described by the National Women's History Museum (2010) as a highly-respected nurse who educated, and influenced doctors and nurses on the proper techniques of

nursing. Nightingale (1860) believed that the care and companionship of a pet supported the patient in the time of need and extensively thought, “A small pet animal is often an excellent companion for the sick, for long chronic cases especially” (p. 130). Several diverse types of animals are used for the benefits of therapy. “A growing body of scientific research is showing that our pets can also make us healthy or healthier (Rovner, 2012, para. 1). Recognition of using animals in therapy has increased over the years, with encouraged growth by the community. Therapy animals were an integral part of the healing process for many ages and types of issues faced by an ailing population. According to Lane and Zavada (2013) “The term “pet therapy” was first coined by child psychiatrist Boris Levinson in 1961” (p. 88). Unger (2009) believed that the incorporation and caring of the animals helped the person become more responsible, less anti-social and more aware of their surroundings. While other researchers like Kruger, Trachtenberg, and Serpell, (2004) believed that animals were more like tools and individuals could use them to gain more information. Unger (2009) also shared the awareness and studied the effects of the AAT, from specific programs designed and researched how beneficial AAT really was to children of specific needs and disabilities, and increased the valuable help provided to the children and caregivers by accessing funds awarded and available. There were multiple levels of animal interventions or animal therapies from the open therapy to specific ranges that has immediate direction and intent (Kruger et al., 2004). The therapies directed to influence the parties, present in a positive manor and included multiple opportunities to navigate the therapy process. MacDonald and Barret (2016) trusted that the companion animal

gave more to the patient than any relationship formed and allowed the person or persons to gain copious amounts of care from the animal and the created connection.

Levels of training, task performance, and protected laws were the differences in a service dog and a therapy dog. According to Intermountain Therapy (2018), “The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects the rights of people with disabilities to be accompanied by their service dogs in public places such as restaurants, grocery stores, and hotels” (Intermountain Therapy, 2018, para. 3). Additionally, ADA (2010) described additional protection from “Department of Transportation’s Air Carrier Access Act, the Housing and Urban Development’s Fair Housing Act and the Federal Rehabilitation Act” (para. 4). Therapy dogs or animals were not covered under these rights. Although both service dogs and therapy animals were trained, and received certifications, service animals were more vigorous. Service animals were considered working animals and not be touched except by the owner, and therapy dogs were different because people were encouraged to touch them (Intermountain Therapy, 2018).

Animals have assisted in multiple ways and places including the military. Animals in the military was not a strange notion since animals were subsequently in battles since fighting began, as important working roles or possible spiritual advisors, from General Custer to aiding in the Army Medics (Chumley, 2012). The military looked to animals for strength, guidance and ability to the things that other humans could not do alone. The military was known for its strength and valor, and contained men and women of honor, but war had its own agenda. White (2013) discussed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder PTSD, possible dishonors with the diagnosis, could occur,

but more research, and proactive studies completed at Walter Reed, a military hospital, and studied effects of PTSD and animal therapy shown in a positive light. The participants that responded to the therapies showed and increased amount of oxytocin. Yount, Ritchie, St. Laurent, Chumley, and Olmert (2013) expressed that the increased levels of oxytocin found in the system increases when there is time spent with a dog, and that dogs can provide “social support and that positive interactions with dogs may offer a safe, effective, and relatively inexpensive way to increase endogenous levels of oxytocin and other important anti-stress agents in humans” (para. 3). Animals have been beneficial for many reasons and continued research and usage with in places like the military allowed for patients to continue positive strides in their healthcare regimen. Chumley (2012) believed that the use of animal assisted therapy in patients who have the “nurturing” characteristic might have a more seeming discomfort acceptance with the creatures that surround them. “This nurturing attribute of animals may be the key difference that separates the effect that animals may render to patients versus an inanimate or animate “distracter” that may temporarily alleviate pain” (Chumley, 2012, p. 20). Yount et al. (2013) described that oxytocin was a helpful inhibitor that positively aided the patients while it combated the negative instabilities, and while the individuals produced oxytocin, they showed signs of increased confidence, compassion, and hopefulness. The military used necessary means and therapies to benefit the welfare of the soldiers and since it incorporated the programs positive outcomes reported. In Canada, the military has created an equine therapy program that allowed the veterans to draw themselves out of depression, and other ailments that have occurred in military service. Westlund (2014) believed that the military and first

responders in need of support could count on nature and the animals to be the helping hand. As animal-assisted therapy or intervention became regulated and provided for the men and women of the military, positive gains in individuals' wellbeing continued.

Many different types of animals are used in therapy treatments for people of all ages, and will focus on the certain needs of the patient. In addition to the K9 and Feline choices for therapy there are varieties that were used as therapy animals and some are: "birds, rabbits, goats, domestic rats, hamsters, guinea pigs, ducks and chickens, goats, miniature pigs, llamas, cows and horses" (Intermountain Therapy Animals, n.d., para. 2). The favored and most recognized rehabilitations treatments are from dogs, but there are also various other types that included horses or Equine Assisted Therapy (EAT). Borgi et al. (2016) studied the benefits of EAT on Autism Spectrum Disorder ASD children and whether there were any social, emotional, and physical changes that had occurred since the program started. EAT allowed the members many levels of participation. EAT provided individuals the ability "to enjoy an independence they never thought would be available to them. We've seen our participants develop physiologically, emotionally, and relationally because of their participation in this program" (Equine Assisted Therapy, 2016, para. 1). The individuals gained support from the horse and the ability to follow through will tasks, the increased compassion and understanding of the relationship that grew between the person and the horse, and allowed for development of the individual while the patients set fears, heartache, and disabilities to the side and permitted growth (Carlsson, Nilsson Ranta, & Traeen, 2015). Animals were proactive in the production of a healthier way of life for many of the people that took part in the programs.

The human animal bond was labeled an extremely significant part of the healing process for individuals. The loyalty found in the animal invoked the positive response from people without even demanding it. Mental health was an area where the companion animal or animal assisted therapy introduced was slowly and encouraged to continue because of the results that included pressure free effects and enjoyable interactions with non-judgmental outward alliances (Walsh, 2009). Humans learned to take care of and respond to the needs of their companion animal. This allowed for growth in the individual and a stronger bond between the animal and the person. Walsh (2009) believed that communal connections were an imperative part of a dog's life, which enabled the animal to closely comprehend and respond to the human attendant thoroughly. The program benefited patients, produced positive outcomes, and helped develop an extension of the animal- assisted therapy programs. Roski Pearl (2012), identified the original unintentional application of animals in the psychiatric world benefited the patient's mental health was Sigmund Freud, and noted the patients comfort, and security with the dog present. Bossard (1944) was dually noted as someone who believed in the mental benefits of owning or having a dog and created the first article on the relationship (Roski Pearl, 2012). The use of animals to encourage increased wellness in the mental health industry is not a new idea, but one that has developed slowly over time. The increased benefits and applications of the AAT in the mental health department continued to improve and showed increased wellness in the patients who had the ability to take part in the therapy.

The nursing home or facility. The introduction of the use of animal assisted therapy programs in nursing homes had been initiated as an addition to the therapy the

patients already received in the facilities. Duong (2010) believed the support of the ATT decreased the levels of hopelessness, heart problems, and angst found in older adults, and established increased levels of interest, tranquility and pleasure in patients that spent time in a nursing home or long-term care facility. The animals were brought into the nursing homes or long-term care facilities as a positive distraction for the older adults in need of a diversion from discomfort. McDonald and Barrett found that studying the human animal interaction at the end of human life was important because it developed a need in the patients to see the animals and provided a better mood for the persons involved (McDonald & Barrett, 2015). Others in the nursing home communities or long-term care facilities looked forward to the visiting animals. According to Nordgren and Engström (2014) there is an increased number of patients diagnosed with dementia; multiple types of drugs prescribed for the patients gave them disquieting side effects that were harmful and even shortened life expectancy. Animal-assisted interventions were incorporated into the routine of the dementia patient with improved positive reaction and responses with lessened negative responses from the patients themselves. The researchers incorporated daily life activities into the visits with the animal and allowed the patient to seek out the familiar in the routine offered by the animal (Nordgren & Engström, 2014). The nursing homes and long-term care facilities have seen positive effects from the routine of the animals that came to visit and work with the residents, and a continued relationship with positive reactions and growth flourished. Individuals, private organizations and shelters provided the animals for the therapy practices. Partnerships raised awareness and thousands have benefited, “Currently, the APA PetReach program serves over 25 senior communities and a variety of other entities” (Animal Protective

Association of Missouri [APA], 2018, para 3.). Animals and people brought together for the benefit of companionship, understanding and so much more.

Hospitals. Along with the nursing homes and long-term care facilities, hospitals became another place where animal assisted therapy and intervention was welcomed. Hospitals have patients with a wide range of illnesses or problems, and the patients have a vast range of ages. Lundqvist, Carlsson, Sjö Dahl, Theodorsson, and Levin, (2017) said, “Animal-Assisted Interventions (AAI) are more or less goal oriented and structured interventions that intentionally incorporate animals in health, education and human service for the purpose of therapeutic gains and improved health and wellness” (p. 1). The AAI was broken into different categories for clarification. Lundquist et al. (2017) stated, “The three groupings included, animal assisted activities (AAA) that utilize companion animals; animal assisted therapy (AAT) that utilizes therapy animals and service animal programs (SAP) that utilize service animals” (para. 1). The groupings of therapy animals allowed for better understanding and definitions determined the animals’ use.

Progress in both children and adults was documented with AAT, which included lesser amounts of fear in children before and after their operations (Calcaterra et al., 2015). Operations were extremely taxing and those involved with the procedures including the adults involved. The animals were introduced to the children, maintained a sense of stability, and being highly trained therapy dogs, were able to sustain a positive and calming appearance (Calcaterra et al., 2015). Tielsch Goddard and Gilmer (2015) created more of a distinction between the different types of therapies used by the children and noted that some like AAA may be unprompted and not have to be approved by a

therapist or supervisor, while other therapies with the animals, or AAT were written down and specific to the patient's needs. The specific therapies required by the children and aided by the animals incorporated everyday tasks, and the children responded well to the challenges. The animals were healthy, well trained, and participated with the kids in a helpful manner, and elevated the staff's disposition in an optimistic way (Tielsch Goddard, & Gilmer, 2015). The animals not only helped the patients but also unintentionally improved the temperament of the people that they surrounded. Along with the hospital visits after surgeries for children and adults, animal assisted therapy was introduced to children with the disease called cancer. Studies developed with random samples of children spending time with a therapy animal at the hospitals versus children that would not have time with the dogs (Locker, 2014). McIntosh (2014) explained that an animal visiting a hospital helped to alleviate pain and calmed those waiting for an operation, and shared a friendliness needed for the unexpected feeling that occurred while waiting. Dogs provided the comfort to the patients and families just by being present and in their company at the time and was desired by the families.

Dogs and the campus. The multiple uses for dog therapy or animal therapy stemmed from animals improving the daily functions of those with a disability. Animals provided adequate and proper care for individuals with a disability thus showing they may be successful in other roles as well. Many people attended universities or colleges to further education and skills but it can be a stressful time in the student's life. One way to keep students positive through the semester and occupied without expending too many resources was having a dog and activities incorporated into the campus system (Jalongo & McDevitt, 2015). Having a dog incorporated into campus life enabled the students to

ease their stress and anxiety. The popularity of pet therapy has been recognized and many college campuses have developed programs around the idea (Adamle et al., 2009). The available therapy animal on campus benefited more than just the students and created another opportunity for staff to reach out to the student (Daltry & Mehr, 2015). College campus provided an area that allowed the students to decompress and the availability of the therapy animals alleviated the pressure and unease that came with the norms of university life expectations. Accommodations have been made concerning the rise of psychological well-being awareness and requirements on college campuses. Von Bergen (2015) stated some colleges and universities made changes to their “no-pet policy” because the animals provided emotive functions and aided students with their daily lives. Although it was not a new concept to see dogs on campus providing guidance to those covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 2010), it was a new concept to allow animals on campus as emotional support (Von Bergen, 2015). Campuses of the colleges and universities have acclimated to the obligations under law and continued to make adjustments for the best intentions of the students.

Children with multiple needs. The general population has become accustomed to service dogs for the disabled, hearing impaired, or blind, and over time has seen the benefits that a therapy dog can provide children and adults. Blind children and adults needed the exposure to the dogs as they gained acceptance of the animal as an essential form of improvement in life skills and everyday tasks (Young, 1997). It was very important that individuals realized there was a difference between service animals and pets, and noted service animals were not considered part of that category (Rothberg & Collins, 2015). The emotional connection between the service animal and the individual

was different for every person that was part of the program. Multiple research opportunities were created to measure the wellbeing of the participants who worked with a therapy animal (Kamioka et al., 2014). The animal assisted therapy or service dog has improved the welfare of those impacted with extra ordinary needs.

Certain therapy animals have trained to work with children who have been unable to stay stationary, make visual connections, or develop strength in their hands and feet (Mockler, 2010). Dogs have worked with children and adults for many years and the bonds between them have increased as multiple forms of therapy were introduced. Children with needs were encouraged to use the therapy dogs for many purposes. Vygotsky, a Russian theorist from the early 20th century believed in the benefits of socializing, and how it affected growing and thinking. Vygotsky created theories in constructivism, and “It asserts three major themes regarding social interaction, the more knowledgeable other, and the zone of proximal development” (Davis, 2016, para. 3). The created social situation between the dog and the child had stimulated the cognitive growth in the individual who had spent a significant amount of time with the therapy dog.

