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The Effects of Extrinsic Motivation on High School Attendance

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The Effects of Extrinsic Motivation

on High School Attendance

by

Eric Conrad Wilken

November 2016

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

The Effects of Extrinsic Motivation
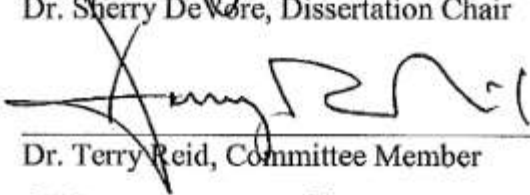
on High School Attendance

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Eric Conrad Wilken

This Dissertation has been approved as partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

Lindenwood University, School of Education

Dr. Sherry DeVore, Dissertation Chair

11-9-16
Date

Dr. Terry Reid, Committee Member

11-9-16
Date

Dr. Dennis Cooper, Committee Member

11-9-16
Date

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 at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree.

Full Legal Name: Eric Conrad Wilken

Signature: _Eric Wilken_   Date: _11-9-16_

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Abstract

The Missouri School Improvement Plan's fourth standard addresses the importance of attendance to the accreditation of school districts. Because of this standard many school districts are in need of a successful plan to increase attendance; therefore, this study was designed to determine the extrinsic motivators educators use to encourage attendance and the influence the motivators have on students. The population for this study included accredited public school districts in the west central and southwest regions of Missouri. A stratified sample consisting of 45 high schools was selected from public school districts with 400 or fewer students in grades K-12 during the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years. From this group, 20 high school principals agreed to participate in the study. Principals completed a survey which was designed to identify extrinsic motivators used to increase attendance rates in their respective districts. Survey results indicated nine different motivators were used among the 20 schools with a final exam exemption identified as the most frequently used and most effective motivator. Attendance data from the Annual Performance Report (APR) for each participating high school were collected. The data revealed only four of the 20 high schools recorded an increase in average daily attendance in school years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015; however, the majority of the 20 high schools' attendance rates were higher than the average daily attendance rate of the state. When attendance rates were reviewed with the survey results, there was little or no increase in attendance rates based on the number of motivators used in the participating high schools.

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Chapter One: Introduction

U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King, Jr. voiced his opinion about the critical issue of student absenteeism in a recent report by the U.S. Department of Education (2016a). King stated the following:

> Ensuring kids actually make it to school is a vital part of leveling the playing field. Just missing a couple of days of school a month can mean the difference between dropping out and graduating on time. Absences add up. That's why eliminating chronic absenteeism is a critical part of our work at the federal, state, and local level to ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed. (as cited in U.S. Department of Education, 2016a, para. 4)

Balfanz and Byrnes (2012) firmly believed students need to attend school daily in order to be successful.

Nationwide, up to 7.5 million students are chronically absent from school each year (Balfanz & Chang, 2013). The U.S. Department of Education (2016b) reported, "Chronic absenteeism occurs at every grade level but is more prevalent in some grades than others… rates are highest in high school, according to data in the 2013-14 Civil Rights Data Collection" (Lost Along the Way section, para. 1). Chronic absence refers to 10% or more of the school year, which is 18 or more days in a 180-day school year (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

Students who are chronically absent in one year are often chronically absent in sequential years (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Students who are absent even a day of school have also lost the opportunity to learn (Henderson, Hill, & Norton, 2014). Multiple missed learning opportunities leads to lower test scores and increases the risk of student

dropouts (Ambrose, 2013; Henderson et al., 2014). If students are not in school, they have fewer opportunities to learn important subject matter which will help them become successful in the future (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

Students have a natural desire to learn (Skoglund & Ness, 2011). However, each student is unique and requires individualized motivation (Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012). Whatever amount of motivation students bring into school, it will be affected either positively or negatively by the school environment (Wang & Eccles, 2013).

There is no formula for motivating students (Rivera, 2015). A student's motivation to excel in the classroom may depend upon everything from small rewards to larger, more expensive rewards (Rivera, 2015). Of course, not all learners are motivated by similar principles, requests, or desires (Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012). What works for one student may or may not work for the rest of the class.

According to Chorneau (2014), "Attendance has also shown repeatedly to be a strong predictor of student performance" (p. 1). After grades, attendance habits have been said to be the best indicator of academic performance (Chorneau, 2014). Larson and Keiper (2013) believed finding what motivates each student individually will help increase student achievement.

School districts have been evaluating student academic achievements for decades. The constant evaluation of student achievement is due, in part, to Missouri public school laws and federal and state educational standards (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [MODESE], 2014c; U.S. Department of Education, 2015). All Missouri public schools are faced with pressure to improve each and every year from the MODESE as measured by Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and an Annual Performance

Report (APR) (MODESE, 2014c). This pressure requires educators to search for additional methods to encourage students to perform.

Rewarding academic achievement and positive behavior has become standard since the introduction of school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports (SWPBIS) (Nocera, Whitbread, & Nocera, 2014; Simonsen & Myers, 2015). The findings in a study conducted by Freeman et al. (2016) were as follows:

> Despite some of the difficulties of SWPBIS implementation at the high school level, evidence suggests positive relationships between SWPBIS implementation and outcomes in behavior and attendance for high schools that implement with fidelity. (Abstract)

Continued study of the connection between SWPBIS and high school attendance is necessary, especially for those students with behavior issues (Flannery & Sugai, 2009). According to Flannery and Sugai (2009), these students "have difficulty meeting attendance, academic, and social requirements of the mainstream high school setting which creates additional stress for themselves, teachers, and administrators" (p. 117).

Techniques used by school districts include monetary rewards, special recognition, extra field trips, recognition in front of peers, and opportunities to attend and participate in extracurricular activities (Chute, 2014; Harms, 2012; Leff, 2012; Ruiz, 2015). Schools may also reward students with parties to promote academic achievement and attendance within high schools (Chute, 2014; Harms, 2012; Leff, 2012; Ruiz, 2015). To determine which techniques or motivators are effective to increase the high school attendance rate of students, this study was conducted to investigate extrinsic motivation and attendance rate.

Background of the Study

United States' citizens are concerned about the country's educational position and rank when compared to other countries across the world (Zeitvogel, 2010). However, the main concern for Missouri is state ranking in the education system compared to the other states in America (MODESE, 2010). This concern has led Missouri to set the goal of Missouri's Top 10 by 20 (MODESE, 2010).

Concern over student standardized achievement scores has led to suggestions and considerations for year-round schooling, charter schools, vouchers, open enrollment, and consolidation of districts (Children's Education Council of Missouri, 2010; Missouri Department of Higher Education, 2010). Other suggestions have included merit pay for teachers, education from preschool through college, professional learning communities, and response to intervention (Children's Education Council of Missouri, 2010; Missouri Department of Higher Education, 2010). Reaching the Top 10 by 20 goal has raised achievement standards for Missouri public school districts (MODESE, 2010).

According to Amrai, Motlagh, Zalani, and Parhon (2011) and Özder and Motorcan (2013), research has determined there is a significant relationship between motivation and academic achievement. High levels of motivation and participation in learning have constantly been linked to increased levels of student achievement (Atta & Jamil, 2012). However, if the student has a history of chronic absenteeism, academic achievement levels suffer (Chorneau, 2014).

Motivating students is a concern for those in education. According to Awan, Noureen, and Naz (2011), "Motivating students so they can succeed in school is one of the greatest challenges of this century" (p. 72). To be motivated means to be inspired to

take on a task (Deci & Ryan, 2000). A person who feels no desire to accomplish a task is described as being unmotivated, whereas someone who is energized toward an end is considered to be motivated (Singh, 2013).

The two main types of motivation are intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation from within based on personal interest, enjoyment, and satisfaction rather than a separate consequence (Acevedo, 2012; Deci & Ryan, 2000). Intrinsic motivation is visible in young infants as they have a desire to explore their environment by consistently attempting to crawl, grasp, and throw new objects they encounter (Carlton & Winsler, 1998). Adults also have intrinsic motivation while completing crossword puzzles, drawing, or gardening for enjoyment. Having intrinsic motivation is important when taking the critical developmental areas of social, cognitive, and physical concepts into consideration, because by acting upon an inherent interest one grows in knowledge and skills (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Extrinsic motivation refers to value not being found in the activity itself, but rather the rewards or consequences of the activity (Hall & Goetz, 2013). Deci and Ryan (2000) described extrinsic motivation as when an activity is done to attain a separable outcome. An example of extrinsic motivation is when students receive pizza for reading books (Ginsberg, 2011). Extrinsic motivation thus contrasts with intrinsic motivation. There are four major elements researchers agree contribute to motivation: competence, control/autonomy, interest/value, and relatedness (Usher, 2012). According to Usher (2012):

The interplay of these dimensions—along with other dynamics such as school

climate and home environment—is quite complex and varies not only among

different students but also within the same student in different situations. Still,

this basic framework can be helpful in designing or analyzing the impact of

various strategies to increase students' motivation and their ability and autonomy

to accomplish good work. (p. 2)

Usher (2012) concluded, "On the whole, research shows that reward programs can have

positive effects if they are implemented thoughtfully, carefully, and within a set of

guidelines, and if they address the four dimensions of motivation. . . ." (p. 3).

Theoretical Framework

This research was framed around the self-determination sub-theory of organismic

integration theory (OIT) developed by Deci and Ryan (2000). The OIT proposes external

regulations can be regulated internally, and thus extrinsic motivations can become self-

determined motivation (McInerney, 2004). The theory suggests people engage in

behaviors unlikely to be intrinsically motivated due to the need for relatedness (Deci &

Ryan, 2000). Gagne and Deci (2005) suggested, "Activities that are not interesting (i.e.,

that are not intrinsically motivating) require extrinsic motivation, so their initial

enactment depends upon the perception of a contingency between the behavior and a

desired consequence such as implicit approval or tangible rewards" (p. 334).

As shown in Figure 1, the OIT proposes different types of extrinsic motivation

exist and fall along a continuum of self-determination between amotivation and intrinsic
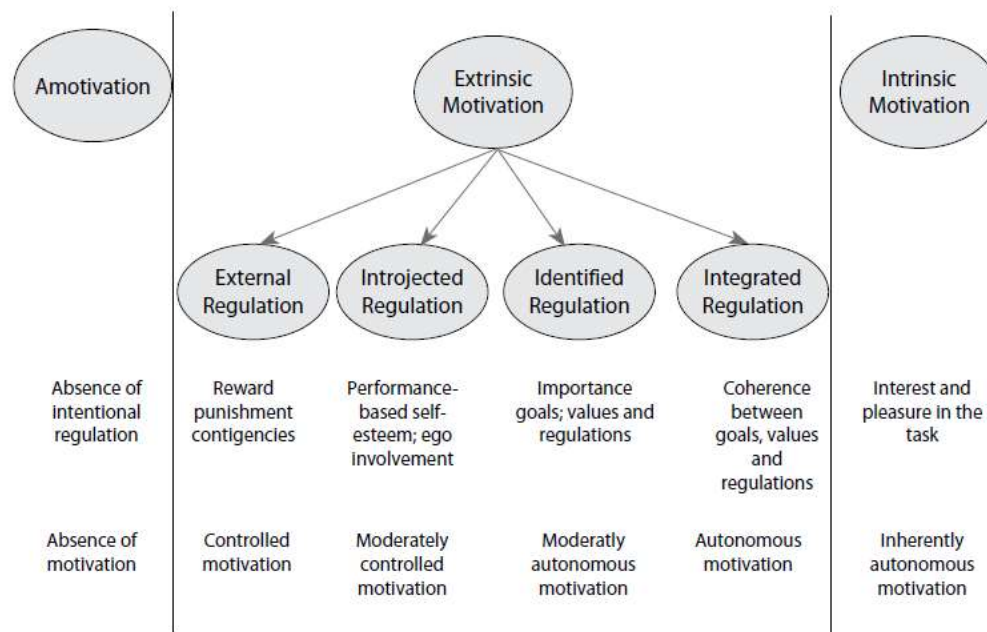
motivation.