Children with vision impairments learned how to address the needs of a dog, and welcomed the responsibility, gained awareness, and interest (Bruce, Jennie, Kennedy, & Liu, 2015). A program that incorporated animals matched with kids that had autism showed the significant improvement in social perceptions and actions (Fung & Leung, 2014). The connection that grew between the child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and the dogs they cared for was measured by researchers, and noted the increased sociability of the child (Carlisle, 2015). Autism Spectrum Disorder had a large scale of diagnosis, and some diagnoses were more negative than others were. “Social, emotional

and behavioral challenges at home and in public mean that parents/guardians of children with ASD experience stress in most areas of their lives” (Burgoyne et al., 2014, para. 8). The understanding the dogs had for people and the empathy the animals can create in the individuals that have worked with the animals was reasonably measurable. Dogs were welcomed into more places than just the therapy room, and worked with patients enough to have sensed tension and acknowledged the patients suffering, grief, or pain (Breslau, 2012). Dogs detected and recognized the needs of others and this created a safe feeling for those who worked with the animals.

Dogs and school. The process that allowed dogs into schools was a slow one, which started with the service dogs and then continued further with therapy animals. Students struggled socially, academically, and behaviorally. Bassette and Taber-Doughty (2013) realized a significant increase in student work related skills, and conduct in the classroom also enhanced with a therapy dog available to students for reading instruction. An early proponent of researching children’s behaviors and tendencies towards animals was Van Arcken. Van Arcken (1984) brought her dogs, cats and guinea pigs into the classroom in the early 1980’s and learned how young children reacted towards the animals, and emotional development. The initial study enabled more research to continue.

Reading and increased academic scores had become a major focus of teachers in the classroom. The teachers prepared the students and incorporated an animal to read to in the classroom setting for the students. Reading was difficult for many children, which prevented students from exceling in classes. Lower scores in reading can cause a social and emotional deficit in a child as they are growing and changing interests in school (Le

Roux, Swartz, & Swart, 2014). Teachers feared the lack of reading confidence in the students eliminated chances for continuous growth in all academic areas, and interventions were required to eliminate the shortfall of information, which the students had not received, retained or understood. A connection scholastically was not happening if the students had not engaged in the learning process (Bassette & Taber-Doughty, 2013). Teachers and other educators considered many possible solutions for the students and concluded on Animal Assisted- Therapy in the school setting. When the educators decided to bring the dogs into the school setting children accepted the transition positively and noted “although therapy dogs are interactive, children seem to perceive them as non-judgmental participants who are outside of the complications and expectations of human relationships” (Friesen, 2010, p. 261). Children were eased by the presence of the dogs and this allowed the learning to continue. The data proposed that reading to a dog had favorable results on conduct that added to encouraged positive results in the surroundings where reading was the mission.

Therapy animals, especially dogs are now a more recognized form of treatment for disabilities and disorders. The animals were a resource for various groups of people and allowed them ability to attain growth in their own journeys. Consenting to bring therapy dogs into the library for children to practice their reading was encouraged by the information gathered on previous programs. The therapy animals provided a safe and calming environment that encouraged participation and statistical growth in programs at the library.

Summary

Libraries and the programs created within them made an immense impact positively on the community. Resources became more readily available to fit the patron's needs. The implementation of programs and services enabled patrons of all ages to become more involved within the library and the community. Conveniences included the availability of technology, resources, books, games, Summer Reading Club programs and so many more opportunities. Providing programs that upheld the Midwest County Library's mission was the goal, and this included children's programs. Paws for Reading, a pilot program, was a service provided by the library for children ages 5-11 (K-5) to encourage reluctant readers. Other programs were presented during the summer months and invited participation of children ages 5-11 (K-5). The implementation of a researcher created evaluation instrument enabled the patrons and staff to assess the children's programs. The researcher created instrument measured the perceptions of the library staff and patrons and determined if the program was following the mission of the Midwest Public Library. The process the researcher took to implement the evaluation of the library programs was described in the following chapter.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The objective of the Midwest Public Library system was to provide the best programming for patrons to support its mission that was “to provide the resources and services to enrich individual minds, enhance lives and expand perspectives” (Midwest Public Library, 2018, para. 1). Incorporating the pilot program, Paws for Reading allowed the implementation of a new programming and for staff and patrons to provide an evaluation of programs. Few studies have been completed on library programs and library evaluations. As cited in chapter 2, Shrestha and Krolak (2015) advocated for continued learning: “In general, libraries have been shifting from being repositories of books and information to being proactive service providers” (p. 403).

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to appraise both the program outcomes and perceptions and evaluation of programs by library managers and staff, as well as parents and caregivers. The program outcomes were evaluated qualitatively with a researcher created questionnaire and survey, as well as observations collected by the researcher. These evaluation tools gathered perceptions of the managers, staff, parents and caregivers while the mission of the library was visibly displayed on the survey and questionnaires. Further, a quantitative evaluation measured the attendance of the patrons in library programs for children ages 5-11 (K-5) versus the attendance rate of the pilot program Paws for Reading.

The research questions were as follows:

RQ 1: How do the library managers and staff perceive current programming at their library?

RQ 2: After a program has been created, produced, and performed, how do the library managers and staff perceive the program's success or failure?

RQ3: How do library managers and staff perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library's mission?

RQ4: After participating in the Pilot Program Paws for Reading, how do the managers and staff perceive the preparation and implementation of programs at the library?

RQ5: How do parents/caregivers perceive the program Paws for Reading overall?

RQ6: How do parents/caregivers perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library's mission?

RQ7: How do parents or caregivers perceive the success of Paws for Reading versus other library programs?

Null H1: There will not be a difference in participation rates for Paws for Reading when compared to other library programs: American Girl Book Club Construction Art, Discovery Club, Food Architecture, LEGO Construction, World in a Jar, presented in summer 2017, specifically for ages 5-11 (K-fifth grade).

The researcher created a survey and questionnaire, and conducted observations to answer the research questions. These included accumulating insights of library programs for children 5-11(K-5) from managers, staff, parents and caregivers who volunteered to participate in answering combined questionnaires and surveys. Chapter Three describes the methodology, data collection, and analysis procedure used to uncover the perceptions of managers, staff, parents and caregivers in an evaluative process during the pilot program Paws for Reading.

Procedure

The researcher obtained permission from library manager to implement the pilot program Paws for Reading in the public library during June, July, and August of 2017 (Appendix A). The youth services specialist contacted SDI to make sure a therapy dog was provided for the program Paws for Reading. Also, the youth service specialist provided the various summer programs, and took attendance stats as a part of routine responsibilities. The researcher created a paper questionnaire and survey instruments (Appendix B and C) that will be given to staff, administration and parents/caregivers about the library program attended. With their consent (Appendix E), staff members, parents and caregivers were given a survey to gain their perceptions and evaluate current library programs (Appendix B; Appenix C). All participant surveys remained anonymous to encourage honesty. Participation needed to occur for the researcher to record observational data (Appendix D). Children will be observed and counted for attendance (observable count), but not surveyed or asked to fill out a questionnaire.

The practices and procedures of the study were conducted on a volunteer basis. This included the assistance of the managers, staff, and patrons. The consent form stated (appendix E and F) no one was disciplined, or made to feel uncomfortable, due to lack of participation throughout the study. The survey and questionnaire were available to the participants; and completed with as little or as much information as the volunteers desired to share. Due to confidentiality, surveys were anonymous but roles were acknowledged. This allowed the correct form to be presented to the volunteer and the representation of the data to include various perceptions of staff and patrons and comparisons to be made.

Instrumentation

The mission of the Midwest Public Library demonstrated servant leadership a philosophy that enabled the community's growth. Robert K. Greenleaf believed putting the needs of others was key and stated, "A servant-leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong" (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2016, para. 3). Understanding the importance of library's role and development of the mission provided guidance in the creation of an evaluation, and to understand if the patrons and staff knew of the library's mission was the foundation of the assessment. The assessment included questions about the mission and programs because the library's goal was to provide for the community. If the programs were not appealing to the patrons or fulfilling the mission the evaluation, the instrument conveyed the information. The patrons needed to like the programs, because that would keep the programs, presentations, and events returning. Putting the patrons first with the creation of programs was considered servant leadership, and the evaluation was created to understand if the patron enjoyed the patron centered focus. Instrumentation was created to assess the patron and staff understanding of the mission, the philosophy of servant leadership and the likability of the programs. On the survey and questionnaires given to parents, caregivers, managers and staff the mission was printed on the form and stated, "The mission of the Midwest Public Library is to provide the resources and services to enrich individual minds, enhance lives and expand perspectives" (Midwest Public Library, 2018, para. 1.)

The researcher created an observation instrument that was used during the program Paws for Reading (Appendix D). The researcher monitored the children's

programs ages 5-11 (K-5) and Paws for Reading collecting attendance and observing (Appendix D) the program. Paws for Reading programs were every Monday in the months of June, July and August. Researcher created evaluative instruments were constructed to compare the perceptions of staff and patrons concerning programming in the Midwest Public Library. This newly fashioned instrument gathered data to gauge opinions on the current children's programs for ages 5-11 (K-5), and measured the alignment of the library's mission. The mission of the Midwest Public Library "To provide the resources and services to enrich individual minds, enhance lives and expand perspectives" (Midwest Public Library, 2018, para 1). The questionnaire and survey examined multiple areas. Managers and staff surveys included a created a Likert scale to evaluate program practice. The respondents answered on a ratio 1 to 5: (a) Program met my expectations (b) Presenter was prepared (c) Convenience of day and time (d) Program content quality (e) Educational Value (f) Information available to research or check out (g) Room Equipped and clean (e) Introduction/expectations announced by staff (f) Staff, kept control of the room. The instrument provided a section with open-ended questions that allowed the perceptions and perspectives of the managers and staff concerning program additions, changes, and recommendations.

The questionnaire and survey given to the parents and caregivers concerning programming at the Midwest Public Library provided a snapshot of the patron's routine for visiting the library, including days and times visited throughout the year preferred and how they were alerted about a program. The questions allowed the patron to express detailed views on programs. Most importantly, it asked the parent or caregiver if the

library program fit the library's mission. After each library program, a survey and questionnaire (Appendix B; Appendix C) was given.

An observation instrument amended from Elder (2015) with permission was used to measure and uniformly collect data during the process. The instrument organized a scale from 1-10 of negative to positive feedback from the programs. The observations included program monitoring, discussions, and interactions with presenter and staff during the presentation.

Research Method

This mixed-methods evaluation looked at the outcomes of the assessed library programs for children 5-11 (K-5), and introduction of the pilot program Paws for Reading. A program evaluation "defined as a social science activity directed at collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and communicating information about the workings and effectiveness of social programs" (Martens & Wilson, 2012, p. 9). Perceptions of the library programs were recorded on a researcher created questionnaire, and survey, and measured qualitatively. The researcher compared the data gathered and observations of the pilot program Paws for Reading. Congruency in themes was created from the data collected and was organized to create an understanding of the perceptions of the managers, staff, parents and caregivers.

Attendance rates of a program at the Midwest Public Library were recorded and measured quantitatively. This procedure allowed the researcher to compare the evaluated programs with understanding that attendance rates helped determine the success or failure of a program. The attendance from the children programs 5-11 (K-5), and the pilot program Paws for Reading were compared to substantiate if there was a significant

increase in attendance, using a two-sample t-test of independent means. Franken and Wallen (2012) stated, 'A t-test for independent means is used to compare the mean scores of two different or independent groups' (p. 234).

Separate surveys and questionnaires were created to gather the data, with each one specifically generated for internal evaluators, "Someone who conducts an evaluation who is an employee of the organization" (Merten & Wilson, 2012, p. 17). This included the managers and staff that volunteered to participate. The external evaluators "Someone who conducts an evaluation who is not an employee of the organization" (Merten & Wilson, 2012, p. 17). These are the parents and caregivers that volunteered to participate. A Likert scale was represented on the questionnaire for the managers and staff determining the perceptions of the programs evaluated with a rating system 1-5 and non-applicable. Each question's score contained a point value; strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), strongly agree, (5) and non-applicable (N/A). The parents and caregiver's questionnaire determined frequency of library visits, including time of year and program practices. The survey for both groups of participants and observations collected information about library programs.

Participants

The participants chosen for evaluation were volunteers who worked at the specific branch of the Midwest Public Library and the patrons that frequented the branch and programs. The sample size consisted of all parents, caregivers, staff and administration who evaluated the program Paws for Reading, and other children's programs ages 5-11 (K-5). There were 54 surveys and questionnaires collected from the population who volunteered to participate. Paws for Reading had a total of 34 surveys and questionnaires

returned with 25 patrons responding and 9 staff responding. In consideration of the other children's programs, only 20 surveys were collected. Patrons filled out 15 responses and staff answered five. All participants including parents, caregivers, staff, and administration were asked to complete a multi-question survey (Appendix B and C) for each library program attended. The sample size of a minimum of 20 was chosen in order to insure validity in the qualitative data collected and compared from the participants. "Population generalizability refers to the degree to which a sample represents the population of interest" (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2015, p. 104). After receiving a consent form, (Appendix E; Appendix F), participants filled out a researcher created survey and questionnaire and were observed by the researcher. The researcher is currently the Youth Services Specialist at the Midwest Public Library. The researcher had a relationship with some of the participants in the study and research site, because some of the participants are co-workers. The others were parents and caregivers participating in the program as library patrons. The participants' identities were anonymous on the survey (Appendix B); therefore, the researcher did not know the identity of any participants on the surveys (Appendix B), only if they are "parent," "caregiver," "staff," "administrator," "volunteer," or "other."

As noted, one survey and questionnaire (Appendix B) gathered data on patron perceptions of programming and frequency of program participation. The data gathered from this information allowed the researcher to understand the perceptions of programs from the patrons. Managers and staff filled out the second survey and questionnaire (Appendix C), which included library clerks, circulation assistants, librarians and library

assistants. Each member of the team had the opportunity to evaluate the program attended and gave perceptions of the platform presented.

The process began with approval from the Midwest Public Library and the managers. Managers had to be willing to allow the researcher to incorporate the pilot program Paws for Reading and permit staff to view the evaluated programs. Once the program plan was finalized and sanctioned by administration, all staff was asked to participate in the evaluation process. Between 60 and 80 staff, administration, parents, and caregivers were asked to answer voluntary, multiple question surveys (Appendix B & C). Two different surveys were completed and presented, one for parents/caregivers and one for library staff/administrators. A minimum of 60-80 completed surveys were expected at the end of the pilot program. The survey was available after each session of the library programs offered in the months of June, July, and August of 2017. The numbers estimated were based on previous attendance at the children's programs specifically ages 5-11 (K-5).

During the time of the program evaluation, there were 18 staff and two managers on the team for the Midwest Public Library. All 20 of the employees were given a researcher created instrument, which was a survey and questionnaire, and given the option to assess a children's program ages 5-11 (K-5). All of the participants were asked to complete the anonymous survey and questionnaire. The purpose of the survey and questionnaire was to gather the perceptions and attitudes towards current children's programs in the specified age range and the pilot program Paws for reading. The purpose of the observation was to consider conversation, interaction and participation a valuable

portion of the evaluation process. The three evaluative instruments worked congruently and allowed for the perception of the participants to be measured in multiple ways.

An observable count was gathered to be analyzed from June, July, and August of 2017 of the attendees of the library programs. Approximately 60-300 people estimated to participate in the summer programs that take place at the Midwest Public Library. Therefore, the researcher estimated between 20-75 people attended the multiple programs.

The perceptions of the managers and staff contributed to the understanding of programming and the important aspects of the presentation from room presentation to the validity of aligning with the programs mission. The patrons who volunteered to participate in answering the surveys and questionnaires with informed consent (Appendix E) were essential because their opinions as attendees to current and future presentations at the library influenced attendance and repetition of programs. As a public service institution, the Midwest Public Library provided services and the best quality programs for the patrons, and return attendance acknowledged the success of a program. With informed consent (Appendix F), the researcher surveyed library co-workers (staff and administration) working on the day of program presentation during the months of June, July and August 2017. The researcher also surveyed the parents and caregivers on the night of program implementation during the months of June, July and August 2017. Secondary data was an observable count done by the researcher. The researcher (Appendix D) took observational notes during the scoring sessions.



Figure 1. Representation of programs most evaluated by managers and staff.

All library managers and staff that worked at the Midwest Public Library branch was offered an opportunity to evaluate the children's programs. At the time, 20 members worked on staff during the implementation of the pilot program and 70% participated in the evaluation process. Participants chose which program they wanted to evaluate. The pie chart represented in Figure 1 described the percentages of the managers and staff as they evaluated the following programs Paws for Reading, Food Architecture, Discovery Club, and Crafternoon. Paws for Reading was evaluated the most with 66% of the staff assessing the pilot program.

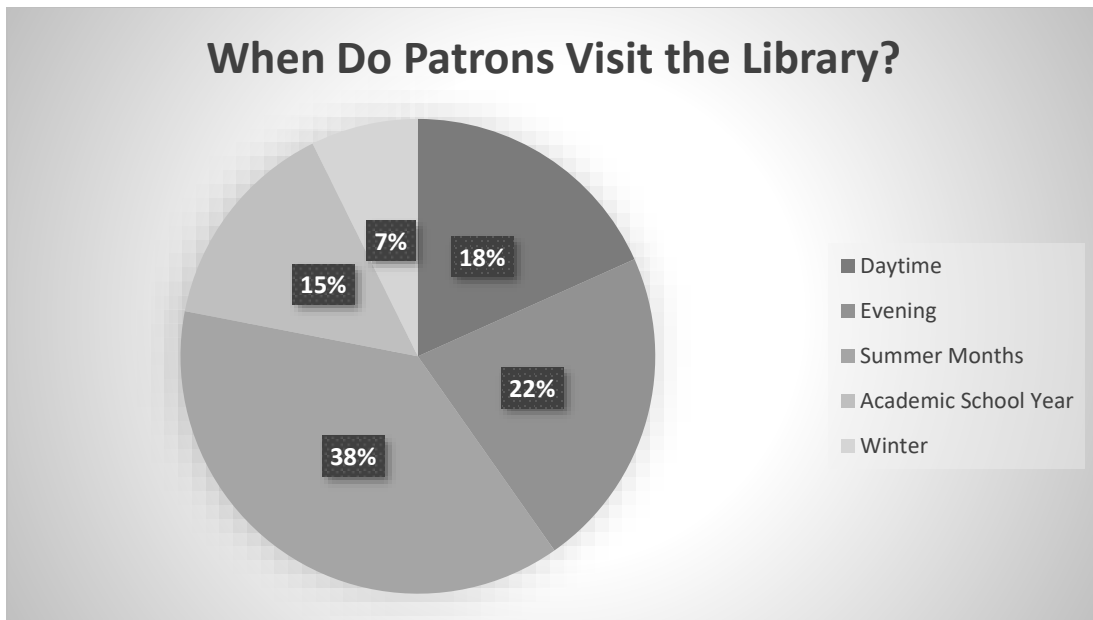


Figure 2. Representation of the time patrons most visit the library.

Adult patrons who attended the programs for the children were given the opportunity to evaluate the programming. The pie chart in Figure 2 represented the volunteered responses on the questionnaire asking patrons when they visited the library. The choices varied from daytime, evening, summer months, academic school year and winter. Customers circled which time correlated with their library habits, and 38% of the respondents chose the summer months. Evening was the next popular choice as 22% of the parents and caregivers responded with that answer.

Parents and caregivers responded to the question 'How did you hear about the program,' with the following feedback. The pie chart in Figure 3 represented the respondents' answers visually. Three popular responses included social media, print or new media, or word of mouth with each representing 24% of the replies. Other participants replied with print or news media as a popular response while 'other' had 9% of the replies.

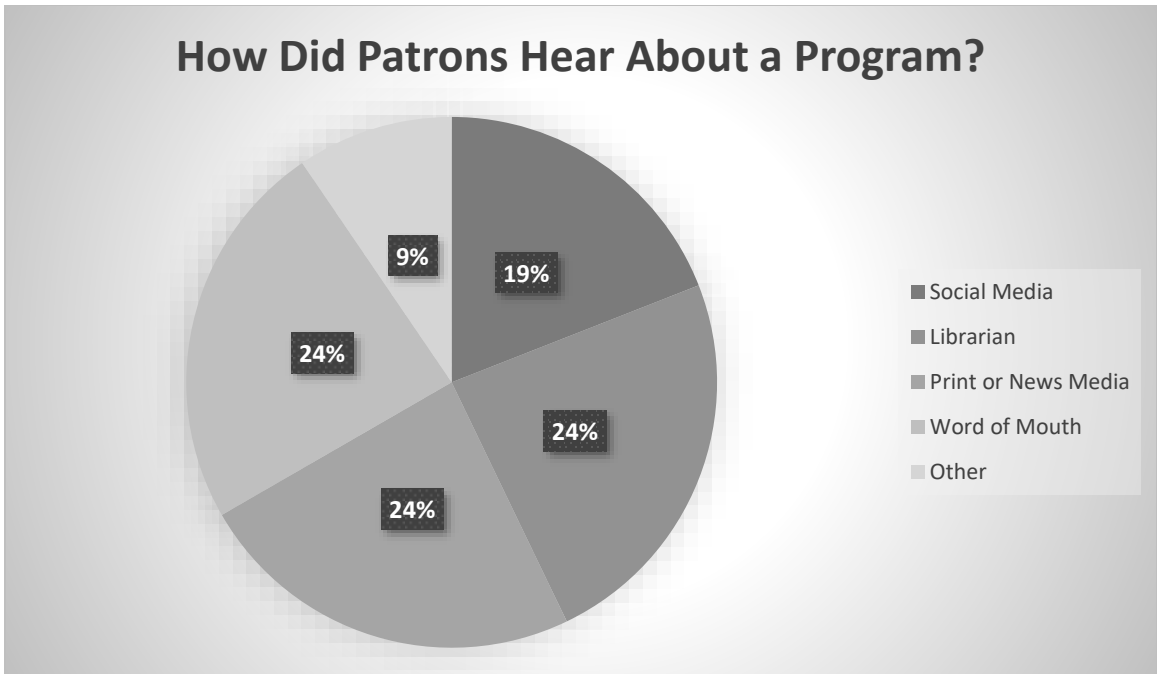


Figure 3. Representation of how patrons learned about the programs.

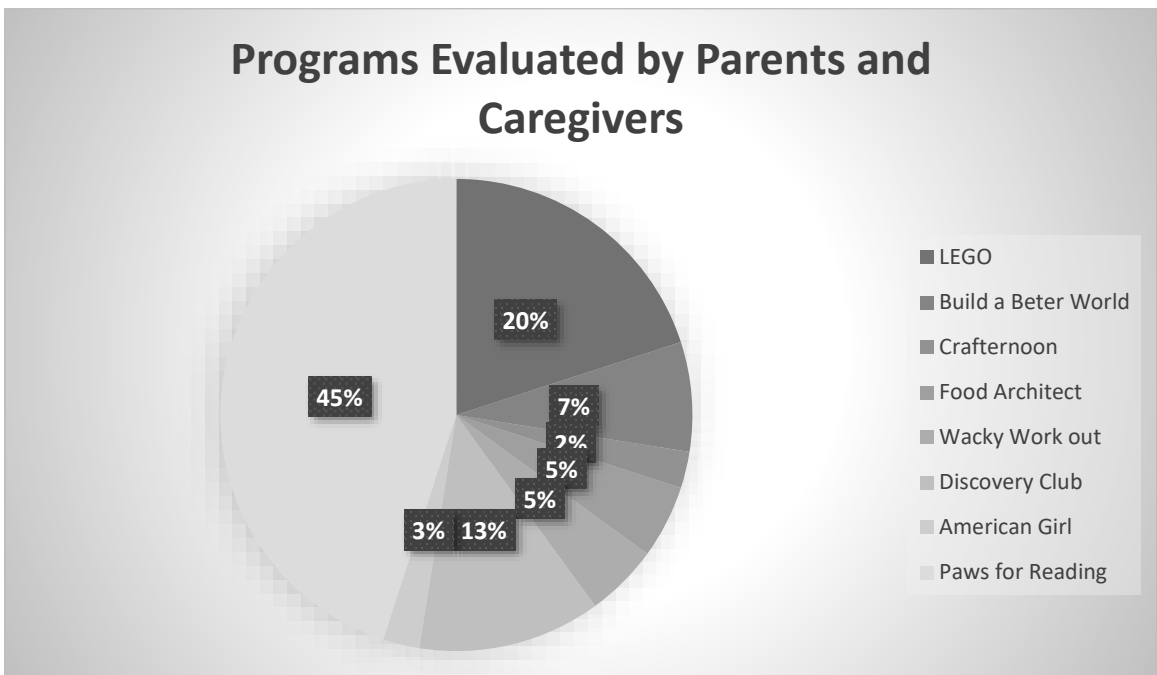


Figure 4. Breakdown of all the programs evaluated by parents and caregivers.

The programs that were evaluated during the summer were children’s programs specified for ages 5-11 (K-5). Each program was represented on the pie graph in Figure

4 and included LEGO, Build a Better World, Crafternoon, Food Architect, Wacky Workout, Discovery Club, American Girl, Paws for Reading. Each of the programs had evaluations available for the patron to fill out, but most participants chose Paws for Reading for responses. Paws for Reading had the most evaluations with 45% of the patrons volunteering to assess the program and fill out the questionnaire and survey.

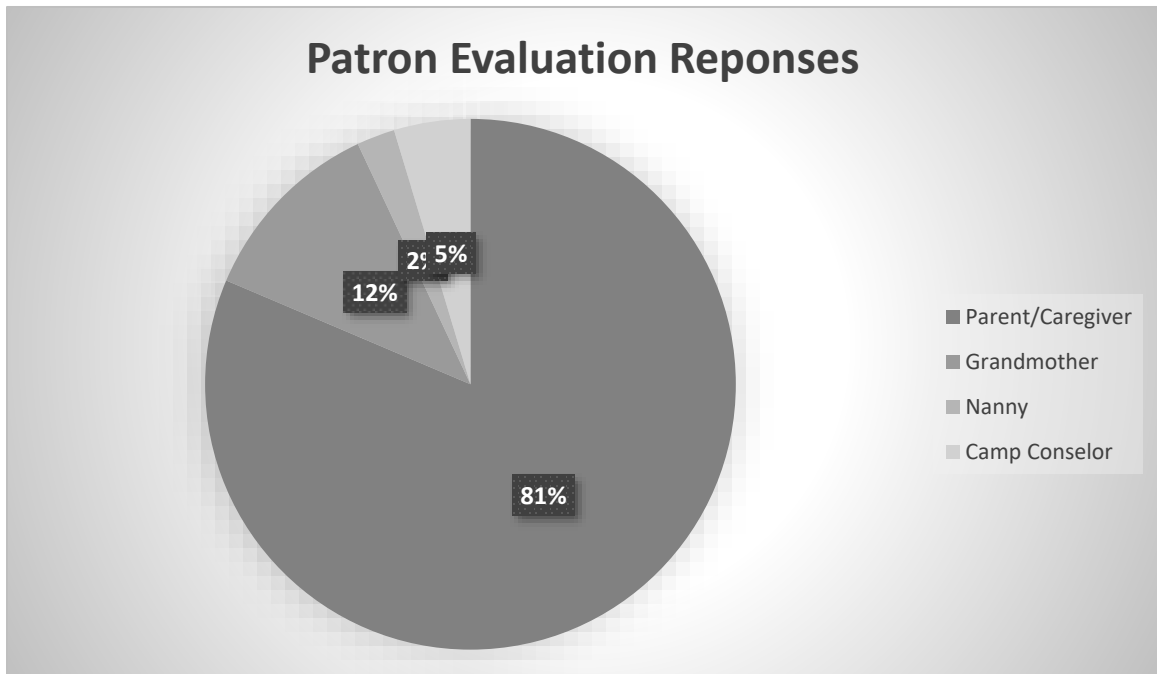


Figure 5. Representation of who responded to the patron survey and questionnaire.