Figure 1. The self-determination continuum. Adapted from *Self-determination theory and work motivation* by M. Gagne and E. Deci. Copyright 2005 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

The self-determination theory consists of six primary levels of internalization; the lowest level is amotivation, which is outside of the OIT (McInerney, 2004). Amotivation is characterized as a complete lack of motivation (Koh, 2015). O'Donnell, Reeve, and Smith (2012) stated, "Amotivation is the state of apathy that arises when the student experiences unmet needs" (p. 363). An amotivated person can have maladaptive ability beliefs, maladaptive effort beliefs, see a low value placed on tasks, or find the task itself unappealing (O'Donnell et al., 2012).

Next begins the OIT, which is focused on the concept of extrinsic motivation (McInerney, 2004). The lowest level of extrinsic motivation behavior is external regulation, and this level is characterized as the least self-determined type of extrinsic motivation; this type of regulation is central to Skinner's operant conditioning theory

(Deci & Ryan, 2002; Skinner, 1938). External regulation is where an individual is motivated solely by external contingencies such as receiving a reward or avoiding punishment (Gagne, 2014). Koludrovic and Ercegovac (2015) described external regulation as when an individual performs in order to gain some kind of award or to please others. An individual's feelings are controlled by forces or pressures outside of self (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

The second level of extrinsic motivation of the OIT is introjected regulation (Deci & Ryan, 2002; McInerney, 2004). This has been referred to as the "should do" stage and is associated with intrinsic motivators, but an individual is still driven by external contingencies (Poulsen, Ziviani, & Cuskelly, 2015). According to the OIT, the source of introjected regulation is mostly external, with some mild internal feelings such as guilt or obligation (Gagne, 2014; Koludrovic & Ercegovac, 2015). An example of this is when an individual completes an activity because the individual feels it is something expected by another (McInerney, 2004).

The third level of extrinsic motivation of the OIT is identified regulation, which is considered a self-determinate type of extrinsic motivation (McInerney, 2004). This is when an individual sees the personal value in a task (Gagne, 2014; Koludrovic & Ercegovac, 2015). The individual will identify with the value of the task and embrace it (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Koludrovic & Ercegovac, 2015). An example of identified regulation within the extrinsic motivation continuum is when an individual writes daily in a journal because he or she values the self-insight and clarity of mind which comes from journal writing (Joseph, 2015).

The final level of the OIT is integrated regulation, which is considered to be the most self-determined type of extrinsic motivation (McInerney, 2004). According to Deci and Ryan (2002), "Integrated regulation provides the basis for the most autonomous form of extrinsically motivated behavior" (p. 18). This occurs when an individual evaluates and identifies the task to be consistent with his or her desired goals and values (Gagne, 2014; Koludrovic & Ercegovac, 2015). As a result, integrated regulation is nearly indistinguishable from intrinsically motivated behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2000). However, integrated regulation is still considered a type of extrinsic motivation because the individual still performs to obtain a separate outcome rather than the end in itself (Joseph, 2015).

The final phase of the self-determination continuum, which is outside of the OIT, is intrinstic motivation (McInerney, 2004). Intrinsic motivation is defined as inherently autonomous, uncontrolled motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). When an individual is being movitated intrinsically, he or she is completing tasks for the inherent interest, enjoyment, or satisfaction the task produces (Deci & Ryan, 2002). This type of motivation is entirely self-determined with no external motivatiors required (McInerney, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

The public education system is based on the assumption that students regularly attend school (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). These students are more likely to achieve both short and long-term success in school (Chorneau, 2014). Studies have indicated there is a strong correlation between attendance percentage and standardized test scores, graduation, and dropout rates (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012)

Most administrators concur that regular attendance is critical if youth are to build and continue a foundation for learning and educational success throughout life (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). When students are absent, they miss vital instruction which often cannot be made up and miss supplementary learning which takes place through ongoing discussion in the classroom setting (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Consequently, "Students who are not in class have fewer opportunities to learn the material that enables them to succeed later in school" (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002, p. 308).

The education of students who have positive attendance habits is lessoned when teachers are forced to reteach those students who have chronic attendance problems (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Epstein and Sheldon (2002) shared, "Whilst non-attenders are a minority of the school population, they can have an adverse effect on other pupils and teachers themselves. Their attitudes and learning deficits can divert teacher attention" (p. 346).

The use of extrinsic incentives for high school students in public school districts has grown in favor as a way to increase student achievement (Allan & Fryer, 2011). When students do not see an intrinsic value in education, they are not motivate to attend school (Usher, 2012). Education leaders must find new ways of extrinsically motivating students to want to attend school. Students need to attend school daily to succeed (Balfanz & Chang, 2013).

Research has also indicated that youth with chronic absenteeism leads to more serious issues including violence, drugs, poor educational performance, teen sex, and teen pregnancy (Dube & Orpinas, 2009). Additionally, poor attendance places youth at risk for dropping out of school (Doll, Eslami, & Walters, 2013). Permanent dropout from

high school can shut the door to a number of academic and social opportunities that cannot be simulated in other areas of life and can lead to larger complications later in adulthood, including the inability to find a job (Dube & Orpinas, 2009). These issues can become very stressful for the entire family and often lead to family strife; in extreme cases, dropouts from K-12 education can lead to decisions resulting in prison time (Dube & Orpinas, 2009).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine if extrinsic motivators have an influence on increasing attendance rates for high school students in grades nine, 10, 11, and 12. The results were determined by collecting the APR attendance percentages from students in grades nine, 10, 11, and 12 in school districts located in the southwest and west central areas of Missouri and evaluating the responses to establish common extrinsic motivators used to enhance attendance percentage.

Research questions. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What percentage of public high schools in rural southwest and west central Missouri use extrinsic motivators to improve attendance?

2. What types of extrinsic motivators are used in high schools in southwest and west central Missouri districts to increase attendance?

3. Which extrinsic motivators lead to a yearly increase in attendance?

4. What process is used to implement extrinsic motivators and sustain improved attendance?

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to enrich the body of research surrounding extrinsic motivation and student attendance. Student absenteeism and its effect on academic performance is a concern for all educators (Richard & Wanga, 2012). There is a critical link between successful educational student outcomes and attendance at school (Laws, 2013). Marburger (2006) determined attendance and academic success are interrelated. Arulampalam, Naylor, and Smith (2008) conducted a study to analyze the factors associated with educational accomplishment and student performance; they concluded the higher the attendance percentage, the greater the educational achievement.

Currently, there is controversy as to who should be responsible to motivate students to have regular attendance (Armstrong, Brown, & Thompson, 2013; Vaidero, 2009). Administrators frequently blame parents and students for poor attendance (Kumashiro, 2012). While parents often will not assume this responsibility, they often hold teachers, principals, and students accountable (Kumashiro, 2012).

Educators agree students who attend school consistently are most likely to have increased achievement (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Balfanz & Chang, 2013; Laws, 2013; Richard & Wanga, 2012). Ginsburg, Jordan, and Chang (2014) stated, "Students eligible for free and reduced price meals, a common marker for low-income status, are more likely to miss three days or more in the prior month" (p. 4). Many absences in rural communities are not about students willfully missing school, but poverty plays a big role through such factors as lack of reliable transportation (Balfanz & Chang, 2013).

Balfanz and Byrnes (2012) stated, "Attendance also strongly affects standardized test scores and graduation and dropout rates. Educators and policymakers cannot truly

understand achievement gaps or efforts to close them without considering chronic absenteeism" (p. 3). Extrinsic motivators are considered one strategy to encourage student attendance (Chute, 2014; Harms, 2012; Leff, 2012; Ruiz, 2015).

With conflicting opinions, administrators are challenged to find ways to motivate students to attend school. By examining the types of motivators that affect attendance, administrators can benefit by understanding the connection between high attendance and what motivates students. This knowledge will help school districts achieve higher attendance rates while also helping students achieve academically.

Definition of Key Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms are defined:

Accredited public school districts. Accreditation is a process in which school districts are certified as attaining minimum standards of quality as designated by the state's local governing body of elementary and secondary public education (Wieder, 2011).

Amotivation. When an individual has an unwillingness or inability to participate in social situations, he or she is considered to be amotivated (Marrero, 2013). Amotivation starts from not seeing importance in an activity; therefore, if there is no importance in an assignment, the student will not engage in the activity (Green-Demers, Legault, & Pelletier, 2006).

Annual performance report. The annual performance report shows how well each school district is meeting Missouri's education standards under the state's accountability system, Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) 5 (MODESE,

2014a). Reports are used to review and accredit Missouri's school districts (MODESE, 2014a).

Attendance percentage. Attendance is measured based on individual student attendance rates, and attendance rates are calculated based on total possible hours in school against any hours the student has been absent from school (MODESE, 2014a). The goal is for 90% of individual students to be in attendance 90% of the time (MODESE, 2014a).

Average rate. The percentage of students who regularly attend school. Attendance targets use the individual student's attendance rate and set the expectation that 90% of the students should be in attendance 90% of the time (MODESE, 2016a). An individual attendance rate is calculated for each student for the amount of time the student is enrolled in school (MODESE, 2016a).

Extrinsic motivation. Refers to behavior that is driven by external rewards such as money, fame, grades, and praise. This type of motivation arises from outside the individual (Cherry, 2016a).

Intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation involves engaging in a behavior because it is personally rewarding. Performing an activity for its own sake rather than the desire for external reward (Cherry, 2016b).

Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP 5). Missouri's accountability system for reviewing school districts, accrediting public school districts, and outlining the expectations for student achievement with the ultimate goal of each student graduating ready for success in college and careers (MODESE, 2016a). MSIP 5 includes five

performance standards which are reviewed for school district accreditation purposes; one of those standards is student achievement (MODESE, 2016a).

Missouri Student Information System (MOSIS).   The MOSIS is Missouri's data collection system at an individual level which derives the data and counts for aggregate collections (MODESE, 2016a). Within this system, data are standardized, collected, and presented for use in decision making and reporting (MODESE, 2016a).

Motivation. Motivation refers to one's drive or reason for doing something and is the key when it comes to getting people to take action (Chauhan, 2013).

Overjustification.   Overjustification is when an individual feels less motivated to participate in an activity after, rather than before incentives are offered, which indicates rewards and punishments can actually diminish the enjoyment an individual experiences (Greene, Sternberg, & Lepper, 1976).

School-reach call.   School-reach is a telephone broadcast system which enables school administrators to communicate with households by sharing general and important information.

Southwest Missouri. Southwest Missouri includes all districts in Region C. This includes the 90 school districts in the following counties: Vernon, St. Clair, Barton, Cedar, Polk, Dallas, Laclede, Wright, Webster, Douglas, Ozark, Taney, Christian, Greene, Dade, Jasper, Lawrence, Stone, Barry, and McDonald (MODESE, 2016b).

Top 10 by 20.   The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education launched the Top 10 by 20 as a major improvement program which focuses on the endeavor for student achievement in Missouri to rank among the top 10 states by 2020 (MODESE, 2010).

West Central Missouri. West Central Missouri includes all districts in Region F. This includes the 54 school districts in the following counties: Ray, Carroll, Lafayette, Saline, Johnson, Pettis, Henry, Bates, Benton, and Hickory (MODESE, 2016b).

Limitations

The following limitations were identified in this study:

Factors beyond the scope of the study.   The MODESE has set an attendance rate expectation that 90% of students are in attendance 90% of the time (MODESE, 2014a). Each accredited public school district has individual benchmarks for the APR attendance percentage depending on the school district's APR from the previous school year. The progress individual school districts need to make may have an effect on what kind of and how many extrinsic motivators are used to increase attendance rates. The final factor beyond the control of this researcher was the voluntary participation of high school principals in rural southwest and west central Missouri public school districts to complete and return surveys accurately.

Instrument.   The instrument, a survey, was created by the researcher.

Sample demographics.   The sample selected for this study were from the same geographic location, with similar demographic characteristics. The recruitment sample was limited to 45 school districts in the southwest and west central part of Missouri with a K-12 enrollment of 400 or fewer students and was limited to students in grades nine, 10, 11, and 12. (MODESE, 2014b). The 45 school districts are predominately rural in nature. Different results may be obtained if the surveys are distributed to urban or suburban school districts.

Secondary database. The APR attendance percentage was obtained for the rural accredited public high schools during the 2012, 2013, and 2014 school years. If the APR attendance percentage results were to be collected from urban and suburban high schools, the outcomes might be different (MODESE, 2014b).