A variety of adult patrons responded to the survey and questionnaire provided in the programs for the evaluation. Each guardian or adult was responsible for bring the child to the program, and the assortment included parents and caregivers, grandmothers, nannies, and camp counselors. As the pie chart in Figure 5 represents, 81% of the respondents were classified as parent or caregiver.

Reliability and Validity

In this mixed methods study three instruments were created and evaluated the perceptions of the staff and patrons concerning children's programs ages 5-11 (K-5) and the pilot program Paws for Reading. The evaluation was created to gain perceptions of the participants and aligned with the research questions created. "Evaluations are conducted on the merit and worth of programs in the public domain, which are themselves responses to prioritized individual and community needs that resulted from political decisions" (Mertens & Wilson, 2012, p. 11). The congruency of the data allowed for common themes to be created and reliability to occur.

Data Collection

The participants for the mixed methods evaluation were separated into two groups, and staff, administration, parents, and caregivers were asked to answer voluntary, multiple question surveys (Appendix B & C). Two different surveys were completed and presented, one for parents/caregivers and one for library staff/administrators. A minimum of 60-80 completed surveys were expected at the end of the pilot program, but there was only a total of 54 responses received, which included 39 patron evaluations and 15 staff evaluations. The survey was completed after each session of the library programs offered in the months of June, July, and August of 2017. The researcher monitored the summer reading programs and Paws for Reading collecting attendance and observing (Appendix D) the program, which were on Monday nights of June, July and August. After each library program, a survey and questionnaire (Appendix B; Appendix C) was available to the participants. The researcher collected and analyzed data results from the surveys, questionnaires, and observation. To provide validity, the Youth

Services Specialist or the researcher led most programs, with the exception of Paws for Reading, which was led by a trained handler from Support Dogs Inc. (2016). An observable count was gathered from June, July, and August of 2017 of the attendees of the library programs. It was estimated that approximately 60-300 people participate in the summer programs that take place at the Midwest Public Library. Therefore, the researcher estimated between 20-75 people would attend each program. A total number of attendees for Paws for Reading was 355, with the largest group which contained 52 people and the smallest that consisted of 11 attendees. The children's programs ages 5-11 (K-5) were totaled at 273 participants with 41 attendants at Crafternoon and the lowest number at American Girl with 6 people.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the survey and questionnaire results along with the observational notes combined by comparing the attendance ratio of the programs allowed the researcher to use a mixed methods approach. To analyze the quantitative data, the following methodology was used: The researcher ran a t-test for a significant difference between two independent means using the average attendance rate for the children's programs 5-11 (K-5) and the pilot program Paws for Reading. To analyze the qualitative data (survey responses and observational data) the following procedure was used: Survey and questionnaire (Appendix B) responses were typed into a document by the researcher. Observational notes (Appendix C) were typed into a document by the researcher. Congruent themes were discovered, and coded by analyzing responses and observational data. Qualitative data was organized by theme and presented. Observation of participants during the pilot Paws for Reading program in a Midwest Public Library for 1

hour, every Monday at 5:00 p.m. occurred during the months of June, July, and August. Overall, the data gathered consisted of parent's, caregiver's, staff's and administrator's perceptions of the programs. Data presented participation rates, along with problems, positive and negative feedback about the programs and finally, alignment with the Midwest Public Library's mission.

Study Limitations

The Midwest Public Library involved in the study was part of a chain that had libraries throughout the county. Libraries throughout the county system renovated each of the buildings, which took years to complete. Thoughtful processes, due to lack of time and space were considered with the preparation of this study. Determined to evaluate the programs for the patrons at this specific library branch timeliness was essential to the study. The neighborhood branch surrounded by homes, schools and day cares made it a formidable place to incorporate the pilot program, because the community was readily available for introduction of programs. "One of the most effective ways to test and evaluate a new program or service is to conduct a pilot project" (Koerber, 2017, para. 1). The study performed and relied only on the perceptions of the managers, staff, and some program attendees. Children did not participate in the study, which limited the data. Information gathered from the children's opinions about the programs whether it was Paws for reading or LEGO club would be valuable for future program development but not indicated to this particular study. The specific data was not generated from the children in attendance; this study received data only from the participant's caregiver or parent who contributed. The pilot program Paws for Reading was intended for children ages 5-12, in a Midwest library setting located in St. Louis, Missouri.

Other limitations included the response rate from the retrieval of the survey and questionnaires. It was determined from sorting that more people responded to the Paws for Reading surveys and questionnaires than other programs evaluated. Some programs had fewer parent attendees than Paws for Reading because parents dropped off their children and waited in the library for the program to conclude. More parents and caregivers attended Paws for Reading for a variety of reasons such as curiosity of the program, or supervision of the child with the dog. Another reason was parents or caregivers were more likely to pick up the evaluation if the researcher was present. Other programs' response rate was higher in the programs the researcher ran versus the programs ran by staff.

Summary

A mixed methods study using a sample of the library population was used to inquire about the perceptions and perspectives of library program for children ages 5-11 (K-5), and the pilot program Paws for Reading were evaluated. Managers and staff had their own researcher created instrument for evaluations, and parents and caregivers who attended at the programs completed another evaluation created by the researcher. The researcher also contributed to the data and used observational notes as the qualitative segment of the investigation. Comparing the attendance data in the pilot program Paws for Reading and attendance data in the other similarly aged children's programs ages 5-11, (K-5) qualified for the quantitative section of the study. Analyzing the perception and perspectives of library programs in a qualitative manner allowed the researcher to associate the likes, changes, success and alignment of the Midwest Public Library's mission. Results were discussed and analyzed in detail in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four: Results

The analysis in Chapter Four showed the results of the evaluation created to assess children's programs in a Midwest Public Library. The analysis also examined the evaluation of the Pilot Program paws for reading in a Midwest Public Library. The data the researcher collected also determined if the hypothesis should be rejected or accepted. In a mixed method approach, the researcher created tools that included a survey, questionnaire, and observation by the researcher. The library patrons, staff and managers gave their opinions about the children's programs provided by the library and the Pilot Program Paws for Reading. Questions included preference in library schedule, program visitation, and if the programs were developed with the library's mission in mind. The mission statement was written above the question for clarification. The researcher used a random sample and it was according to Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2015), "to obtain a sample that is representative of the population of interest" (p. 95). Participants in the study, included patrons, library staff and managers, who were given access to survey and questionnaire available to them at all children's programs that were appraised. Once the participants completed the surveys and questionnaires, the researcher stored the data safely in a locked cabinet. To look for common themes, the researcher then analyzed, coded, and organized the data. The researcher's tool for observation was used to collect conversations and remarks during the programs, which was then coded and sorted according to themes.

Scoring

As indicated in the previous chapter, the instrument created for evaluation purposes contained a questionnaire and survey questions generated for

the volunteers usage. There were two separate instruments; one was created strictly for patron use, which gathered specific data about library use and program attendance, and program presentation. Coding the gathered data and organizing the information provided in the surveys allowed the researcher to see the programs that could use improvement from a patron point of view. The other instrument was created for managers and library staff that evaluated programs presentation and quality. Each question asked aligned with the research questions and hypothesis. The questionnaire had a Likert scale rating system 1-5 and non-applicable. Each questions score contained a point value; strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), strongly agree (5) and non-applicable (N/A). The researcher collected the scores from each questionnaire and summarized what was found to gather the overall score that included program expectations, presenter preparedness, convenience of day and time, program content and quality, educational value, available research information, room equipped and clean, introduction by staff, and staff control of the room. The results informed the researcher, which programs could use improvement depending on the answers provided on the questionnaire.

Null Hypothesis 1

Null H1: There will not be a difference in participation rates for Paws for Reading when compared to other library programs: American Girl Book Club Construction Art, Discovery Club, Food Architecture, LEGO Construction, World in a Jar, presented in summer 2017, specifically for ages 5-11 (K-fifth grade).

Paws for Reading was a pilot program introduced to the library patrons and staff in the summer months of 2017, along with all the other programs the youth services specialist incorporated for children ages 5-11 (K-5). Participation rates for Paws for

Reading was expected to significantly increase compared to the other programs implemented during the evaluation period. This meant for the pilot program there would be a difference in attendance rates June, July, and August of 2017 and concluded more people would want to come to the new program. In addition, perceptions and perspectives of library programs from managers, staff, parents and caregivers were used to determine if the children's programs were successful and aligned with the library's mission.

The researcher analyzed data and compared attendance data from the children's programs evaluated and the attendance rate of Paws for Reading. "The *t*-test for independent means is used to compare the mean scores of two different or independent groups" (Fraenkel et al., 2015, p. 234). The researcher ran a two-sample *t*-test of Independent Means to determine if the attendance rates for children's programs were different than the pilot program Paws for Reading. The researcher conducted a *t*-Test of two means to see if the Pilot Program Paws for Reading had a higher attendance compared to the other children's programs evaluated. A preliminary test of variances revealed that the variances were equal. The analysis revealed that the attendance for the pilot program Paws for Reading ($M = 27.31$, $SD = 16.01$) were not significantly higher than the attendance for other children's ($M = 24.82$, $SD = 14.62$); $t(22) = -0.40$, $p = .348$.

The researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis and concluded that Paws for Reading did not have a significant difference in attendance compared to the other children's programs. "If the probability is small the null hypothesis is rejected, thereby providing support for the research hypothesis (Fraenkel et al., 2015, p. 228). However,

when the average mean was compared between Paws for Reading and other children's programs ages 5-11 (K-5), there was an increase in attendance rate.

Research Questions

The researcher authored survey questions and questionnaire were used to gain a deeper understanding of program perspectives from the standpoint of the parent or caregiver and managers and staff. The questions mirrored the components and ideology of the research questions. Observation was another tool the researcher used to gather more information to create triangulation.

Research Question 1: How do the library managers and staff perceive current programming at their library?

Table 1

<i>Staff Program Evaluations</i>						
	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Program Expectations	67%	0%	7%	0%	0%	20%
Presenter Prepared	73%	7%	7%	0%	0%	7%
Convenience of Time	60%	7%	13%	0%	0%	7%
Program Content Quality	60%	27%	7%	0%	0%	7%
Educational Value	47%	20%	13%	0%	0%	7%
Information Available for Check Out	40%	13%	13%	0%	7%	20%
Room Equipped and Clean	67%	13%	7%	0%	0%	7%
Introduction/Expectations announced by staff	53%	7%	0%	0%	0%	27%
Staff Kept control of the room	53%	20%	0%	0%	0%	13%

The Likert scale questions developed by the researcher captured the competency areas of program expectations (Table 1). The researcher sought to decipher what current programming meant to the manager and staff. When asked the perception of current programs most of the responses met expectations with the common themes representing program expectations, presenter preparedness, and content quality.

Expectations. Expectations are created to enhance a program, and make it more fluid. In response to the question, ‘Did the program meet expectations?’ Managers and staff responded with 67% of the declaring the programs evaluated met expectations. A scoring of 5 on a ratio scale 1-5 was seen for programs like Discovery Club, Crafternoon, and Build a Better World. One staff member replied, ‘If the patrons are happy, I am happy.’ While most of the managers and staff that evaluated the programs responded positively, 7% were neutral about the program expectations for programs like Food Architecture. One staff member implied ‘Just glad it was another smooth week.’

Prepared. In response to the question ‘Was the presenter prepared?’ the following answers were accumulated based on the evaluation during multiple presentations 73% of the respondents marked a 5 on the survey from a 1-5 ratio. The presenters who received a 5 were the Youth Services Specialist for World in Jar, and Crafternoon, along with the presenter for Discovery Club. Staff observed, in all programs that there was a cart full of materials prepared and ready for the patrons for each program containing supplies needed and directions for the program. There was also an emergency cart filled with ‘board games, puzzles, and books, included coloring pages’ specifically available for Paws for Reading.

Although most believed the presenter was prepared, 7% of the patrons were neutral in their responses. Discussion between parents stemmed around the tardiness of the presenter and staff was frustrated with the presenter during the Paws for Reading. One staff member stated in the evaluation for Paws for Reading, 'I wish the volunteer would come before 5 p.m.' Another comment from a staff member stemmed from the program Food Architecture concerning available research material for the patrons and children to check out. 'I would recommend having more books available for check out on research materials to inspire them and spark their creativity.'

Time. The time of day for a presentation of a program can alter attendance. In response to the question about 'Convenience of the day and time,' 60% believed the program time was convenient to the day and time offered marking a 5 on a 1-5 ratio scale. Programs evaluated included Discovery Club and Crafternoon, and received a 5 out of a 1-5 ratio. Observational data encompassed managers' and staff behavior, and demonstrated the number of patrons that attended a program.

Food Architecture was a program that received a 3 or agreed about time of the programs on a scale of 1 –5. While other respondents believed, the program was convenient 13%, of the respondents marked a neutral response about convenience of day and time. Managers and staff felt convenience of the time and day may have been difficult for the presenter. One person noted 'I wish the volunteer would show up before 5 p.m.'

Research available. Some materials readily available for patrons to check out included books, DVD's, Cd's and multiple types of science, reading or parental kits were available in the library. In response to the question, 'information available to research or

check out' received mixed results. Less than half, 40% marked a 5, from a 1-5 ratio scale determining enough information was available for the patrons. Observation of staff looking at the materials available for check out for the patrons during the programs, and noted the displays the material in programs like Paws for Reading, Discovery Club, World in a Jar, and Crafternoon.