Assumptions

The following assumptions were accepted:

The responses of the participants were offered honestly and without bias. Within the survey, the different types of extrinsic motivators used by principals to motivate students in grades nine, 10, 11, and 12 to attend school were defined. The survey allowed the researcher to determine the types of extrinsic motivators used, as well as the most effective extrinsic motivators.

Summary

This study was designed to determine the variety of extrinsic motivators educators use and the influence the motivators have on students based on the Annual Performance Report (APR) attendance percentage. High school attendance is earning more attention from administrators, teachers, and families across the country (U.S. Department of Education, 2016a). Good attendance is mandatory for success in school (Usher, 2012).

There is a need to address frequent absenteeism in an effort to help students be successful academically. By identifying factors that contribute to good attendance, each district can take steps and develop strategies which can benefit students' academic progress. The greater knowledge educators acquire through research regarding motivational techniques, the better the likelihood students will be successful.

As student attendance rates increase, so does learning, which translates into students being prepared for college and ensuring a positive impact on society (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

The Alliance for Excellent Education (2008) reported:

American's secondary schools are failing far too many of their students. Although intensive education reforms directed toward younger children have resulted in higher test scores and a narrowing achievement gap in the early grades, students in their middle and high school years are registering stagnant achievement and mediocre attainment on every national and international measure. (p. 1)

As educators address this and other issues, dropouts and those who fail classes remain the focus.

Research indicates high attendance rates are important, because students are more likely to be academically successful if they attend school regularly (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Studies reveal student success and school attendance are correlated (Marburger, 2006). School administrators are challenged to develop an all-inclusive intervention standard to improve poor attendance and motivate students to stay in school.

In Chapter Two, a review of relevant literature is presented along with the main topics. The organismic integration theory (OIT), which a sub-theory of Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory is described; this theory is presented as the theoretical framework. The effects of student absenteeism and importance of attending school are discussed.

Reasons and effects for students who choose to drop out of school and the effects of student motivation and rewards are presented. A deeper understanding of the three

main motivators of the self-determination continuum (amotivation, intrinsic, extrinsic)

are described. Relative literature information on the topic of motivation and student

attendance are presented in detail.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

This chapter provides an overview of current literature and studies on types of motivation and attendance. Due to the demands placed on students with performance-based testing, substantial research has been conducted in the area of motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Ayub, 2010; Usher, 2012). Little research has been done solely on extrinsic motivation and its effect on increased student attendance.

Theoretical Framework

After reviewing the available literature on motivation, the work of Deci and Ryan (2000) was selected as an appropriate framework for this study. Their self-determination sub-theory, the organismic integration theory (OIT), suggests the following:

> People are active agents whose engagement with their world leads to an ever more elaborated and refined set of internal processes and structures. We refer to this inherent tendency as *organismic integration* and we assume it to be a fundamental aspect of human life. It is the process through which healthy psychological development occurs. One important manifestation of organismic integration is people's natural tendency to internalize values and behavioral regulations that are extant in their social world and to make those values their own. (Deci, Ryan, & Williams, 1996, pp. 167-168)

The sub-theory, OIT, is comprised of four types of regulations: external, introjected, identified, and integrated (Deci et al., 1996). Each of these is rated by degree, and a working description is assigned.

The lowest degree of self-regulation is external in which "behavior [is] controlled by demands or contingencies external to the person" (Deci et al., 1996, p. 168). Next on the continuum is introjected; a moderately low degree of self-regulation occurs in this phase, and the "behavior [is] controlled by demands or contingencies inside the person such as self-esteem contingencies" (Deci et at., 1996, p. 168). A moderately high integrated degree of self-regulation is recognized in a person who choses a behavior "because the person identified with the importance of the activity" (Deci et al., 1996, p. 168). The highest degree of self-regulation, integrated, occurs when the "behavior [is] experienced as 'wholly free' because the regulation has been integrated with the person's sense of self"' (Deci et al., 1996, p. 168).

Pertinent to this study is external regulation. According to Deci et al. (1996), external regulation is the lowest degree of self-regulation. A definition and example offered by Deci et al. (1996) follows:

> *External regulation* describes behaviors that are controlled by contingencies overtly external to the individual. Examples of such regulation would be engaging in a behavior to obtain a reward or avoid a punishment. Although externally regulated behaviors are intentional, they are dependent on external contingencies and are thus said to be controlled by those contingencies. (p. 168)

As mentioned in the example, this regulation falls into the realm of using external rewards or motivators to encourage students to improve attendance.

To move into the next level, the moderately low type of regulation, the following sequence would occur:

As an external regulation becomes internalized and integrated, the person

becomes more fully self-regulating of that behavior. The behavior is still said to

be extrinsically motivated because it is still instrumental to some separable

consequence, but when the regulation has been integrated, the person will perform

the instrumental behavior wholly volitionally. (Deci et al., 1996, p. 167)

Whether the student would continue up the continuum to reach the next level, identified

regulation, or just be motivated by receiving rewards was not the focus of this study;

however, this is certainly an issue that should be considered by educators.

Student Absenteeism

The public school system is based on the belief that students attend school

regularly (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Most states have compulsory attendance laws to

mandate good attendance (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Missouri's accountability standards

place an emphasis on good attendance (MODESE, 2016a). Other states, including Texas,

stress attendance for the purpose of accountability and funding (Texas Education Agency,

2016).

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 placed an increased emphasis on

attendance (Smink & Reimer, 2005). Over 37 state agencies use attendance measures as

part of their adequately yearly progress reporting system (Smink & Reimer, 2005).

Attendance also affects the financial health of schools because most state aide formulas

are based on the average daily attendance rate of students (Smink & Reimer, 2005). Low

attendance rates are strong predictors of the likelihood of a student dropping out of school

(Smink & Reimer, 2005). Students with poor attendance are more likely to drop out of

school or develop negative social behaviors, which are not acceptable in the business world (Smink & Reimer, 2005). The Alliance for Excellent Education (2008) reported:

> Recent studies have identified the academic factors (such as low attendance, poor behavior, and course failure) that more accurately predict whether or not a student is likely to drop out than socioeconomic factors. This data has been used to predict as many as 75 percent of future dropouts by the end of sixth or eighth grade and 80 percent of future dropouts by the end of ninth grade. (p. 19)

Attendance is a major factor in student achievement; therefore, most schools expect students to be present every day. Attendance is so important that many high schools employ attendance officers to oversee absenteeism; the main duty of the attendance officer is to ensure that all school age children attend school (Tipton County Schools, n.d.).

In today's society, increased accountability for school districts has pushed the importance of school attendance to new levels, because "a missed school day is a lost opportunity for students to learn" (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009, para. 1). The main reason attendance is important is the direct relationship to student achievement (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). Chronic student absenteeism reduces even the best teacher's ability to provide adequate learning opportunities. Low attendance rates have negative implications for later in life (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). Students may eventually lose course credits, drop out of school, or be excluded from other learning opportunities (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009).

Georgia's school superintendent, Richard Woods, concluded a student's absence of more than five days of the school year, regardless of the cause, negatively impacted that student's academic performance (Woods, 2016). He added that chronic absenteeism helps negatively shape a student's attitude toward school (Woods, 2016). He stated, "for students in the 6th grade through the 9th grade, student attendance is a better predictor for dropping out of school than test scores" (Woods, 2016, para. 2). He found that excused absences and unexcused absences had a similar impact on student academic performance (Woods, 2016).

According to Oxted School (2016), "Good attendance and punctuality are important for achieving success at school and are also important life skills" (para. 1). Moreover, school absenteeism interrupts learning and delays progress (Oxted School, 2016). It is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian to ensure their child has regular attendance (Oxted School, 2016).

Educators expect high attendance rates unless a student has an illness, an occasional doctor's appointment, or a crisis. Sadly, 25% or more of the students in high schools are not meeting state attendance expectations (Balfanz & Byrnes 2012). For many years educators and other researchers have studied student absenteeism, and most find absenteeism difficult to define. Some categorize absenteeism as school phobia, separation anxiety, school refusal, or school refusal behavior (Kearney, 2008).

School phobia is absenteeism driven by fears (Kearney, 2008). These fears may be associated to a particular event within the school environment (Kearney, 2008). For example, a student experiencing school phobia may have a fear of being apart from his peers or a fear of a pending safety alarm or weather drill (Kearney, 2008).

Separation anxiety is usually associated with being separated from one's parent or guardian (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Students experiencing separation anxiety may attend school but go home early because they are scared; their parents are their security blanket (García-Gracia, 2008). A student with separation anxiety may find his/her fear fueled by an over-protective parent (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002).

School refusal and school refusal behavior are both considered to be a nervous condition causing an overall feeling of confusion during the entire school day (García-Gracia, 2008). This nervousness is often a result of personal insecurities (García-Gracia, 2008). These absenteeism terms previously discussed are considered internal and are not related to the environment (García-Gracia, 2008).

Reasons and effects of dropping out of school. Social professionals place a greater emphasis on looking at environmental factors and external factors related to absenteeism (Epstein & Sheldon 2002). For many years, high school principals have often responded to student attendance issues by blaming students; educators sometimes accuse students rather than trying to understand the student's individual needs and other personal issues which may be attributing to the absenteeism (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). . García-Gracia (2008) suggested there could be a need to intervene in the causes of absenteeism beyond normative and reactive practices or the situation may generate more absenteeism.

García-Gracia (2008) also suggested that principals should find and address any external risk factors within the school setting which could lead to student absenteeism. Principals must be willing and ready to respond to any external risk factors and to make necessary changes which could benefit the students (García-Gracia, 2008). Doll, Eslami,

and Walters (2013) were concerned about the reasons students drop out of school and did

not believe the issue had been thoroughly examined. Using two factors, *pushed out* and

pulled out, identified by Jordan, Lara, and McPartland (1994), and one factor, *falling out*,

identified by Watt and Roessingh (1994), the researchers created a framework to study

why students drop out of school (Doll et al., 2013). The authors determined:

> The key difference between push, pull, and falling out factors has to do with
>
> agency. With push factors, the school is the agent whereby a student is removed
>
> from school as a result of a consequence. With pull factors, the student is the
>
> agent, such that attractions or distractions lure them out of school. Finally, with
>
> falling out factors, neither the student nor school is the agent. Instead,
>
> circumstances exist that neither the school nor the student can remediate, and as a
>
> result, the connection students have with school gradually diminishes. (p. 2)

During the course of examining selected studies throughout a 50-year period, Doll et al.

(2013) compiled the findings separately and collectively.

In a previous study (Explorations in Equality of Opportunity, 1955), the top-

ranked reasons for dropping out of school included: got married (pulling out), did not like

school (falling out), go to work (pulling out), and poor achievement in school (pushing

out) (as cited in Doll et al., 2013, p. 3). The reasons given for dropping out, as found in a

1972 study (U. S. Department of Education), were: poor study habits (falling out), lack of

teacher help (pushing out), preferred courses were not offered (falling out), and courses

too difficult (pushing out) (as cited in Doll et al., 2013, p. 5). A longitudinal study in

2002 by the National Center for Educational Statistics resulted in the follow reasons for

dropping out of school: missed school frequently (pushing out), pursue GED (pulling

out), poor grades (pushing out), and did not like school (falling out) (Doll et al., 2013, p. 12).

In summarizing their findings, Doll et al. (2013) noted the incidence of each factor as identified from the selected studies ranging from 1955 to 2002:

Overall, there is credence for each type of dropout antecedent, whether being a push, pull, or falling out factor. At the same time, it was apparent that pull factors elicited the highest rates overall for all the studies, while eliciting prominence in . . . [the selected] studies. (p. 13)

Although the research conducted by the authors identified reasons why students drop out of school, the question still remains: How can educators mitigate these factors to help students stay in school?