Some believed, there was enough information immediately available for the patron to research or check out, 7% did not agree, or marked a 1 on a ratio scale 1-5. Staff discussed the lack of material or displays available for programs like Food Architecture saying 'Put out books about food architecture and encourage kids to go in to the library and check them out.'

Room efficiency. Reserving the space and making sure the room is presentable for patron participation in the programs is important to how staff perceive programs. In response to the question was the 'Room equipped and clean.' Most respondents, or 67%, believed the room was equipped and clean enough to participate in programs and marked a 5 out of a ratio scale 1-5, while 13% marked a 4 for programs like Food Architecture. One staff member commented on the room set up during Crafternoon stating, 'I like the flow and space in the room for program.'

In the programs evaluated, 13% of the respondents marked a 4 on the scale 1-5 for programs like World in a Jar. While 7% were neutral about the room space, for a program like LEGO Construction. The respondents were observed looking around the room and noting accessibility for patrons and available equipment provided for the patrons during the program.

Introductions and expectations. The importance of introductions and expectations presented in the program benefited the presenter and the patrons. In response to the question inquiring about “Introductions and expectations by the staff, 53% of the managers and staff believed the presenter announced introductions and expectations by marking a 5 out of a ratio scale 1-5. In addition, 7% agree that the introduction and the expectations were offered by the presenter, and marked a 4 out of a 1-5 ratio scale. In the programs, evaluated it was observed that some staff were not in the room at the time that introductions and expectations were offered noting that 27% felt the question was not applicable.

Age. Making sure a program was age appropriate was helpful determining many important factors from inception to presentation. In response to the question, ‘What age group would best fit the program (Adult, teen kid, families)?’ Staff and managers perceive current programming to be best for a particular type of audience, 13 of the 15 respondents determined that kids would be the best audience for the programs evaluated. Many staff comments included, ‘Kids and families’ or ‘Families with children’ were recommended in the evaluation for Paws for Reading. In addition, the evaluations for Paws for Reading declared ‘young kids from 4-12,’ and especially ‘kids especially those learning to read’ the age group for the program. Staff was observed petting the dog before the kids arrived and the program began. In the presentation of World in a Jar, it was stated ‘Children mostly, but adults had fun too,’ and staff were observed saying programs like this are good for kids “without ready access to them.”

Some of the responses recommended that children as old as teens could take part in the programming that was evaluated. One respondent said ‘kids, teens and families’

would most likely be a perfect fit for the programs like Food Architecture. While another believed Discovery Club was best for ‘teens, kids and families, because I can see it being adaptable for many ages.’

Research question 2: After a program has been created produced and performed, how do the library managers and staff perceive the program’s success or failure?

Expectations. Understanding the perception of a program’s success or failure, managers and staff were asked, ‘How did the Program meet my expectations’ 67% of the respondents believed library programming met expectations by marking 5 from a 1-5 rating scale. Observations indicated that managers and staff expectations were met when staff remarked on the “positive response from the patrons” during Food Architecture. In addition, the perceptions of managers and staff were exceeded by relaying the excitement in having a dog in the library for programming during Paws for Reading. ‘It is great having a big old dog ready and waiting for the kids,’ one staff member relayed.

Perspectives and perceptions of expectations were mostly met while 13% marked a 4 out of a 1-5 ratio scale. Observations indicated that managers and staff went on with library tasks and one respondent mentioned, ‘As long as I (Youth Services Specialist) was happy, they were happy.’

Program quality. The perceptions of the manger as staff when looking at programming quality in the library was measured. In response to the question ‘Program content and quality,’ 60% of the respondents strongly agreed that program quality and content was a 5, and marked it on the ratio scale of 1-5. Programs that received these marks included, World in a Jar, Discovery Club and Paws for Reading. Observing the program content and quality during Paws for Reading the manager noted, ‘everything’s

ready for kids and parents, and patron's eagerness and happiness to be involved in the program.'

In consideration of the question about program content and quality, most respondents agreed program content and quality was good enough, with 27% of the respondents marked a 4. Concerning the first Paws for Reading presentation, respondents noted 'you can't always predict if a program will go as planned but it was handled well' in response to the presenter not showing up and the youth services specialist creating an impromptu program for the kids and families who decided to stay at the library.

Educational value. The library managers and staff evaluated educational value in the programs presented. In response to the question, 'Incorporating educational value,' 47% strongly agreed the educational value was present in the programs evaluated by marking a 5 out of a 1-5 scale. One respondent believed, 'It was a unique way for kids to connect with books; it was educational as well as enjoyable' discussing the program Paws for Reading. Observational data collected from managers and staff included staff engagement with the program during Paws for Reading and included asking the questions from the presenter about the dog and abilities, and excited responses from watching the dog with the children. In addition, 20% of the respondents agreed on its educational presence by marking a 4 out of ratio scale 1-5 for programs like LEGO Construction and Food Architecture. One respondent stated, 'I would recommend this program it allowed children to be creative, taught basics of architecture, and engineering and explained landmarks.' Managers and staff members, who evaluated a program like Crafternoon, perceived the educational value of the program was neutral with 13% and marked a 3 on a ratio scale 1-5 and described the programs as 'fun.'

Room control. The perception of a program's success or failure evaluated by the manager and staff included the awareness of staff capability. In response to the question 'Staff kept control of the room,' 67% strongly agreed that the presenter or staff kept control of the room, and marked a 5 on a ratio scale 1-5. Staff discussion remarked it was 'great' one respondent said during Carfternoon. Another staff member stated, 'kids really enjoyed themselves' during World in a Jar. During Paws for Reading, one staff member commented 'programs like these are can happen in a safe place.' Others agreed staff were keeping control of the room with 20% marking a 4, out of a 1-5 scale ratio, during the program Food Architecture.

Changes. Perceptions of the success or failure of a program by managers and staff included the possibility of adaptations or changes. In the survey and questionnaires the managers and staff were asked to answer the following question, 'What changes would you make to the program?' The respondents evaluated the programs and while only 11 responded, 4 deemed the program needing no changes or "none" concerning Crafternoon, or World in a Jar and stated the 'program was great.' In consideration of the program Food Architecture, a few commented on the lack of available on the literature, or a need of an available display on the topic with one respondent stating, 'I would recommend having more books available for check out on research materials to inspire them and spark their creativity.' Another respondent declared, 'Availability of more books would prompt the kids to check them out of the library.' The biggest response for a change in the program was concerning Paws for Reading. There was the emphasis of having more than one dog during the program noting, 'If there were more dogs available, more kids could be accommodated at one

time.’ The staff were observed brainstorming, and discussion was overheard wondering how to get more dogs available for the program.

Recommendations by staff. The managers and staff provided recommendations for library programs. In response to the question, ‘Would you recommend this program why or why not?’ The respondents unanimously responded yes, in a survey and questionnaire created by the researcher. Positive responses were retrieved from evaluations on the program Food Architecture. One respondent occurred described, ‘How it was beneficial for kids to have a place to learn and have snacks.’ A response from LEGO Construction declared, ‘It allows the children to be creative.’ Another respondent says, ‘It Inspires creativity.’ Observations included the positive discussion from the staff concerning the programs evaluated because it brought the kids into the library.

Program perception by the managers and staff was an integral part of program development especially in alignment of the library’s mission. In response to the question, ‘Do you feel this program aligns with the Midwest Public Library mission statement?’ In a survey and questionnaire created by the researcher, all respondents agreed the program evaluated supported the mission. Multiple surveys regarding Paws for Reading stated positive information. One respondent mentioned, ‘It benefits the children and gets them excited about reading in general.’ Another staff member emphasized, ‘It provided a vehicle for enrichment, experiencing a unique way to be involved with literacy, and showing kids that animals can be therapeutic and capable of contributing to the community.’ Concerning the program Food Architecture one staff member stated, ‘The program provided a free service to the parents and children by providing an enriching environment and a safe place to explore and learn.’ One respondent discussed the

atmosphere of the World in a Jar program stating, 'It encourages the children to be creative and think outside the box.' For the program Discovery Club, one staff member stated, 'The library provided resources for the expansion of learning and development.' For the program Crafternoon, aligning with the mission, one staff member said, 'It was great.' Through observation of staff discussion, one staff member believed, 'if the resources and good programs are provided patrons will show.'

Research Question 3: How do library managers and staff perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library's mission?

Alignment of Midwest Public Library mission. The mission of Midwest Public Library District is to provide the resources and the services to enrich and enhance lives and expand perspectives (Midwest Public Library, 208, para. 1). The perception of the manager and staff concerning the program Paws for Reading determined the alignment of the mission with the pilot program. In response to the question, 'How do the managers and staff perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library's mission?' In a created survey and questionnaire, all responses deemed Paws for Reading as a positive addition to library programming. One response determined the program 'An extension of the library mission.' While another staff member intentionally included, 'It definitely aligns with the mission.' Another respondent mentioned the program 'Provided experiences kids may not receive at home.' One person mentioned, 'kids overcame fear.' Observations included staff noticing the kids were excited about reading. A manager stated, 'This program aligns with the libraries mission statement because it provided enrichment, education, a unique way to be involved with literacy, and great way to show that animals can be therapeutic and capable of contributing to the community.'

Other considerations for Paws for reading included more staff discussion. One staff member stated, “It teaches the children to be considerate of others because they have to take turns and be careful with the dog.” More responses included one staff member saying, ‘Dogs don’t critique.’ Another statement from a manager included, ‘It is unique and encourages kids to read aloud.’ Discussions proclaimed ‘Dogs and books are a fun combination,’ and that there were many children waiting to read to the dog. Other observations included staff members interested in helping with the program if the researcher was unavailable, while one staff member revealed they ‘Enjoyed seeing a loving, calm, atmosphere.’

Positive responses. A reoccurring theme appeared in manager and staff data was happiness, or contentment. Happiness was a positive emotion observed or discussed during the program. One staff member stated, ‘Yes I saw 2 young children afraid to be in the room with Kia the dog but because the handler was so calm and the dog so well trained they overcame their fear and had a great time.’ Another exclaimed, ‘Yes, gets kids excited about reading.’ Observations of staff determined the happiness of the youth services specialist was important and noted that perception on days the programs ran smoothly. Staff also loved seeing a dog in the library and looked forward to the program.

Critiques. Although most of the responses from the respondents were positive, there were some comments from staff and managers that were critiques. The most reoccurring criticism was not enough dogs provided or available for all the kids. One staff member said, ‘If there were more dogs available, more kids could be accommodated at one time.’ Another staff member commented, ‘If it was possible to

have 2 dogs things might run more quickly and kids could have more time with the dog, however 1 dog was a good fit for the day.’ Through observation and discussion staff was worried about the tardiness of the handler and recalled the first session when she did not show and stated, ‘The dog handler is pleasant but late and many people were there waiting for her to start.’

Research Question 4: How do parents/caregivers perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library’s mission?

The library’s mission was integral to the creation of programs and their development. Parents and caregivers’ perceptions of the library’s mission were reflected in a survey and questionnaire created by the researcher. In response to the question, “How do parents/caregivers perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the libraries mission?” All respondents, or 100% of the evaluations believed yes the pilot program Paws for Reading does relate to the libraries mission. One parent declared, ‘It was a wonderful opportunity to make reading enjoyable and inspired the kids.’ Another stated, ‘Promoting reading with a dog was a high incentive for the kids,’ especially. One parent also said, “It provided a service with literature exposure, community service and volunteerism.” Books were readily available for the kids to read gave them the opportunity to spend time with the dog and not wondering if there was a book on their level. A parent commented, ‘It makes reading fun and encouraging for the kids.’ While another patron stated, ‘I love the dog interaction with the kids and the active reading activity by the children.’

Comparison of staff/manager and parent/caregiver perceptions. Library staff that included clerks, library assistants, circulation assistants, librarians, and managers

evaluated Paws for Reading at the Midwest Public Library. In response to the question, ‘How did the perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library’s mission?’ the respondents had positive responses that concerned the perception of Paws for Reading and the library’s mission. Managers and staff responded with 100% yes that the pilot program Paws for Reading aligned with the library’s mission with one staff member that stated, ‘Yes this provides a chance to interact with animals to kids who may not be able to have one at home and materials to read.’ Another staff member believed, ‘A Loving, calm atmosphere, there were many children in the room reading.’ A Manger stated, ‘This program aligns with the libraries mission statement because it provided a vehicle for enrichment; participants also experienced a unique way to be involved with literacy, and it was also great to show the kids that animals can be therapeutic and capable of contributing to the community.’

In response to the question ‘How did the perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library’s mission?’ Patrons, which included parents, caregivers, grandparents, camp counselors and nanny, responded positively with 100% certainty that Paws for Reading aligned with the Midwest Public Library’s mission. One parent or caregiver enjoyed the experience and said, ‘I love the dog interaction with the kids and the active reading activity by the children.’ Another stated, ‘I think being with the dogs is a very good experience; the children don’t often get to read to something so patient with them.’ More patrons positively declared ‘It promoted reading with high incentive (dogs), used number turn taking.’ Some patrons believed, ‘It is a great program for children with disabilities and makes reading fun and encouraging for the kids.’

Positive responses. Patrons responded positively and happiness with the Paws for Reading program was observed. One parent said, 'Having books available for children was helpful and coloring was nice too.' Some patrons believed, 'It is a great program for children with disabilities and makes reading fun and encouraging for the kids.' Also stated by a parent, 'It absolutely provide a service with literature exposure to community service and volunteerism.' Observations of the parents and caregivers included upholding the interest of children. One parent said, 'The children become more excited to read around dogs.' Observations of parent discussion included, 'Kia is an amazing loving happy dog, just like the Libby, she was ready to respond to the kids and listen to the stories and the pictures that were shown.' Another caregiver commented, 'We had another younger group in tonight and it was ok she loved to pet and shown the pictures of the book no one read, they made up stories and had fun.' Parent's perception of happiness was noted in the observations. Patrons that participated were in a pleasant mood and happy to be there, some asked, 'If there were more opportunities to do this.'