School leaders must assume a more supportive approach when working with students who are chronically absent (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). This additional support entails school leaders embracing the difficult challenge of exploring student absenteeism by evaluating the schools current attendance practices and policies (García-Gracia, 2008). School leaders must identify and take ownership of occurrences related to student attendance, whether positive or negative (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Educators must recognize and respond to the positives and negatives related to their actions, attempting to improve the system and how it affects absenteeism. Research by Balfanz and Byrnes (2012) concluded that chronic absence in kindergarten was connected with lower academic performance in first grade, and the impact of absenteeism was twice as great for students from low-income families. They also found a strong relationship between

sixth-grade attendance and the percentage of students who graduated on time with their cohorts (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

Habitual absenteeism is believed to increase the achievement gaps at the elementary, middle, and high school levels (Wilkins, 2008). Usually students raised in poverty profit most from good attendance; therefore, one of the most effective strategies for providing a route out of poverty is to motivate students to attend school every day (Wilkins, 2008). Balfanz and Byrnes (2008) stated the following:

Because students reared in poverty benefit the most from being in school, one of the most effective strategies for providing pathways out of poverty is to do what it takes to get these students in school every day. This alone, even without improvements in the American education system, will drive up achievement, high school graduation, and college attainment rates. (p. 4)

Wilkins (2008) also believed attendance alone will drive up achievement, high school graduation rates, and college placement.

Students are absent for various reasons. The reasons can usually be classified into three broad categories (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Balfanz and Byrnes (2012) stated these reasons are:

Students who cannot attend school due to illness, family responsibilities, housing instability, the need to work or involvement with the juvenile justice system. Students who will not attend school to avoid bullying, unsafe conditions, harassment and embarrassment. Students who do not attend school because they, or their parents, do not see the value of good attendance, they have something else

they would rather do, or no one attempts to stop them from skipping school. (pp. 4-5)

Balfanz and Byrnes (2012) concluded that regular attendance makes a difference, especially to the students who live in or near poverty. Statewide, thousands of students are absent from school resulting in many negative effects (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). These negatives might be eliminated if educators used extrinsic motivators to improve student attendance (Balfanz & Byrnes 2012).

Student Motivation and Rewards

Currently, there is a great deal of guesswork as to who should be responsible to motivate students to achieve (Armstrong et al., 2013; Vaidero, 2009). Administrators frequently place the blame on parents, teachers, and students for the decline in academic achievement, while teachers tend to hold students, parents, and administration responsible (Kumashiro, 2012). While parents often will not assume this responsibility, they tend to hold teachers, principals, and students accountable (Kumashiro, 2012). Through all of this debate, students have remained silent (Vaidero, 2009).

Schoeneberger (2012) performed a longitudinal study on high school attendance, and he observed students over a long period of time to identify different factors which existed with students who dropped out of high school. Schoeneberger (2012) concluded the number one factor was the students' attendance rate. Students who had a low attendance rate in elementary school will likely to continue that trend throughout middle school, high school, and even into adult life (Schoeneberger, 2012).

Schoeneberger (2012) theorized unless schools are able to cultivate the importance of attendance when students are in primary grades, the school will not be able

to encourage strong attendance no matter what extrinsic motivators were available. Schoeneberger (2012) reported many larger schools do not have the luxury of having the same students for their entire high school careers like smaller K-12 schools (Schoeneberger, 2012). Instead, many larger high schools must find new and creative ways to motivate students to attend school regularly (Schoeneberger, 2012).

Motivators have effects on student learning and behavior (Ormrod, 2014). Extrinsic motivators such as gold stars, student awards, honor rolls, pizza for reading, and other reward-based incentive systems have been a part of the educational system for a long period of time (Ryan, Koestner, & Deci, 2001). As one elementary teacher said, "Some teachers give children candy, some teachers give them school supplies. We have a new era of children coming through. For a lot of them, money is the motivator" (S. Daggett, personal communication, August 22, 2016).

For affluent parents, rewarding students monetarily is nothing new (Wallace, 2009). Allowing educators to do the same for all students could make all students feel more equal (Wallace, 2009). If a simple motivator encouraged one student to study for an exam, complete a homework assignment, or attend school, the motivator could be very valuable (Wallace, 2009). By working to earn the reward, many students would likely accomplish more than if the motivator was not present (Wallace, 2009). The indirect results from students pursuing a motivator might result in students obtaining better study skills, higher self-confidence, and better attendance, which could result in increased student performance even after the motivator fades (Wallace, 2009).

Educators must promote learning and inquisitiveness, not simply train students to perform for rewards. Willingham (2008) suggested reward programs are unrealistic

because they cannot go on forever. Often when the reward is taken away, students no longer have a motivation to continue the performance (Willingham, 2008).

If the motivator is too large, students may believe they have no choice but to participate, which can diminish their spirit and decrease the effects of the motivation (Willingham, 2008). In a study conducted by Wormington, Henderlong, and Anderson (2011), intrinsic motivation was identified as more effective than extrinsic motivation:

> Students in the high quantity and good quality profiles reported the strongest academic performance and extracurricular participation, implicating intrinsic motivation as the primary correlate of positive school outcomes in the high school environment. Students in the high quantity profile, however, reported the most emotional engagement with school. These findings suggest that extrinsic motivation may not be maladaptive at the high school level when coupled with high levels of intrinsic motivation. (Abstract)

These findings are consistent with Willingham (2008), who proposed extrinsic motivators do not have a long-term effect.

Large rewards may also raise ethical questions concerning whether students are being pressured or coerced into performing (Rigby, Deci, Patrick, & Ryan, 1992). Some studies indicate extrinsic rewards can reduce intrinsic motivation, especially when students perceive the motivator as a technique of control or when the activity being rewarded was originally done purely for pleasure (Rigby et al., 1992). Performance motivators may be viewed by students as unfair, because schoolwork comes easier to some, while many others try very hard but cannot perform at a proficient level (Rigby et

al., 1992). It can become discouraging when some students earn rewards easily, while others try hard but cannot succeed (Rigby et al., 1992).

If students approach learning with performance goals in mind, they are constantly stressed to confirm their abilities (Heyman & Dweck, 1992). Many believe failure suggests a lack of skills, which often deflates any feeling of proficiency (Heyman & Dweck, 1992). In addition, if students believe the goals are too high, they may feel incapable and give up on learning (Heyman & Dweck, 1992). Many students scale back their efforts as a coping mechanism or craft an excuse if they perceive failing to reach a certain level will indicate a lack of personal ability (Heyman & Dweck, 1992). When adults praise students for their effort or strategies, students are better able to deal with failure than are students who are commended for their intellect or performance (Mueller & Dweck, 1998).

Countless reward programs have been implemented around the country but are seldom formally studied. Some are district-wide, while others may affect only one school or sometimes just one classroom (Ash, 2008). Some incentive programs have included cash rewards in an attempt to motivate student behavior, increase test scores, and achieve higher attendance rates (Ash, 2008; Miller, 2008).

Other incentive programs offer non-cash rewards, such as Pizza Hut certificates, McDonald's Happy Meals, or other snacks (Ash, 2008). Some school administrators have given away iPods, cars, or televisions for good test scores or perfect attendance (Chute, 2014; Leff, 2012; Ruiz, 2015; Springfield Public School District, 2015; Vandemark, 2014). These are usually awarded by entering the top-performing students into a drawing to win (Wallace, 2009).

In Brooklyn, a program provided students with cell phones and rewarded positive behavior, high attendance, homework completion, and test scores with cell phone minutes (Medina, 2008). The phones also allowed students and teachers to converse about assignments, homework, and tests (Medina, 2008). Other schools have implemented a system of rewards.

At a Virginia public school, students who made the honor roll were awarded a "VISA" (Very Important Student Academically) card that provided them special freedoms like a five-minute early release (Calhoun, 2011). The principal observed an increase in grades and social movement, which appeared to make students popular if they became a cardholder (Calhoun, 2011). The principal found this generated many positive behaviors (Calhoun, 2011).

A recent study of public school students in Rhode Island cited those with good high school attendance records were three times more likely to be on track to earn a college degree (Arditi, 2015). The study concentrated on students who were recognized as being frequently absent from school (Arditi, 2015). These students were absent at least 18 days per year or collected over 72 absences during four years of high school (Arditi, 2015).

There were 408 students identified as being frequently absent (Arditi, 2015). Of those enrolled full-time in college after graduation, only 12% were still enrolled full-time four years later (Arditi, 2015). In the same study, high school graduates with good attendance (zero to 5% absenteeism per year) who had enrolled full-time in college after graduation were three times more likely to be full-time college students three years later (Arditi, 2015).

Palardy (1997) reported schools can only have so much influence on a student's motivation to succeed in school. Palardy (1997) suggested by starting early, educators can begin to influence a student's views on school attendance and behavior, even without parental support. Schools can no longer depend on parents to provide motivating influences to students on the importance of regular attendance (Palardy, 1997). Instead, it is the responsibility of educators to begin nurturing those behaviors in the early grades in order for attendance to become a learned habit (Palardy, 1997). It is essential to set solid expectations and objectives for student performance at the beginning of each school year (Palardy, 1997).

Teachers must accept the initiative in allowing students to take a leadership role in their own learning throughout the school year (Palardy, 1997). If students have an active say in education, they are more inclined to attend school daily and become a full participant in the learning experience (Palardy, 1997). Teachers must also establish an open and welcoming learning setting for the student (Palardy, 1997). If teachers establish a learning environment where students are unafraid to take risks without becoming embarrassed, then students will likely become more involved with the entire learning process (Palardy, 1997).

Palardy (1997) encouraged the use of extrinsic motivators at the start of the school year. It is often important to reward students who demonstrate good attendance starting early in the school year (Palardy, 1997). As the school year progresses, students should gradually move away from these motivators and begin learning the importance of achievement and good attendance for intrinsic reasons and not just to obtain rewards (Palardy, 1997).

Froiland, Oros, Smith, and Hirchert (2012) concurred with Palardy (1997) concerning the importance of using extrinsic motivators to initiate the motivational process for students. These researchers agreed it is necessary to begin with extrinsic motivators, especially for students who are younger (Froiland et al., 2012; Palardy, 1997). However, caution should be applied when relying strictly on material items in an attempt to motivate students (Froiland et al., 2012). Extrinsic motivators should only be used as behavior incentives for the long term for behaviors like good attendance (Froiland et al., 2012). Too many educators fail because teachers become too consumed with providing a "prize" to the winners and do not create life-long changes in students (Froiland et al., 2012).

The evolution of moving students from needing extrinsic motivators to merely desiring success intrinsically is an important step for most students (Willie, 2014). Students who feel they always need motivators to succeed may also feel a need for motivators in adulthood (Willie, 2014). Educators must begin to make the change from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation by upper elementary school (Willie, 2014).

Due to society and the movement toward technology, students expect to have instant gratification when pursuing most endeavors in life (Willie, 2014). The instant gratification epidemic is very apparent in school, especially in band and music classrooms (Willie, 2014). It has become tremendously challenging for educators to teach students to learn and perfect playing musical instruments due to the students' failure to persevere toward long-range goals (Willie, 2014).

Rewarding students with tokens which students can turn into points has resulted in enormous progress in the playing of instruments (Willie, 2014). As students slowly

advance and feel success, the extrinsic motivators ultimately begin to be eliminated (Willie, 2014). It is vital to wean students off extrinsic motivators gradually and not eliminate them immediately (Willie, 2014). The removal of extrinsic motivators should be so subtle students are hardly aware the motivators no longer exist (Willie, 2014).

As educators use extrinsic motivators in schools to meet state standards, discussion has occurred within the education community on what extrinsic motivators are the most productive. In 2008, Tyler studied student success and what students report as the most important contributor to student success. Students who were most successful in school had developed some type of personal connection to the school (Tyler, 2008).

Students with high attendance rates and high achievement succeeded not because they were given tokens for accomplishing the goals, but because they had a special connection to their teachers (Tyler, 2008). These students believed they were a vital part of the daily school life (Tyler, 2008). Tyler surveyed students concerning how they developed this personal connection with teachers and found many students connected when teachers gave students more control of their own learning (Tyler, 2008).

Students reported a positive involvement with teachers who allowed them to participate in learning groups, define grading rubrics, and establish their own assignment due dates (Tyler, 2008). Students determined to make an extra effort to attend those classes as opposed to classes where those attributes were absent (Tyler, 2008). When students take ownership of their own learning, they demonstrate the drive to succeed (Tyler, 2008). In turn, self-ownership of learning should result in improved attendance rates, because students perceive their presence will be missed if absent (Tyler, 2008).

Mantell (2013) also studied the significance of students obtaining ownership of their own learning. At the beginning of a school year it could be profitable to offer various extrinsic motivators to help students succeed at school (Mantell, 2013). As the school year progresses, teachers should have laid the ground work so students understand the importance of regular attendance (Mantell, 2013). The root of making students sense they are a vital part of their own learning is crucial in developing good attendance habits (Mantell, 2013).

It is important to study and evaluate the different types of extrinsic motivators thought to improve school attendance (Mantell, 2013). Without adequate attendance data it is difficult for administrators or teachers to effectively evaluate if interventions are successful (Mantell, 2013). It is counterproductive to keep using motivators unless data confirm the reward is actually beneficial (Mantell, 2013).

Educators across the nation have differing opinions as to how to best increase student attendance. Some educators promote better attendance with robust extrinsic motivators, yet others count on the student's own intrinsic motivation for good attendance. The most successful method is the one that includes both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators (Aarnio, Nieminen, Pyoral, & Lindblom-Ylanne, 2010). If educators desire to be successful in improving attendance rates, educators cannot be opposed to a little incentive (Aarnio et al., 2010).

The goal of motivation should be to encourage students to develop habits such as good attendance, academic growth, interacting responsibly, and being accountable for one's own successes (Jones, 2011). Motivators should encourage skills which make students successful in school and in adulthood (Jones, 2011). Many school districts have

implemented an extrinsic reward system in an attempt to garner these improvements (Jones, 2011).

Intrinsic Motivation

The idea of student motivation has been a focus of much research; therefore, the attention on motivation and approach to motivate students is not new (Amrai et al., 2011; Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Özder & Motorcan, 2013). The motivators of autonomy, mastery, and purpose which were practiced during the 19th century are no longer effective for the 21st century (Pink, 2010). Pink (2010) stated, "We need to fundamentally rethink things; not to be nicer and kinder, but to be more effective and more productive" (p. 4).

An important key to motivation is to develop an inner characteristic of resilience. Resilience gives people the strength to tackle problems and to overcome adversity to face new challenges (MacConville & Rae, 2012). Resilient students are found to be self-motivated (Kang, 2014). Programs such as the Teen Outreach Program are providing teenagers with the opportunity to receive immediate feedback while providing community service, giving students a sense of self-pride and accomplishment and embedding resilience (Allen & Allen, 2010).

Many theorists have provided studies and rationalizations regarding benefits and disadvantages of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Kaplan, 2010; Ryan, 2009). Intrinsic motivation is a self-induced internal drive to engage and accomplish a task purely for the satisfaction it brings (Wentzel & Brophy, 2014). In a study by Vansteenkiste and Deci (2003), students who competed and lost in a puzzle competition continued to work longer on previous puzzles during their free-choice period

than did those who either did not compete or who won. This would indicate the perseverance of the students who lost was intrinsically motivated (Gregory & Kaufeldt, 2015).

However, in a study conducted by Wiechman and Gurland (2009), participants rewarded for completing a drawing chose to continue with the drawings during their free time as compared with the control group. One possible explanation for this finding is the rewarded participants may have continued with the drawing simply because of satisfaction with gift certificates they received (Wiechman & Gurland, 2009).

For a student who is intrinsically motivated, extrinsic motivators may take the fun out of learning (The Focus, 2016). Intrinsically motivated students often feel forced to buy into a reward system (The Focus, 2016). Sometimes intrinsically motivated students consider others are being rewarded for what they have been doing without a reward (The Focus, 2016).

Although many intrinsically motivated students can succeed in an extrinsic system, frequently intrinsically motivated students begin to expect some type of reward (The Focus, 2016). According to LD OnLine (2002):

> A child who is intrinsically motivated performs a task because of the joy that comes from learning new materials. A child who performs in school to gain parent approval, grades, or rewards is externally motivated. While research shows that those children with internal motivation may achieve greater success, teachers and parents often find that many children seek external reinforces. (para. 1)

Fawson and Moore (as cited in Marinak & Gambrell, 2008) conducted a survey where 95% of elementary teachers used some type of reward system in an effort to develop

students' intrinsic motivation to read. When the desired behavior is to have students become more intrinsically motivated to read, teachers should offer extrinsic rewards such as books, increased time for self-selected reading, and increased library time (Marinak & Gambrell, 2008). Willingham (2015) admitted rewards work for short-term reading motivation; however, the concern should be placed on the students' attitudes toward reading. Intrinsic motivation has been linked with successful reading compression (Israel & Duffy, 2011).

Cho, Dehejia, Mukhopadhyay, and Visaria (2015) studied the average effect of extrinsic motivators. Students were divided into two subgroups, those who previously had low intrinsic motivation and those with high intrinsic motivation (Cho et al., 2015). With the two subgroups separated, attendance increased within both subgroups when extrinsic motivators were used (Cho et al., 2015).

Interestingly, the two subgroups performed very contrarily when the incentive was removed (Cho et al., 2015). Students who had high attendance prior to the addition of a motivator continued to have high attendance, while those with initial low attendance reverted back to their baseline low attendance rates (Cho et al., 2015). Future studies should be developed in which the subgroups are divided (Cho et al., 2015).

Motivation in education should center on the teacher (The Focus, 2016). Teachers are the role model both in and out of the school setting (The Focus, 2016). Teachers should find it important to get to know each student on a personal level, including knowing the student's personal interests and enjoyments (The Focus, 2016).

Teachers should use true-to-life examples during lecture and student-teacher communication so students understand the information and how it will be useful later in

life (The Focus, 2016). Teachers should engage students in learning by using examples and strategies to which the student can relate (The Focus, 2016). These examples should challenge students at an appropriate level and help students set and achieve obtainable goals (The Focus, 2016). Student assessments should help identify mastery rather than simply providing students with a letter grade (The Focus, 2016). In addition, teachers should praise and criticize students in a constructive manner so both are perceived as a positive (The Focus, 2016).

Amotivation

Green-Demers et al. (2006) discussed the idea of academic amotivation and developed categories of educational amotivation. The four categories include the following: ability beliefs, characteristics of the task, effort beliefs, and value placed on the task (Green-Demers et al., 2006). The level of a student's self-confidence and self-perception can be used to predict if the student is able to complete academic tasks with or without success (Feng, 2011). Students who lack confidence also lack the desire to put forth the effort needed to begin or complete an assignment (Green-Demers et al., 2006). Students who lack the ability to persist are unable to generate and maintain the necessary effort to pursue a goal (O'Donnell et al., 2012).

The characteristics of the task need to be interesting and important to the student. If a student perceives an assignment as boring, dull, or uninteresting, the student is more likely to become academically disconnected (Moraine, 2012). If the student cannot identify with the value placed on the assignment, the student will not engage in the activity (Green-Demers et al., 2006). Amotivation represents a lack of both extrinsic

motivation and intrinsic motivation and therefore a deficiency in self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivators or rewards are commonly used in school districts.   Food, drinks, homework passes, or field trips may be offered to reward good behavior, good attendance, or academic performance (Learn NC, n.d.). Students may view the withholding of a reward as punishment for behavior or performance which does not meet the standard (Learn NC, n.d.). Students may be drawn to extrinsic motivation because it encourages good or better behavior (Learn NC, n.d.). Teachers often like motivators, because the motivators often produce immediate improved behaviors (Learn NC, n.d.).

Extrinsic motivators also include parental expectations or the expectations of other adults including teachers (Delong & Winter, 2002). These motivators may produce behavior changes and typically require very little effort or preparation. Teachers find that applying extrinsic motivators to students do not require extensive knowledge of the individual students (Delong & Winter, 2002). Some believe extrinsic motivators can be a distraction. Extrinsic motivators do not typically work over extended period of time (Delong & Winter, 2002). Once the reward is removed students often lose their motivation (Delong & Winter, 2002).

Students in the 21st century have been motivated by performance-based incentive systems (Murayama, Matsumoto, Izuma, & Matsumoto, 2010). Houlfort, Koestner, Joussemet, Nantel-Vivier, and Lekes (2002) and Cameron, Pierce, Banko, and Gear (2005) conducted studies on motivation when monetary rewards were given. In the study produced by Houlfort et al. (2002), students who were told they would receive a

monetary reward reported feeling higher levels of pressure and anxiety to complete a task compared to the control group.

However, in the monetary group, students' feelings of competence were enhanced through the extrinsic motivation (Houlfort et al., 2002). Cameron et al. (2005) concluded when monetary rewards were given, students acknowledged they had a greater self-interest in the task. The researchers involved in both of these studies concluded extrinsic rewards can promote intrinsic motivation and improve general interest (Cameron et al., 2005; Houlfort et al., 2002).

The primary argument against extrinsic rewards is if extrinsic rewards are removed, the activity will stop (Sidorkin, 2008). However, the fact the desired activity is discontinued after eliminating the rewards is merely another way of defining what extrinsic motivation is, not an argument against it (Sidorkin, 2008). Lepper, Corpus, and Iyengar (2005) advised students may engage in an activity because they already have a self-driven interest, which will guide them to learn and excel in the activity. Moos (2010) stated, "The possibility that extrinsic motivation in combination with intrinsic motivation may be the most optimal combination to facilitate learning" (p. 1646).

Interest is selective and is used by students to establish their individuality (Sidorkin, 2008). Therefore, some students will not like the school academic environment simply because their personalities are different from those students who do (Sidorkin, 2008). Levine (2012) stated, "If pushing, direction, motivation, and reward always come from the outside, the child never has the opportunity to craft an inside" (para. 18).

Even though studies concerning motivation have left out students' perceptions of rewards, hindsight may be useful in determining the efficiency of extrinsic rewarding. Davis, Winsler, and Middleton (2006) studied college students' opinions of extrinsic rewards given throughout their primary and secondary education. The outcome showed males who received numerous rewards from teachers reported higher academic goals for themselves as compared to males who reported getting a lesser amount of teacher rewards (Davis et al., 2006). Overall, "77 percent of the participants responded that rewards were effective academic motivators" (Davis et al., 2006, p. 217).

Marzano (2010) suggested students record their own scores on a displayable chart to have a visual representation of how students are doing academically compared to their peers. According to Marzano (2010), "This strategy brings about 32 percent-point gain in achievement" (p. 86). This style of self-motivation shows competition among students is a positive source of motivation.

Attendance and Achievement

Students need to attend school daily to succeed (Balfanz & Chang, 2013). Balfanz and Chang (2013) found a school can have a 95% average daily attendance rate and still have 25% of its students chronically absent. Educational policies have been in place for many years to increase student academic achievement and attendance, but just having a policy does not lead to improved learning (Golding, 2011). Educators and policymakers cannot truly understand achievement gaps or efforts to close them without considering chronic absenteeism (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

Student absenteeism and its effect on academic performance is a concern for all stakeholders in education (Richard & Wanga, 2012). There is a critical link between

successful educational student outcomes and attendance at school (Laws, 2013).

Ginsburg et al. (2014) stated, "Students eligible for free and reduced price meals, a

common marker for low-income status, are more likely to miss three days or more in the

prior month" (p. 4).

Many absences in rural communities are not about students' willfully missing

school, but poverty plays a big role through such factors as lack of reliable transportation

and frequent moves or homelessness (Balfanz & Chang, 2013). Absence of even two

weeks during one school year can have a major impact in areas such as math (Balfanz &

Byrnes, 2012). Attendance strongly affects standardized test scores and graduation and

dropout rates (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

The reasons a student is absent from school vary. Corville-Smith, Ryan, Adams,

and Dalicandro (1998) conducted a study of "student attendance, personal characteristics

of the student, the student's family relations, and school variables… of 54 high school

students" (Abstract, p. 629). The purpose of the study was to determine the reasons for

the continued problem of student absenteeism, and although the study took place nearly

18 years ago, the problem still exists (Corville-Smith et al., 1998). The findings of

Corville-Smith et al. (1998) are worthy to consider in view of the high rate of

absenteeism (U.S. Department of Education, 2016a).

According to Corville-Smith et al. (1998), six variables significantly affect a

student's attendance:

Embedded within the domain of personal characteristics is the child's perceived

academic self-concept, and his or her social competence in class as rated by a

teacher. Within the domain of the family are students' perceptions of parental

discipline, parental control, and family conflict. And finally, in the domain of

school are students' perceptions of school characteristics and school personnel.

The combined set of variables not only reflects the influence of variables from

multiple domains, but more importantly identifies a parsimonious set of

characteristics to target in designing prevention and intervention programs to deal

with student absenteeism. (Discussion section, p. 637)

Students' misperceptions of self, parents, and school are not easily changed; however,

educators must continue to assist students who are chronically absent.