Critiques. Most respondents who took part in the pilot program Paws for Reading had positive comments about the presentation. However, there were some respondents among the parents and caregivers who believed some things needed change. The biggest response was lack of dogs available. Some respondents said, 'If it would be possible to have another dog so that the children aren't waiting as long that would be nice.' 'One parent responded, 'Some kids wanted to read privately, but there were so many people and only one dog, and it really could not happen, and left some kids and parents frustrated.' Observations of the parents and caregivers affirmed the frustration of not

having more than one dog available for the participants. Other caregivers mentioned seating arrangement and said, 'The seats are limited so please extend it' or 'I think we need some seating arrangement of silence.' Two respondents believed the increased frequency of the program would be better.

Research Question 5: After participating in the pilot program Paws for Reading at the library, how do the managers and staff perceive the program?

Implementation of the pilot program Paws for Reading was created to add to the rotation of library programs. In response to the question, 'How did managers and staff perceive the pilot program Paws for Reading?' In a survey and questionnaire created by the researcher, managers and staff responded positively to the implementation and preparation of the program. One respondent believed, 'It was a pleasant learning experience for the kids, and fun for the staff.' Another staff member stated, 'It was fun to see a golden lying there on the floor waiting for the kids to read to her.' Staff was observed watching the presenter and patrons with the dog, and petting the dog themselves. Staff remarked 'Yes reading to dogs is non-threatening for kids.' Reaction included a staff member response about the atmosphere of the program, 'Yes, it was fun and the kids really enjoyed themselves.' Staff recognized the parent and caregiver interest in the program and heard the following comments during the evaluation, 'This provides a chance to interact with animals to kids who may not be able to have one at home and materials to read.' During one program, the researcher observed staff happy kids, colleagues, and the parents, and repeated patron's eagerness and happiness to be involved in the program.

While there were positive responses from the managers and staff concerning the implementation of the program, there were a few concerns. The first time Paws for Reading was executed the handler and dog did not show to the presentation. Observations included uncomfortable staff because of a large group of restless parents and caregivers, first program, and no dog. A manager commented ‘One cannot always predict if a program will go as planned and it was handled well.’ Although the researcher occupied the attendants, some were disappointed in the outcome. One attendant commented, ‘It was a shame the dog wasn’t here.’ Another manager asked the researcher ‘Should I step in and help’ when asked about talking with the program's coordinator. Nervousness of the staff every time the presenter was late was observed, and one staff member commented, ‘I wish they would come before 5 p.m.’

Expectations. Managers and staff have certain expectations in the development of a program presented in the library. In response to the question ‘How do managers and staff perceive the pilot program Paws for Reading in their library,’ the researcher created a questionnaire that determined the responses from the staff were positive. Managers and staff strongly agreed with 9 of the 10 evaluations or 90% of the respondents marking a 5 on the 1-5 ratio scale. One respondent noted, ‘I saw 2 young children afraid to be in the room with Kia the dog, but because the handler was so calm and the dog so well trained, they overcame their fear and had a great time.’

Although there was a positive response from managers and staff about the expectation on the pilot program Paws for Reading, 10% of the respondents believed that the expectations were not applicable. Observations included the staff and caregivers

participating in the program and watching the kids read to the dog with one respondent stating, 'It's an opportunity for kids to meet dogs and practice reading aloud.'

Program quality. The managers and staff evaluating the presentation determined if a program was an asset to the library. In response to the question, 'How do the managers and staff perceive the program quality of Paws for Reading?' the responses were positive. The respondents strongly agreed that the program content quality was present during the presentation with 90% of the respondents marking a 5 on a 1-5 ratio scale. Through observation, one respondent commented, 'Parent response to their child reading, and participation is good to see.' One parent commented 'Most definitely interaction for children with books, and reading to dogs bring much happiness.'

Although, there were many positive responses about program quality in the presentations at the library, 10 % of the respondents marked a 3 on a 1-5 ratio scale. This represented neutrality for the pilot program Paws for Reading. The manager who responded decided to neither agree nor disagree with programs content quality. Observations and discussion believed it the content quality would be helpful, 'Only to those learning to read.'

Educational value. The perception of the pilot program Paws for Reading by managers and staff determining the educational value was evaluated. In response to the question, 'How do the staff and managers perceive the educational value of the pilot program Paws for Reading,' most managers and staff strongly agreed that the educational value was present during the program with 67% of the respondents marking a 5 on a 1-5 ratio scale. Other respondents agreed that the educational value to the presentation was available, with 20% marking a 4 on the 1-5 ratio scale. One respondent replied, 'The

animals present a unique way for kids to connect with books, it was educational as well as enjoyable.’ Another manager replied, ‘The program was good for elementary or beginning readers.’

While most respondents strongly agreed or agreed that, the educational value was present in the program during evaluation, 13% marked a 3 on the 1-5 ratio scale representing neutral in educational value. One respondent believed, ‘Books and kids are a fun combination.’ Parents and caregivers were perceived happy with the pilot program Paws for Reading during the observation, with one respondent stating, ‘It was fun and the kids really enjoyed themselves.’

Research Question 6: How do parents/caregivers perceive the program Paws for Reading over all?

Parents and caregivers can determine the success or failure of a program in many ways with feedback, and repeat attendance to programs. In response to the question, ‘How do parents and caregivers perceive the pilot program Paws for Reading, the response was positive. Parents and Caregivers evaluations recorded in a survey and questionnaire created by the researcher regarding Paws for Reading with a 100% of the respondents regarding the experience positively. One parent replied, ‘Because of the experience you get to have a calm dog in a controlled and peaceful setting.’ Another parent said ‘Kids really enjoyed reading to Libby (dog); it’s a fun time.’ Parents and caregivers also agreed that the presenter was prepared with stories about Libby the dog, calm and understanding, and appreciated ‘efforts and understanding with the kids.’ The respondents also appreciated, ‘The interaction between the leader and the children.’ This interaction allowed the children to feel safe and relaxed in the room, and acknowledged

by the parents and caregivers through observation and discussion. Parents and caregivers also replied that they would like to see the program continue throughout the year. One parent explained, 'Having the opportunity to see my child read again, next year, new level and progressing.' Discussion included curious patrons wondering if the program will continue until branch closes and return after it opens. A statement from patron discussion included, 'Please continue through the year.' While another comment included, 'Increase the frequency.'

Most comments about the program Paws for Reading and the parent and caregiver perception were positive. In response to the question, 'What if anything would you liked changed about the program?' in a survey and questionnaire created by the researcher, comments were made towards improvements. Participants frequently discussed the addition of dogs to the program. One patron believed, 'If it would be possible to have another dog so that the children aren't waiting as long that would be nice.' One parent believed that coordinating the children better would be beneficial, 'If they stand while reading, every kid will put attention to hear the story.' While another parent exclaimed, 'I think we need some seating arrangement of silence.' Through observation and discussion, parents and caregivers were disappointed when the presenter and dog did not show for the first time. The following times, if the handler was late anxiety was felt because they did not want a reoccurrence of the first program. One parent asked a staff member, 'Is the dog coming tonight?' As mentioned previously, one parent wanted "Increased frequency of the program;" stating this as a positive change. While another wished, they could do this program at school stating, 'I would like the school to have dogs at school.' Overall

parents and caregivers responded positively on the survey when it came to Paws for Reading.

Social. The topic of socialization for children was discussed by parents and caregivers on the survey and questionnaire created by the researcher, and through discussion. The patrons remarked the importance of socialization on multiple occasions. One parent supposed, 'The involvement and inclusion of the children was apparent and the skills they were gaining by being together was crucial.' Another parent believed, 'This is so important because it included social skills like taking turns, listening to others, and patience.' One parent exclaimed, 'The interaction with the books and reading with and animals and dogs brings much happiness.' Another stated, 'because the kids are interested.' While one parent deemed, 'This is opportunity for kids, together reading.'

Children with special needs. Patrons and caregivers have children with different abilities. One parent commented it was "a great program for children with disabilities," and it was observed that children with multiple ranges of needs and abilities took part in the program. A mother with a severely autistic child had always been afraid to have her daughter around animals and commented, 'she responded beautifully.' Another comment came from a parent who agreed, 'I like the nice dog that is calm around my daughters especially my autistic daughter.' A caregiver responded to the evaluation stating, 'He was terrified to read or be in front of people, but going to a quiet place to read to the dog privately gave him the courage to try.' Another comment stated, 'I think being with the dogs is a very good experience; the children don't often get to read to something so patient with them.' The dog's patience with the children while she was pet and explored especially from the children with different abilities was recognized. Demonstrations of

what Kia the dog's abilities as a service dog to the families with needs started an open dialogue between the patrons and the handler.

Research Question 7: How do the parents or caregivers perceive the success of paws for Reading versus other library programs?

The perception of the pilot program Paws for Reading by the parents and caregivers in the library was evaluated. In a researcher created tool, the questionnaire and the survey gathered data answered the question, "How do the parents and caregivers perceive the success of Paws for reading versus other library programs?" The parent and the caregivers responded after evaluating and declaring Paws for Reading as a successful program. Positive comments retrieved from the surveys with 18 out of 18 participants would like to see the return of Paws for Reading with a unanimous 'Yes!' response. Other parents stated, 'The children would like to join again.' Other comments about Paws for Reading discussed the great opportunity it was for kids to read to dogs. One parent said, 'It's a nice experience and a great start for children beginning to read.' Another important issue that was discussed was the benefit of socialization and bringing the kids together, noting, 'Interaction for the children with books reading to animals like dogs bring much happiness. Another retorted agreement, 'Everything the dogs to the leaders to my child being around other children.' Most parents believed that the program was an asset for this ideal affirming, 'It's a great opportunity for kids to meet dogs and practice reading aloud.' Parents loved the idea of coming to the library and seeing a pet they do not have at home with one parent saying, 'Yes we loved being able to have a pet we cannot have at home.' Another stated, 'The children become more excited to read around dogs.'

Responses from the survey and questionnaire varied, but most stated that they would like to see more dogs available at the program for the children, and believed it would benefit the children because there would be less of a waiting time. Additional changes were mentioned like improving seating arrangements, playing soft music, or, in contrast, keeping the room silent. While three responses concluded that nothing needed to be changed; one parent specifically said, “Nothing it was fabulous, please continue through the year.”

The parents and caregivers responded positively about the other evaluated library programs. These programs included Discovery Club, American Girl Book Club, LEGO Construction, Crafternoon, Wacky Workout, Build a Better World, and Food Architect. In response to the question, “What did you like about the programs?” Most respondents believed that the experience of going to the programs were positive, noting it was well organized, and supplies that some parents may not have readily available. One parent said about Food Architecture, “The kids were able to be creative and problem solve, as a parent I appreciate having a space for the kids to do this kind of activity I didn’t have to plan or clean up.” Parents and caregivers attended the programs because their kids liked the subject presented. For example, one parent stated about Crafternoon, “My kids love crafts.” Many appreciated the hands-on activities, and ‘It’s fun to experience different type of activity at the library,’ another parent commented about World in a Jar. Through observation and discussion, parents believed the programs were fun with one parent noted, ‘It was a great way to break up the summer.’

Responses from the survey and questionnaire questions about the perceptions of the parent and caregivers about the library programs evaluated agreed that there should

be some changes. Some of the changes they would like to see at the library programs included more materials available for the children to check out on the topic noted in the evaluation for Food Architecture. Another important comment stemmed from Food Architecture, a parent stated, ‘One of my kids has an allergy to gluten so it would have been difficult for her to enjoy, she would not have been able to eat her creation, so some gluten free or allergy free options would be nice.’ Reoccurring response were noted and 3 of the 14 replies discussed for LEGO Construction included “more instruction,” “demonstration,” or “examples” would be helpful during the program.

Summary

The researcher presented findings and analysis for Null H1, RQ1, RQ2, RQ3, RQ4, RQ5, RQ6, and RQ7 in Chapter Four. The quantitative analysis generated evidence to suggest that the Pilot Program Paws for Reading indicated that there was not an increase in participation rates for Paws for Reading when compared to other library programs: American Girl Book Club Construction Art, Discovery Club, Food Architecture, LEGO Construction, World in a Jar, presented in summer 2017, specifically for ages 5-11 (K-fifth grade). When the qualitative data was analyzed, the perceptions were positive and declared the program successful. The following chapter discussed suggestions for the research pilot program and evaluated library programs to apply the results for enhancements in current programs and recommendations for further investigations.

Chapter Five: Discussion, Recommendations, and Reflection

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to gain the perspectives of library managers, staff, parents and caregivers of library programs, using an instrument of evaluation, of the pilot program Paws for Reading, along with other children's program specified for ages 5-11(K-5). Programs generated for children 5-11 (K-5) were evaluated to determine success of the program and whether the program aligned with the library's mission statement (the library was a place that offered means and conveniences that developed and improved the lives of the patron) (Midwest Public Library, 2018). The perceptions of the library staff and patrons determined if the program was worth repetition specifically when the library would re-open in 2019 after remodeling.