Currently, the U.S. Department of Education (2016a) has joined with the Charles

Stewart Mott Foundation and the Ad Council to inform parents of the importance of

student attendance. The "Absences Add Up" message is aired through public service

announcements and consists of resources, facts, and information for parents to improve

their child's attendance (U.S. Department of Education, 2016a, para. 3). In a recent

survey of parents, the Ad Council reported the following:

An overwhelming majority (86%) of parents understand their child's school

attendance plays a big role in helping them graduate from high school. However,

nearly half (49%) of parents believe that it is okay for their children to miss three

or more days of school per month – and that they won't fall behind academically

if they do. In reality, missing just two days of school per month makes children

more likely to fall behind and less likely to graduate. (U.S. Department of

Education, 2016a, para. 2)

When reviewing the findings of Corville-Smith et al. (1998) with the recent campaign to reach parents and inform them of the importance of attendance (U.S. Department of Education, 2016a), the need for parents to support and encourage their children is critical.

Negative Consequences to Motivation

Researchers have documented when students enjoy an activity, extrinsic motivators may result in the activity becoming less enjoyable (Jones, 2011). If correct, it could be foolish to reward a student who already has good attendance. Jones (2011) surmised rewarding students for good attendance will result in poorer attendance when the reward is halted.

The negative factor of extrinsic motivation is far greater than the positive aspect (The Focus, 2016). For a student who is extrinsically motivated, failure to reach the goal may result in the reward appearing as punishment (The Focus, 2016). Often, these students quit after disappointment even though a new reward may be offered (The Focus, 2106). Extrinsically motivated students often tend to exhibit less compliance after the reward is discontinued (The Focus, 2016). Students who are only extrinsically motivated tend to necessitate a bigger reward after each successful occurrence (The Focus, 2016).

Rewards for test scores, behavior, grades, and school attendance can significantly weaken intrinsic motivation in students (Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2011). By extrinsically motivating students, school administrators run the risk of damaging intrinsic motivation (Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2011). A quick fix, such as adding financial incentives for students, sends the wrong message about the purpose of schooling and can be ineffective in promoting lasting motivation (Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2011).

Opponents of extrinsic motivation contend extrinsic motivators weaken learning by enticing desired performance in students (Learn NC, n.d.). The pursuit of learning, knowledge, and behaviors are suitably motivated by enjoyment or curiosity rather than by acknowledgment, rewards, or fear of negative consequences (Learn NC, n.d.). Extrinsic motivation opponents determined bribery is a short-term fix and does not have lasting results (Learn NC, n.d.).

Instructional approaches which encourage students to better engage in school as opposed to simply rewarding students to engage have been studied (Jones, 2011). The teachers' instructional styles can have a primary influence on student performance (Jones, 2011). Yet, most educators are limited in their capability to motivate some students because of certain external factors which occur away from the school setting (Jones, 2011). Diverse families, students, and communities have unique conditions, but in most cases, educators should attempt to motivate students by improving teaching methods and curricula rather than addressing larger social-economic factors such as poverty (Jones, 2011).

Giving students a prize for doing a task can actually lessen intrinsic motivation, because students may begin to only complete the task for external rewards; this is referred to as the over justification effect (Hyatt, 2013). The over justification effect was shown when researchers rewarded nine- and 10-year-olds for playing with mathematical games (Greene et al., 1976). Before students were given the rewards, many of them played with the games just because they were entertaining (Greene et al., 1976). However, after receiving rewards for playing the math games, many students spent significantly less time playing with the games than they did before the reward was

initiated (Greene et al., 1976). According to Headden and McKay (2015), "Research shows that when rewards come to be expected, they can have the effect of undermining motivation in general and intrinsic motivation in particular" (p. 5).

Summary

Due to accountability placed on school districts through performance-based testing, substantial research has been conducted on the topic of motivation (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Kumashiro, 2012; McInerney, 2004). The majority of studies have targeted the impacts of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Acevedo, 2012; Deci & Ryan, 2000). The results are conflicting as to which of the two is more influential. The bulk of the research findings suggest when students are extrinsically rewarded, they do better on tasks and can continue to be motivated even after reinforcers are taken away (Usher, 2012).

In this chapter, the main topics of discussion included the theoretical framework which guided the study, student motivation and rewards, intrinsic motivation, amotivation, extrinsic motivation, attendance and achievement, and negative consequences of motivation. The self-determination sub-theory, OIT, was presented with an emphasis on external regulation, the lowest degree on the continuum (Deci et al., 1996); in this study, external regulation corresponds with the implementation of extrinsic motivation programs in schools. Also reviewed were the studies and reports surrounding student motivation. Although each of the main topics was presented as separate reviews, these topics are intertwined.

In Chapter Three, the methodology used in this study is presented along with quantitative data and descriptive statistics. The population of Missouri public school

districts and stratified sample are discussed. The instrumentation and steps taken for the

survey development are discussed. Also included in Chapter Three are the ethical

considerations, data collection procedures, and the steps taken to analyze the data.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Students who lack motivation rarely put forth academic effort and can often be disruptive in class, thus causing other students to become off-task (Ghazi, Shahzada, Tariq, & Khan, 2013). Educators must develop a plan to motivate each student to want to become successful (Wiseman & Hunt, 2014). This study was conducted to enrich the body of research as it relates to student extrinsic motivation and to provide educational leaders with current extrinsic motivation techniques other school districts are utilizing to increase attendance. The overarching question for this study is: Do extrinsic motivators increase student attendance?

Problem and Purpose Overview

The design of this study was focused on descriptive statistics taken from the analysis of quantitative data to identify the types of extrinsic motivation used to increase attendance of high school students (Farrell, 2011). Surveys were distributed to high school principals to gather their insights into using motivators to encourage better attendance. Then, data from the MODESE were collected to examine the average attendance rates for the high schools participating in the study. These data were taken from the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years.

Research questions. The following research questions guided this study.

1. What percentage of public high schools in rural southwest and west central Missouri use extrinsic motivators to improve attendance?

2. What types of extrinsic motivators are used in high schools in southwest and west central Missouri districts to increase attendance?

3. Which extrinsic motivators lead to a yearly increase in attendance?

4. What process is used to implement extrinsic motivators and sustain improved attendance?

Research Design

The focus of this study included examining extrinsic motivation and high school attendance. Descriptive statistics were applied to explore how school districts are extrinsically motivating students to attend school, which would serve as an advisement for educational leaders. Data were gathered to compare student attendance rates in grades 9-12 based upon extrinsic motivators used in school districts in southwest and west central Missouri during the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years. High school principals were asked to complete a survey based on extrinsic motivators used to increase attendance rate.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was Missouri accredited public school districts. After reviewing the literature regarding selecting samples in quantitative studies, it was determined a stratified sample was appropriate for this study. A stratified sample is when the population is split into non-overlapping groups and then a sample in taken within each group (Sullivan, 2014). The purpose of a stratified sample is to ensure adequate representation of subjects in each group (Sullivan, 2014).

The stratified sample was comprised of public school districts with 400 or fewer students in grades K-12 during the 2012-2015 school years. The original intent was to secure attendance data from grades 9-12 of the 45 high schools in the sample. Of the 45 possible participants, 20 high school principals agreed to take part in the study.

Instrumentation

    Secondary database. Attendance data were obtained through the MODESE website. These MODESE records are open for public viewing. Public schools in Missouri are required to meet the standards set forth in the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) 5th cycle (MODESE, 2014c). The purpose of MSIP 5 is to:

> . . . distinguish the performance of schools and districts in valid, accurate and meaningful ways so that districts in need of improvement can receive appropriate support and interventions, and high-performing districts can be recognized as models of excellence. Annual Performance Reports (APRs) are based on the performance standards and are reviewed for accreditation purposes at the district level. (MODESE, 2014c, p. 2)

Attendance standards are one part of the overall MSIP to assure students are college- or career-ready upon graduating from high school (MODESE, 2014c). An APR score for each district is calculated for each of these performance standards:

> (1) Academic Achievement,
>
> (2) Subgroup Achievement,
>
> (3) High School Readiness (K-8 districts) or College and Career Readiness
>
>   (K-12 districts),
>
> (4) Attendance Rate, and
>
> (5) Graduation Rate (K-12 districts).
>
> Status, progress, and growth (where applicable) are used to calculate a comprehensive score used to determine the accreditation level of a school district. (MODESE, 2014c, p. 5)

The performance standard for attendance is "set at the expectation that 90% of the students are in attendance 90% of the time" (MODESE, 2014c, p. 5). Secondary data for this study included attendance rates for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years in grades 9-12 from the participating high schools.

Survey. The survey was developed based on literature reviewed about extrinsic motivation (Cameron et al., 2005; Houlfort et al., 2002). The focus of the original survey was types of extrinsic motivators used. A field test was conducted with five individuals currently in the education field but not invited to complete the final survey. The survey was electronically mailed (emailed) to the five individuals. They were asked to provide feedback on access and navigation within the survey, clarity of instructions, grammar errors, and general observations (Roberts, 2010).

The sample group suggested question and format changes which were taken into consideration. The original draft was modified from yes/no questions to include yes/no, check all that apply, and fill-in-the-blank questions. An additional two questions were added to the survey following field testing (see Appendix A).

Data Collection

The Missouri School Directory, published by the MODESE (2015b), was used to obtain the names and email addresses of high school principals in west central and southwest regions of Missouri. The high school principals were emailed a recruitment letter (see Appendix B) and informed consent form (see Appendix C) to request their participation in the study. The consent process consisted of an explanation of the study, while providing pertinent information such as purpose, procedures, risk, benefits, and

alternatives to participation. The principals acknowledged consent by completely the survey via SurveyMonkey.

Data Analysis

The analysis for this study was directed by quantitative methodology. According to Laerd Dissertation (2012), "Quantitative research takes a particular approach to theory, answering research questions and/or hypotheses, setting up a research strategy, [and] making conclusions from results…" (para. 3). In this study, survey data were collected using SurveyMonkey, and descriptive statistics were applied (Farrell, 2011).

Initially, a frequency chart was developed to record survey responses. The frequency chart presented the numerical summary of extrinsic motivators used (Hanneman, Kposowa, & Riddle, 2013). The secondary attendance data were reviewed and matched with the respective participating high schools. Then, survey responses about the high school principals' perceptions of extrinsic motivation and implementation of motivators were considered in combination with the percentages of each school's attendance rates. These data were depicted through figures.

Ethical Considerations

Once approval was given by the Lindenwood University IRB (see Appendix D), data collection began. During each step of the data collection phase, participants were informed of the scope of the study, their ability to answer any or all survey questions, and their ability to stop participation at any time. Participants were informed personally identifiable information obtained during the course of the study would remain confidential. Any resulting publications will not contain the name of the participating schools or principals.

All survey responses and informed consent forms remained under the direct supervision of the researcher during the duration of the study. The electronic data were housed on a password-protected site known only to the researcher. Paper documents were secured by the researcher in a locked cabinet. After three years, the electronic and paper documents will be shredded. There were no human risks associated with this study.

Summary

School districts have been assessing students for many years. All Missouri public schools now are faced with the pressure from Annual Performance Report (APR) to continually improve attendance (MODESE, 2015a). The requirements in education have forced districts to improve attendance (MODESE, 2014c). Techniques developed by administrators include rewarding students with automobiles, private concerts, food, finals exemptions, electronic devices, gift cards, and other monetary incentives to increase attendance (Chute, 2014; Leff, 2012; Ruiz, 2015; Springfield Public School District, 2015; Vandemark, 2014).

This study involved examination of different extrinsic motivators which high school principals use and the influence motivation has on APR attendance percentage. The greater the knowledge acquired through research regarding motivational techniques, the more effective educators will be in enhancing student attendance.

Surveys were distributed to high school principals to gather their insights into using motivators to encourage better attendance. Then, data from the MODESE were collected to examine the average attendance rates for the high schools participating in the study. These data were taken from the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school

years. Data were gathered to compare student attendance rates in grades 9-12 based upon extrinsic motivators used in school districts in southwest and west central Missouri during the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years. High school principals were asked to complete a survey based on extrinsic motivators used to increase attendance rate. The secondary attendance data were reviewed and matched with the respective participating high schools. Then, survey responses about the high school principals' perceptions of extrinsic motivation and implementation of motivators were considered in combination with the percentages of each school's attendance rates.

In Chapter Four, a brief review of the study is offered. Then, the seven survey questions and responses are shared and explained. Annual performance data are presented which indicate the attendance rates for each of the participating high schools.

Chapter Four: Analysis of Data

Review of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the different types of extrinsic motivators rural school districts located in the southwest and west central regions of Missouri use to increase high school attendance rates. After securing a sample of 45 school districts with 400 or fewer students in K-12, a survey was presented to each high school principal via electronic mail. The survey return rate was 44% with 20 principals completing the survey. The sample included 20 districts with enrollment sizes ranging from 141 to 392 students in grades kindergarten through 12.

The responses from southwest and west central districts were 40% and 60%, respectively, as shown in Figure 2. The responses from southwest and west central districts which use extrinsic motivators were 60% and 40%, respectively, as shown in Figure 3. The 5 districts which do not use extrinsic motivators are shown in Figure 4. The responses shown in Figure 4 were 60% southwest and 40% west central.
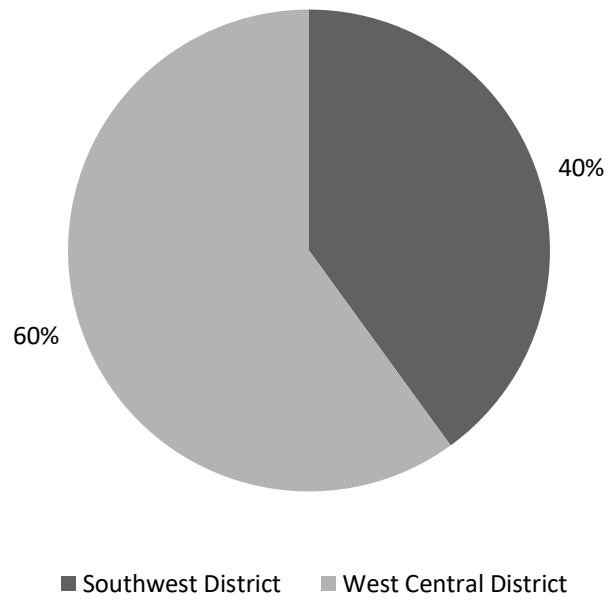
Figure 2. Percentage of responses from each district.
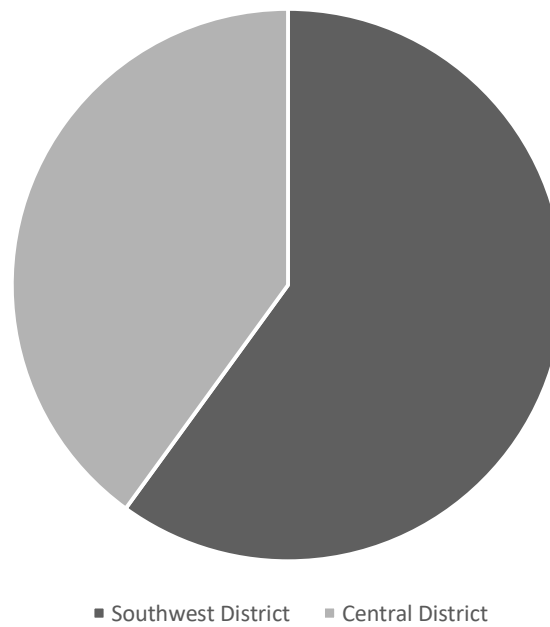
Figure 3. Percentage of response from each district which use extrinsic motivators.
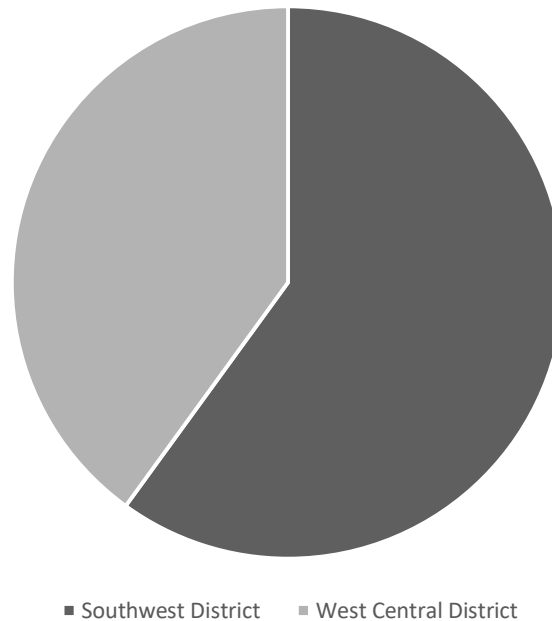
Figure 4. Percentage of response from each district which do not use extrinsic motivators.

Survey Responses

Question one. Within the past three years, has your school district used extrinsic motivators as a way to promote or increase student attendance rates*?*

Of the 20 participants, 15 (75%) reported their school district used extrinsic motivators to increase student attendance. The remaining 25% responded their district did not use extrinsic motivators to increase student attendance.

Question two. Which of the following extrinsic motivators were used?

This question was written as *check all that apply*, and the following choices were given to the participants:

(1) gift card

(2) gas card

(3) field trip

(4) final exam exemption

(5) technology gifts

(6) food or drinks

(7) field day

(8) homework pass

(9) watch a movie

The questions were answered by the 15 school principals who responded positively to *use extrinsic motivators as a way to increase student attendance*. The most common extrinsic motivator reported by nine of the 15 principals was final exam exemption.

The second most common extrinsic motivator was field trip, which was checked by eight principals. The third most common extrinsic motivator was gift cards, which was indicated by six of the 15 principals. The next most common extrinsic motivators were food or drink and watch a movie, which were checked by four of the 15 principals.

The sixth most common extrinsic motivator checked was field day by two of the 15 principals. Gas cards were used by one principal, and a homework pass was also checked by one principal. Technology gifts was a choice for extrinsic motivator on the survey, but was not checked by any of the principals.

In comparing the average three-year attendance rates (2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015) of the 15 school districts which used at least one extrinsic motivator to the five districts which did not use extrinsic motivators, the data revealed the attendance rate of those using extrinsic motivators was 90.5% compared to 90.9% for those using none. These data indicated the attendance rates for districts using no motivators were actually

0.4% higher than those using at least one motivator.   Figure 5 and Figure 6 represent the

responses to survey question two.

Motivators	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Final Exam Exemption			x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	
Field Trip		x					x	x	x		x	x	x		
Gift Card	x		x						x		x		x		x
Food/drinks					x			x	x			x			
Watch a Movie		x		x				x	x						
Field Day		x							x						
Homework Pass	x														
Gas Card											x				
Technology Gifts															

Figure 5. Extrinsic motivators used to increase student attendance rate. Survey responses
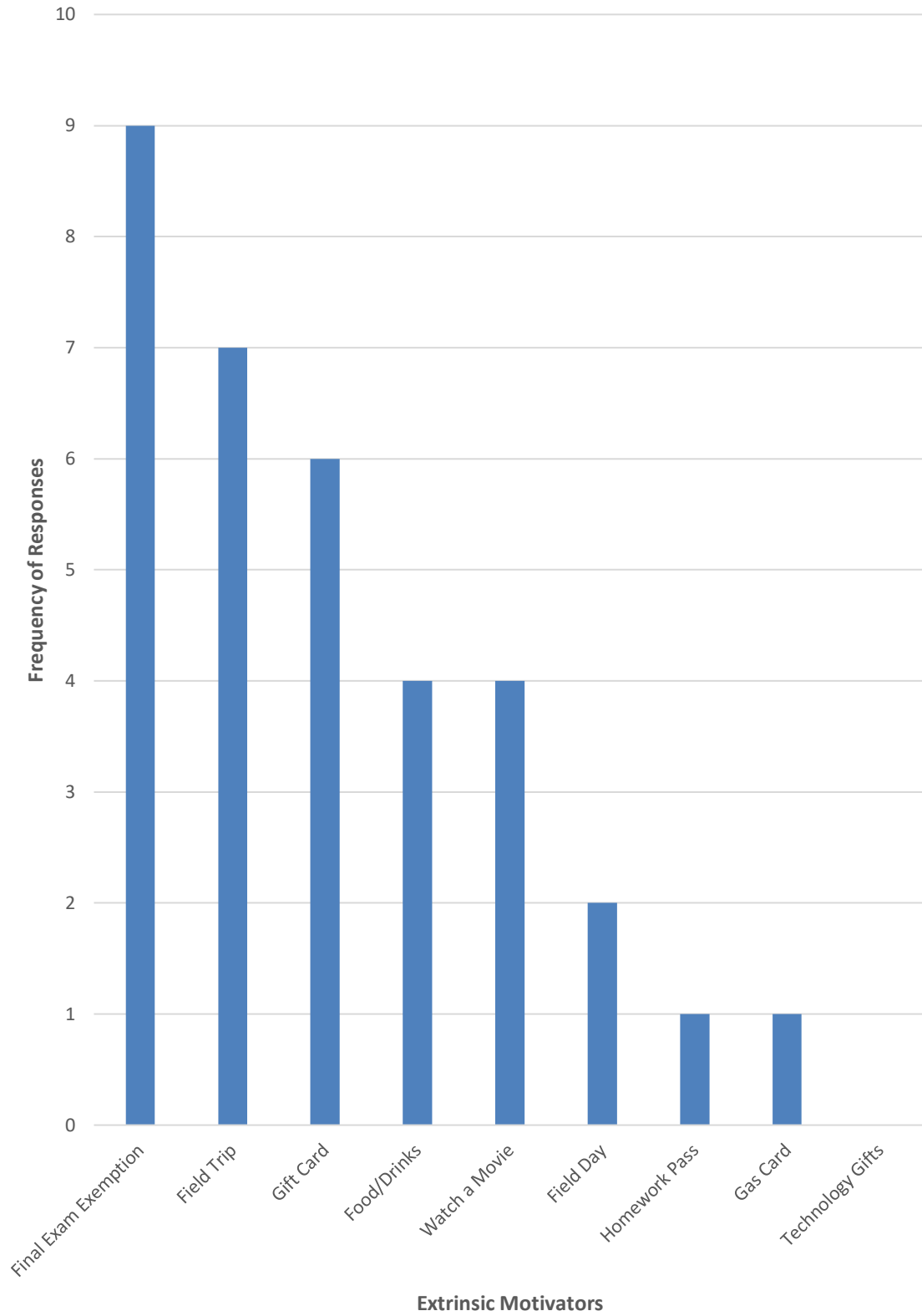
to question two. $N = 15$.

Figure 6. Extrinsic motivators used to increase student attendance rate. $N = 15$.

Question three. Which extrinsic motivators were the most effective? List the top three.

The majority of school principals responded the final exam exemption was one of the top extrinsic motivators. Eight of the nine school principals who reported they used final exam exemptions as an extrinsic motivator also felt final exam exemptions were one of the most effective motivators used. Five of the seven school principals who used field trips as an extrinsic motivator also reported the field trip was one of the most effective motivators used.

Three of the six school principals who responded using gift card as an extrinsic motivator also identified the gift card was one of the most effective motivators used. Two of the four school principals who responded using food or drinks as an extrinsic motivator also believed provision of food or drinks was one of the most effective motivators used.

One of the four principals who used a movie as an extrinsic motivator reported the movie was one of the most effective motivators. One of two school principals who used field day as an extrinsic motivator felt the field day was one of the most effective motivators used. The school principals who responded with gas card or homework pass did not choose these extrinsic motivators as one of the most effective motivators. Technology was an option to choose; however, since no school principal chose technology in question two, none of the principals responded technology was one of the most effective motivators used. The data for question three are outlined in Figure 7 and Figure 8.