Discussion of Outcome Results

The current literature discussed libraries and their missions as an essential part of the community with library programs and materials that encouraged literacy, self and technological growth. As cited in Chapter Two, "Most library mission statements or philosophical stands maintain that the library aims to be an important piece of the educational growth for young patrons and a place for continuing education for adult patrons" (Amann & Carnesi, 2012, p. 9). Programs incorporated into the library curricula were assessed by specific groups of people and were asked to participate in the evaluation process. The first group included library staff that consisted of managers and staff. The second group was patrons of the library comprised of parents and caregivers. Both groups evaluated the programs with a researcher created instrument that specified elements required for success. These questions permitted the staff and patrons to express their

opinion on programs implemented for children 5-11 (K-5) or the pilot program Paws for Reading. Evaluators also determined if the programs that were presented aligned with the Midwest Public Library's mission. The information provided by managers, staff, parents and caregivers was significant for the research because it helped identify the perceptions through colleagues and patron's perspectives.

Programs evaluated included Paws for Reading, American Girl Book Club Crafternoon, Discovery Club, Food Architecture, LEGO Construction, World in a Jar, presented in summer 2017, specifically for ages 5-11 (K-fifth grade). All programs met with positive responses from the evaluators, with few adaptations or changes suggested for the programs. As stated in Chapter Two, "Of all the elements contributing to the positive library experience, programming is high on the list of the most important" (Kieserman, 2014, para. 15). The recommendations for Paws for Reading included additional dogs for the participants, adjusted seating arrangements, and a timelier handler. Other programs like LEGO Construction and Food Architecture suggested more directions, examples, and more materials to check out. Discovery Club, Crafternoon, and World in a Jar had no suggestions for alterations.

The researcher created programs and the pilot program Paws for Reading were incorporated into the library's program line-up for June, July, and August of 2017. After each presentation, the researcher collected questionnaires and surveys from the parents and caregivers to analyze and compare data with the managers and staff. Observational notes were taken by the researcher during the programs evaluated specifically notes on the program, conversations and perceptions of patrons and staff, and the researcher. The researcher gathered, analyzed, and compared data from the three instruments, then coded

the information and located common themes. A *t*-test was run to see if there was a significant difference between two independent means for the hypothesis, which discussed the attendance of Paws for Reading versus the other summer programs.

Although research and information about libraries and its growth was found, little research was created on the evaluation process for children's programs in a library setting. The researcher created instruments that consisted of a survey and questionnaire combined with observation allowed the researcher to gain insight on the perceptions of the library programs implemented into the Midwest public libraries children's program line up from parents, caregivers, library managers and staff. Perspectives and perceptions gathered from the patrons and staff indicated whether the program should continue, and followed the mission of the Midwest Public Library.

The hypothesis stated, 'There will be an increase in participation rates for Paws for Reading when compared to other library programs: American Girl Book Club Construction Art, Discovery Club, Food Architecture, LEGO Construction, World in a Jar, presented in summer 2017, specifically for ages 5-11 (K-fifth grade).'

Based on the results the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis because there was no significant difference in the attendance rates. The average mean was compared between the children's programs and Paws for Reading and the increased attendance rate was visible. The first research question guiding the study was 'How do the library managers and staff perceive current programming at their library?'

The researcher identified the manager and staff's perception of programming through an evaluation process. Through this process, based on the results the managers and staff believed the children's programs and new additions like Paws for Reading were

satisfactory. The results of the evaluation indicated that most programs did not need removal, or unnecessary adjustments. The modifications suggested included more information available on the subject to look at and check out in the program like Food Architecture, and LEGO Construction.

Based on the results and the themes found represented the following:

Identified emerging themes were present and based on the research, managers evaluated these and staff and included (a) prepared (b) time (c) research available (d) room efficiency (e) introduction and expectation (f) age appropriate. Based on the results managers and staff perceived that the children's programs evaluated were positive additions to the Midwest Public Library.

Research Question 2: After a program has been created, produced, and performed, how do the library managers and staff perceive the program's success or failure?

In evaluation of perception of programs success and failure, managers and staff were asked, 'How did the Program meet my expectations most of the respondents believed library programming met their expectations.' Based on the results, library managers and staff believed programs quality was represented by programs (a) expectations, (b) program quality, (c) educational value, (d) room control, and (e) changes recommendations by staff. These expectations were embodied in the programs created for children ages 5-11 (K-5) and in the pilot program Paws for Reading. Educational value was one theme that reported lower than expected with only 47% of the staff responding with a high mark of 5 on a ratio scale 1-5.

Research Question 3: How do library managers and staff perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library's mission?

The mission of Midwest Public Library District is to provide the resources and the services to enrich and enhance lives and expand perspectives (Midwest Public Library 2018, para. 1). The perception of the manager and staff concerning the program Paws for Reading determined the alignment of the mission with the pilot program. In response to the question, ‘How do the managers and staff perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library’s mission?’ Based on the results most of the managers and staff believed the program expectations were aligned with the mission. Managers and staff thought (a) alignment of Midwest Public Library’s mission, (b) positive responses, (c) critiques, were defined enough in the response to estimate that the mission was delivered in the children’s program ages 5-11 (K-5), and the pilot program Paws for Reading.

Research Question 4: How do parents/caregivers perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the library’s mission?

The perception of the parents and caregivers determining if the library’s mission was upheld was asked in a survey and questionnaire created by the researcher. In response to the question, “How do parents/caregivers perceive Paws for Reading in relation to the libraries mission?” Based on the results, all respondents, or 100% of the evaluations believed yes the pilot program Paws for Reading does relate to the libraries mission. Respondent believed that the program Paws for Reading fulfilled the expectations and values in the mission. Managers and staff looked forward to seeing the dog and the happiness of the kids in the library.

Research Question 5: After participating in the pilot program Paws for Reading at the library, how do the managers and staff perceive the program?

In response to the question, ‘How did managers and staff perceive the pilot program Paws for Reading?’ Based on the results, managers and staff responded positively to the implementation and preparation of the program. As mentioned in Chapter Four, one respondent believed, ‘It was a pleasant learning experience for the kids, and fun for the staff.’ Managers and staff perceived the pilot program Paws for Reading as beneficial. They surveyed (a) expectations, (b) program quality, (c) educational value, and believed that the program demonstrated positively in each category examined.

Research Question 6: How do parents/caregivers perceive the program Paws for Reading over all?

As discussed, parents and caregivers can determine the success or failure of a program in many ways with feedback, and repeat attendance to programs. In response to the question, ‘How do parents and caregivers perceive the pilot program Paws for Reading,’ the response was positive. Parents and caregivers’ evaluations recorded in surveys and questionnaires created by the researcher regarding Paws for Reading with a 100% of the respondents regarding the experience positively. Stated previously in Chapter Four, one parent replied, ‘Because of the experience you get to have a calm dog in a controlled and peaceful setting.’ Positive responses were based on (a) social, (b) children with special needs among other attributes. Many parents and caregivers replied that program was beneficial for their kids and were looking forward to its return when the new library opened.

Research Question 7: How do the parents or caregivers perceive the success of paws for Reading versus other library programs?

In a researcher created instrument, the questionnaire and the survey gathered results answered the following question, ‘How do the parents and caregivers perceive the success of Paws for reading versus other library programs?’ As stated previously in Chapter Four, the parent and the caregivers responded after evaluating and declaring Paws for Reading as a successful program. Positive comments retrieved from the surveys with 18 out of 18 participants would like to see the return of Paws for Reading with a unanimous ‘Yes!’ Other contributor responded positively to children’s programs ages 5-11 (K-5). The parents and caregivers responded positively about the other evaluated library programs. Previously stated in Chapter Four it mentioned that these programs included Discovery Club, American Girl Book Club, LEGO Construction, Crafternoon, Wacky Workout, Build a Better World, and Food Architect. In response to the question, “What did you like about the programs?” Most respondents believed that the experience of going to the programs were positive, noting it was well organized, and supplies that some parents may not have readily available. As stated in Null H1, There will not be a difference in participation rates for Paws for Reading when compared to other library programs, and even though the NH was not rejected, the mean was higher and the responses were favorable. The attendance rates were not significantly higher but Paws for Reading responses and positive reactions promised a return of the program when the library opens in early 2019.

During the summer months the new program Paws for Reading was incorporated into the Midwest Public Library’s events and programming. The perceptions and perspectives of the patrons and the staff were evaluated to determine if the program met the library’s values that stated, “The mission of the [Midwest Public Library was] to

provide the resources and services to enrich individual minds, enhance lives and expand perspectives” (Midwest Public Library, 2018, para. 1). A program such as Paws for Reading was received and accepted by the parents, caregivers, managers and staff and most participants were happy with the program. Even though the quantitative results explained that Paws for Reading did not have significant growth in attendance compared to other children’s programs incorporated into the summer line up, the positive reactions to the program were welcomed and evaluated. Once assessed by the researcher, the results determined the popularity of the program, or one similar, allowed for its continuation as once the new branch opens in the spring of 2019. Patrons and staff responded with a unanimous ‘Yes’ when asked if they believed the program aligned with the library’s mission. In addition, the parents, caregivers, managers, and staff recommended having the program again. Patron and staff’s involvement with the evaluations for children’s programs ages 5-11 (K-5) were validated by the responses.

The results of the attendance for the programs were unexpected. The researcher believed there would be a significant increase of attendance in Paws for reading versus the other children’s programs ages 5-11 (K-5), although the mean was higher there was no significant difference in the attendance rates. Previous research from groups like Support Dogs Inc. (2016) discovered, “Reading to dogs can boost reading skills in children as well as help with emotional and social skills” (para. 1). Popularity of reading to a dog in the library allowed for parents and children to feel involved while moving forward with literacy goals. Kelly (2016) believed, “Children who read to dogs also reported a greater enjoyment of reading than children who did not read to dogs” (para. 1). Evidence supported that Paws for Reading would have a greater attendance rate

compared to the attendance of the other children's programs 5-11(K-5), but when statistically compared, it did not. The literature supported the supportive nature of the animals "Dogs are viewed as a non-threatening entity to promote reading, writing, and increased interaction and social skills in the child" (Support Dogs Inc., 2016, para. 1). The respondents agreed especially with the social and interactive aspect of the Paws for Reading program, and requested the renewal of the program when the new library opens.

Recommendations for Library Programming

More programs involving therapy animals. Comparing the research from the Humane Society's (2016) Shelter Buddies program along with Paws for Reading in the library setting would be a viable continued study. Shelter Buddies was another program that focused on the benefits of children, dogs and reading, and evaluation of the parents' perception on the benefits of the program would be collected. Based on the feedback from the evaluations, observations, and the literature, introducing more therapy animals in the library setting would be beneficial for both patrons and staff. In positive comments both mentioned, 'They looked forward to the days when the dog was here.' Patrons and staff would welcome other programs that introduced working animals. Allowing the patrons to get more involved with the therapy animal would strengthen the community base as the St. Louis Blues hockey team were doing with DUO a faction of Support Dogs Inc. (Constantinesco, 2018). Therefore, even though there was no significant difference in attendance for Paws for Reading compared to the other children's programs ages 5-11 (K-5), the mean was higher and evaluations were positive. Due to the success of the Paws for reading program and the patron and staff positive response, the library should recommend more programs with animals, and more programs with therapy animals.

Mission alignment. Transparency with the library mission added to program development would be useful for understanding the intent of the presentation. The Midwest Public Library's mission was developed to enhance the growth and development of the community. As stated previously, "the Midwest county library's mission is to provide the resources and services to enrich individual minds, enhance lives and expand perspectives" (Midwest Public Library, 2018, para. 1). Acknowledgment of the mission to the public would be a positive addition to the delivered programming. Displaying the mission openly during all programs presented helped and awareness would increase in both patron and staff. The library created an understanding by adding the mission, and a greater response from people when asking for their opinions on programs.

More evaluations. Library programming varied from fun to educational and all programs are created for the benefit of the patron. The creation of library evaluation tool for multiple forms of programs presented at the library would be a positive addition to the programming spectrum. An evaluation process allowed the patrons and staff to recommend programs or changes they felt appropriate, and feel they were a valuable part of the community. This process eliminated stale programs and informed others about some programs that were not getting as much attention. Another essential aspect of the researcher-created evaluation tool was the visibility of the library's mission. Program awareness was created with the evaluation and allowed the participants to record their perception of library presentations. More evaluation tools created for all the library programs would give a wider perspective on what patrons and staff think about the presentations, and connect with the mission of the library.

Use of technology. In a world where technology was mainstream, it was important to point out that 19% of the patrons received the program information by some form of technology, while the most relied on paper or oral communication. These included social media sights like Facebook and Twitter, or email updates from the library telling the patron about programs. Promotion of the technology and resources helped the library stay relevant in today's society. Pushing the immediacy of technology was beneficial for patrons and staff because it was a way to get the programs promoted in an economical and timely way. When more people noticed the library social media it would encourage more participation in many areas. More electronic media ways of communication are impressed upon people in this century. Immediate updates from certain servers helped with promotions. There are possible ways to get more surveys out with email addresses and app reminders. New time saver apps such as Remind me, can alert people about the survey they needed to take. For example, text alerts from a business or institution reminding the patron about programs like new technology classes or painting class can help a patron. Keeping patrons abreast of the new programs created for them promoted the mission and philosophy of servant leadership because the presentations were created for the betterment of others. Requiring an email address or phone number at registration for the assessed program could allow the researcher to text or send (with permission) a Google survey to the participants, thus having more opportunities for patron feedback. If patrons followed the library on social media or emedia, the patrons would be more up to date in a shorter amount of time. Promotion of technology as a resource and benefit for staff and patrons would not exclude patrons that needed word of mouth, or print resources.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Recommendations for future studies included the research of another company or organization that brought more dogs to the session. More information and research on therapy dogs would be valuable for participants. Therapy dogs were an integral part of the study. The training and behavior of a therapy dog made it possible for the children and parents to feel safe and participate. Each participant benefited from the program and the dogs. The lessons learned, reading practiced, and time spent was because the therapy dog was there to provide a safe, calm, and welcoming atmosphere in the library setting. There were a few non-profit businesses in the area that brought dogs to places like libraries for reading practice. Certified places in the area included organizations like The Humane Society (2016), DUO or Support Dogs Inc. (2016), Whiskers and Tales and few others. Both staff and patrons exclaimed that more dogs would make the program better for the kids. The researcher believed more animals would increase the involvement of the participants, and individuals would get to spend a greater amount of time with the dog. If the group who provided Paws for Reading, Support Dogs Inc. or DUO was unable to provide more dogs than another organization would be researched. Another recommendation included changing the time of day the program was presented. Even though the program was offered during the summer months during the pilot, the researcher believed if there were a continuation of the program throughout the school year the time would need to change from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. or later to give children a chance to get home from school.

Limitations

Limitations also occurred in the creation of the pilot program Paws for Reading occurred due to time. The first limitation occurred because the library was in line to undergo construction and was closed for over a year. To avoid the construction, the researcher developed and incorporated the pilot program during the summer of 2017, and compared Paws for Reading with the other summer programs for children aged 5-11 (K-5). Limitations also occurred because the summer schedule was filled with multiple programs for all ages. Location of a consistent date and time with an open room available for the developed program was not easy. The importance of finding a regular time allowed the staff and patrons to rely on the constancy of the date and time. Time was essential for the researcher and the introduction of the program. Possibilities of program introduction and evaluations during another time of year, specifically the children's school year.

Adjustment in the methodology occurred in the reconfiguration of the evaluations. The researcher provided evaluations for each of the children's programs that were offered for age groups 5-11 (K-12), and the information retrieved from the patron and staff appraisals was valuable. Adjustment of the instrument included asking the patrons the following questions, "What are the reasons, you visit the library?" "When looking for a program for a child, what kind of program are you looking for?" "Does the programming fit with your vision of the libraries mission?" "If there was something more the library could provide for you, what would it be?" Evaluations available at every program allowed the patrons to contribute and helped develop the best presentations for the

families. Understanding the needs of the patrons helped with the construction, adaptation and integration of all programming for children, not just the Paws for Reading.

Interviews and focus groups should be included in a future study. Conversations with managers and staff members would develop greater insight of library programming. Observations were extremely helpful but the expansion of the managers and staff's thoughts was important. Interviews and focus groups with a core group of patrons to get their opinion on the library, programs and included more thoughts, and perceptions could be of great benefit. Although the survey and questionnaire had the Midwest Public Library's mission statement printed on it, understanding if those who evaluated the programs really knew or understood the mission could have been discussed in interviews and focus groups.

Creating incentives for the patron to fill out a survey or questionnaire would have been productive. Patrons could receive incentives such as raffles for gift cards, leveled book baskets, library tote upon completion of a filled-out survey. Incentives offered for all the programs assessed because of an imbalance of responses retrieved from the presentations. More people responded to Paws for Reading than other programs, which meant the response rate for surveys was higher than the other children's programs assessed ages 5-11 (K-5). Some programs had fewer parents available because children were the only participants available in the room. There was a noticed higher response rate with the programs the researcher was leading and a low to zero response rate in others. Other programs had the researcher available for discussion, and more likely to fill out the survey and questionnaire, but not in all the presentations. More parents were curious

about Paws for Reading and stayed in the same room with their child allowing for survey and questionnaire access, thus the response rate was higher.

Conclusion

This study introduced a pilot program into the Midwest Public Library and incorporated the use of an evaluation system that allowed parents and staff to assess library programming. These evaluations provided a way for the researcher to understand the perceptions of the patrons. The study helped the researcher develop an evaluation to use for further research that included more patron and staff feedback in the development of children's programs. In the development of pilot program, Paws for Reading the researcher created an instrument that permitted the parents, caregivers, managers and staff to evaluate children's programs ages 5-11(K-5). The researcher-developed evaluation examined perceptions of the patrons and library staff. A primary mission of the Midwest Public Library was to provide and develop the patron in positive ways and assessments of perceptions and perspective was gathered to determine if the programs created for the children age 5-11 (K-5) followed protocol. The attendance rates were calculated and it was determined that even though Paws for Reading was perceived to be exceedingly well liked by patrons and staff, there was no significant difference in attendance rates compared to other children's programs in the same grouping. Other programs assessed by the caregivers, parents, managers, and staff found library programming appropriate and fit the mission statement of the Midwest Public Library. The literature reviewed for the study established that therapy animals made a significant effect on the people with whom they worked. Therapy animals allowed people to make gains in many areas, including reading in the library setting.

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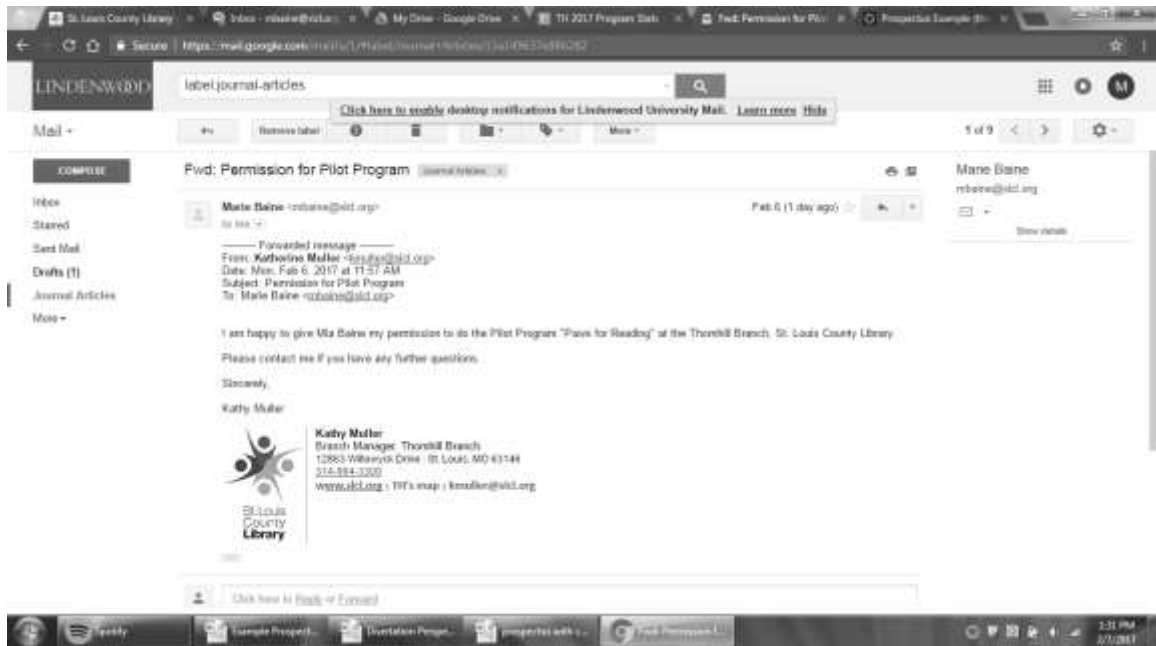
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Appendix A: Permission E-mail to Conduct Study: Paws for Reading



Appendix B: Survey/Questionnaire for Parents/Caregivers

Name of the Program Attending: _____

Please Answer All the Questions on Both sides of the Paper:

Please Circle the following:

1. Are you ...

A. Parent/Caregiver

B. Other _____

2. How many library programs do you participate in throughout the year?

A. 0-none

C. 6-11

E. 17 or more

B. 1 to 5

D. 12-16

3. When do you visit the library most? (Circle all that apply)

A. Daytime

C. Summer Months

E. Winter

B. Evening

D. Academic school year

4. How did hear about this program?

A. Social Media

C. Print or News media

B. Librarian

D. Word of mouth

5. What did you like about the program?

6. What, if anything would you like to see changed about the program?

7. Was the performer/presenter prepared? What did you like or dislike about the performer/presenter?

8. Should the library offer this program again? Why or Why not?

9. The mission of the library is to help provide the resources and services to enrich individual minds, enhance lives and expand perspectives. Did the program demonstrate or provide this? Yes or No please explain.

Appendix C: Program Evaluation for Library Staff

Please circle one: Staff Administrator Volunteer Other_____

Library Branch Name_____

Program Attended_____

Presenter's/ Program's Name_____

Rate the following with rating scale 5: Outstanding, 4: above Average, 3: Average, 2: below Average, 1: Poor and N/A: Not Applicable

Program met my expectations:	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Presenter was prepared:	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Convenience of day and time:	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Program content quality:	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Educational Value:	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Information available to research or check out:	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Room Equipped and clean:	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Introduction/expectations announced by staff	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Staff "Kept control of the room"	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

What age group would best fit the program (Adult, teen, kid, families, N/A)

What changes would you make to the program?

Would you recommend this program? Why or why not?

Do you feel this program aligns with the St. Louis County Library's Mission statement?

The mission of the St. Louis County Library District is to provide the resources and services to enrich individual minds, enhance lives and expand perspectives. Yes or No please explain

Appendix D: Observational Data from Paws for Reading Sessions

Observational Data Instrument Created by Robyne Elder (see next page for permission)

How observational data was gathered: while the children were reading to the dog, the researcher was walking around the room assisting with any questions or problems (as a part of her Youth Services Specialist job); while doing so, she makes observational notes on the following:

Scorers' behavior/feedback while working with the volunteers from Paws for Reading scores (problems, positives, questions, etc.):

Negative behavior/feedback							Positive behavior/feedback		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Notes:

Scorers' behavior/feedback toward the parent and caregiver's responses:

Negative behavior/feedback							Positive behavior/feedback		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Notes:

Scorers' behavior/feedback toward the staff and administration response:

Negative behavior/feedback							Positive behavior/feedback		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Notes:

Scorers' behavior/feedback toward their own program implementation strategies after hearing the participants' response:

Negative behavior/feedback

Positive behavior/feedback

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Notes:

Scorers' behavior/feedback toward the youth services specialist and program readiness for the public library:

Negative behavior/feedback

Positive behavior/feedback

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Notes:

LINDENWOOD

I give permission for Marie Baine to use my Observational Data instrument.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "RElder". The letters are connected and written in a cursive style.

Robyne Elder

Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership

School of Education, Lindenwood University

Appendix E: Adult Consent Form for Parents and Caregivers

LINDENWOOD

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

“A Mixed-Methods Evaluation on the Pilot Program Paws for Reading in a Midwest Public Library”

Principal Investigator: Marie Baine Telephone: 314-249-1703; E-mail:

mtb104@lionmail.lindenwood.edu

Participant _____

Contact info

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Marie Baine under the guidance of Dr. Robyne Elder. The purpose of this research is to create an evaluation of programming for future use at the St. Louis County Library.

2. a) Your participation will involve the completion of the evaluation of the library program, provided by the principal investigator

b) The amount of time involved in your participation will be 5-10 minutes of your time following the program.

Approximately 40-75 participants will be involved in this research at the St. Louis County Library.

3. There are no more than minimal anticipated risks associated with this research.

4. There are no direct benefits for you participating in this study. However, your participation will contribute to the knowledge about library program quality and evaluation.

5. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in this research study or to withdraw your consent at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or to withdraw.

6. We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation that may result from this study and the information collected will remain in the possession of the investigator in a safe location.

7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the Investigator, Marie Baine, (314) 248-1703 or the Supervising Faculty, Dr. Robyne Elder (636) 949-4332. You may also ask questions of or state concerns regarding your participation to the Lindenwood Institutional Review Board (IRB) through contacting Dr. Marilyn Abbott, Provost at mabbott@lindenwood.edu or 636-949-4912.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I consent to my participation in the research described above.

Participant's Signature Date

Participant's Printed Name

Signature of Principal Investigator Date

Investigator Printed Name

Appendix F: Adult Consent Form for Library Staff

LINDENWOOD

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

“A Mixed-Methods Evaluation on the Pilot Program Paws for Reading in a Midwest Public Library”

Principal Investigator: Marie Baine Telephone: 314-249-1703; E-mail:

mtb104@lionmail.lindenwood.edu, or mbaine@slcl.org

Participant _____

Contact info

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Marie Baine under the guidance of Dr. Robyne Elder. The purpose of this research is to create an evaluation of programming for future use at the St. Louis County Library.

2. a) Your participation will involve the completion of the evaluation of the library programs provided by the principal investigator

b) The amount of time involved in your participation will be 5-10 minutes of your time following the program.

Approximately 15-20 staff participants will be involved in this research at the St. Louis County Library.

3. There are no more than minimal anticipated risks associated with this research.

4. There are no direct benefits for you participating in this study. However, your participation will contribute to the knowledge about library program quality and evaluation.

5. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in this research study or to withdraw your consent at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or to withdraw.

6. We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation that may result from this study and the information collected will remain in the possession of the investigator in a safe location.

7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the Investigator, Marie Baine, (314) 248-1703 or the Supervising Faculty, Dr. Robyne Elder (636) 949-4332. You may also ask questions of or state concerns regarding your participation to the Lindenwood Institutional Review Board (IRB) through contacting Dr. Marilyn Abbott, Provost at mabbott@lindenwood.edu or 636-949-4912.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I consent to my participation in the research described above.

Participant's Signature

Date

Participant's Printed Name

Signature of Principal Investigator Date

Investigator Printed Name

Appendix G: NIH Certificate



Vitae

Colleges and Universities

1997-2001: Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Public Management at Lindenwood University

2002-2003- Certificate in Radio Broadcasting from the Broadcast Center

2003-2005: Master of Arts in Teaching from Lindenwood University;

2015-present: pursuing Doctorate of Education in Instructional Leadership (expected graduation date in May of 2019) from Lindenwood University

Teaching Employment History

2010-present: Youth Services Specialist at St. Louis County Library

2010: Teacher at ACE Learning Centers

2007-2010: Second Grade Teacher at Hazelwood School District

2005-2007: Fourth Grade Teacher at Hazelwood School District