Motivators	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Final Exam Exemption	x		x		x	x	x		x	x		x		x	
Field Trip		x						x			x	x	x		
Gift Card			x										x		x
Food/Drinks								x				x			
Watch a Movie		x													
Field Day		x													
Homework Pass															
Gas Card															
Technology Gifts															

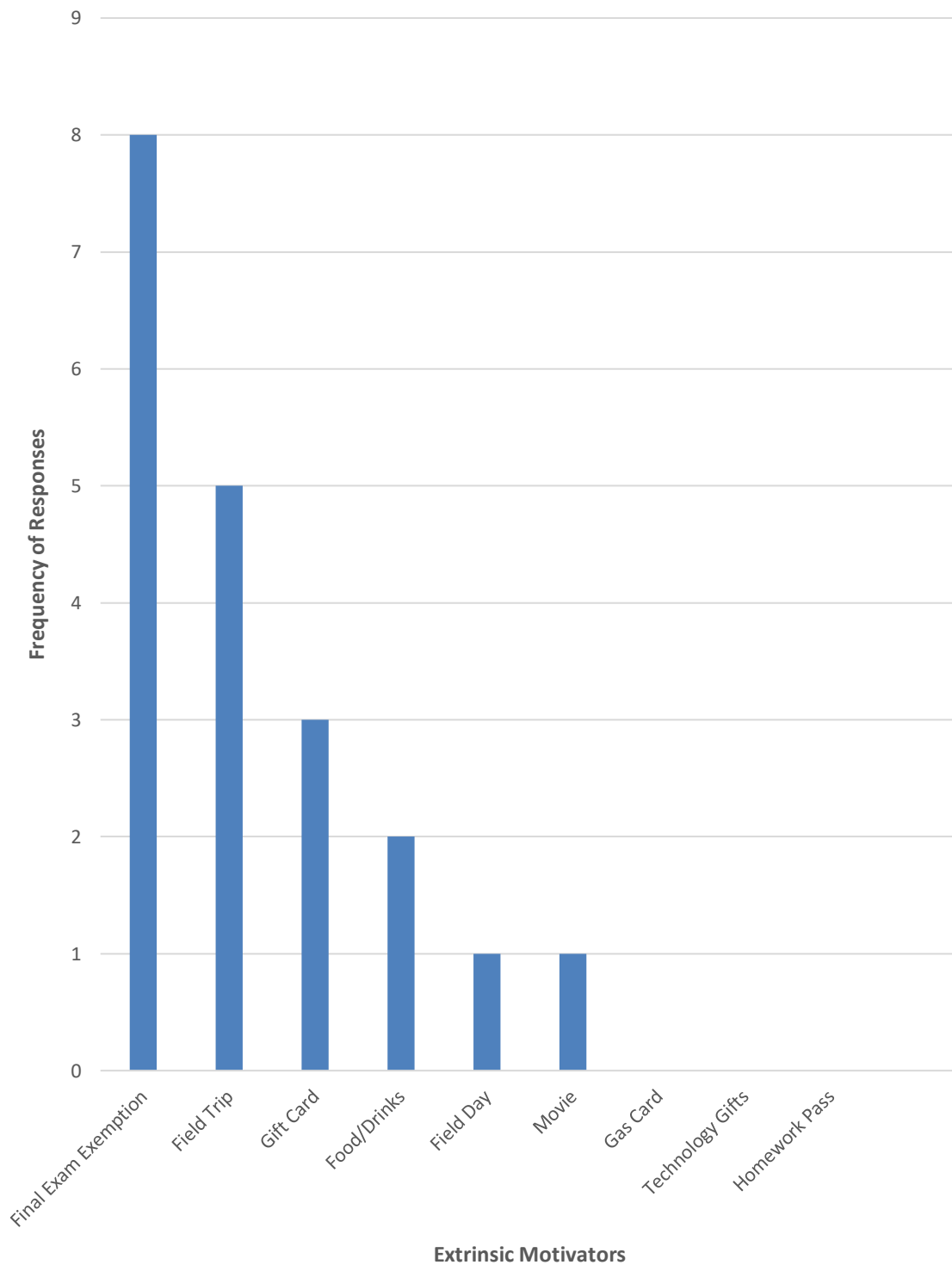*Figure 7.* Most effective extrinsic motivators by school district. *N* = 15.

Figure 8.   Most effective extrinsic motivators by school district.   *N* = 15.

Question four. Which extrinsic motivators were the least effective? List the top three.

Only five of the 15 (33%) school principals responded. Two of the five reported the field trip was the least effective extrinsic motivator used. Another two of the five school principals responded the homework pass was the least effective extrinsic motivator used. Of the five principals who responded, the least effective extrinsic motivators were food and drinks, final exam exemption, and movie. The data for this question are outlined in Figure 9 and Figure 10.

Motivators	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Final Exam Exemption								x							
Field Trip							x	x							
Gift Card															
Food/Drinks				x											
Watch a Movie									x						
Field Day															
Homework Pass			x	x											
Gas Card															
Technology Gifts															

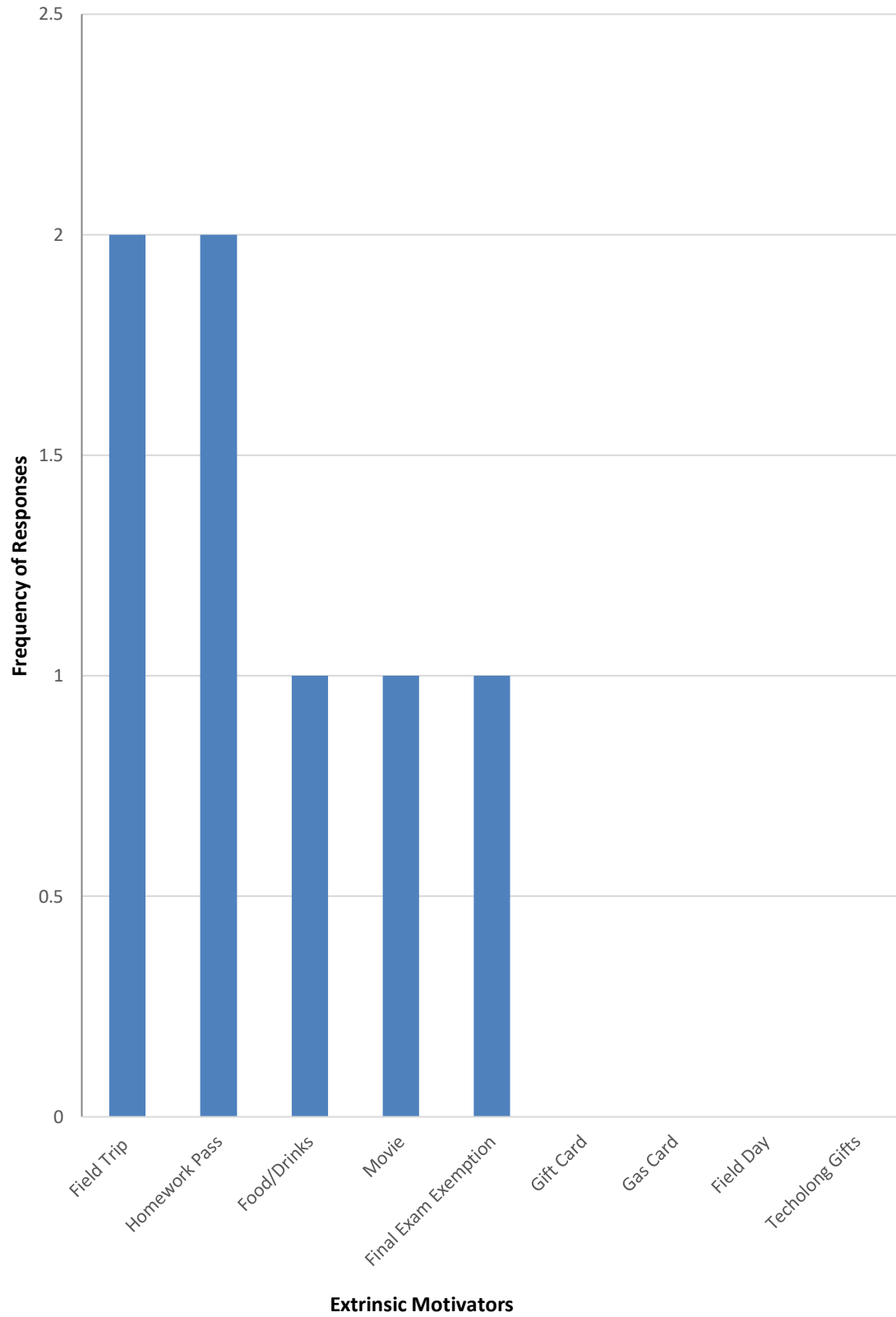*Figure 9.* Least effective extrinsic motivators. $N = 15$.

Figure 10. Least effective motivators listed by frequency of responses. *N* = 15.

Question five.   How were students informed of attendance incentives?

This question was written as *check all that apply*, and the following choices were given to the participants: student handbook, board policy, newsletter, daily announcement, and school-reach call. The response rate for this question was 100%. The majority of the school principals (80%) responded students receive information about incentives by reading the student handbook.

Fifteen school principals responded to using daily announcements as a way to inform students of the extrinsic motivators used to improve attendance. The last choice, newsletter, received the fewest responses. Of the 15 school principals, three (20%) responded newsletters were the preferred mode of communication. Board policy and school-reach calls were not used by any of the 15 school principals (see Figure 11).
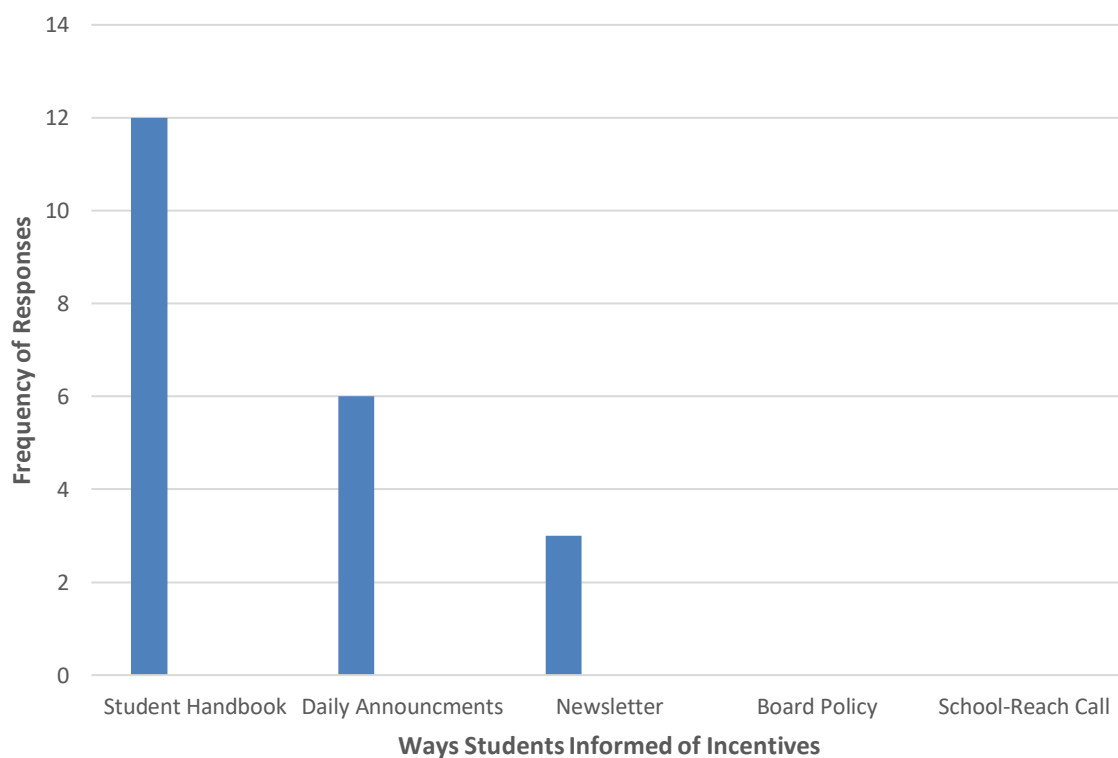

Figure 11.   How students were informed of attendance incentive.   *N* =15.

Question six.   Who was responsible for selecting which extrinsic motivators to use?

This question was written as *check all that apply*, and the following choices were given to the participants: administration team, teachers, and students. The response rate for question six was 100% with all 15 school principals responding. The majority, 93%, (14 of 15) responded the administration team was responsible for selecting the extrinsic motivators used to increase student attendance rate.

Teachers were responsible for selecting which extrinsic motivator was used in 60% (9 of 15) of the schools. Of the 15 principals, six (40%) responded students were able to provide input on which extrinsic motivators were used in relation to attendance rate (see Figure 12).
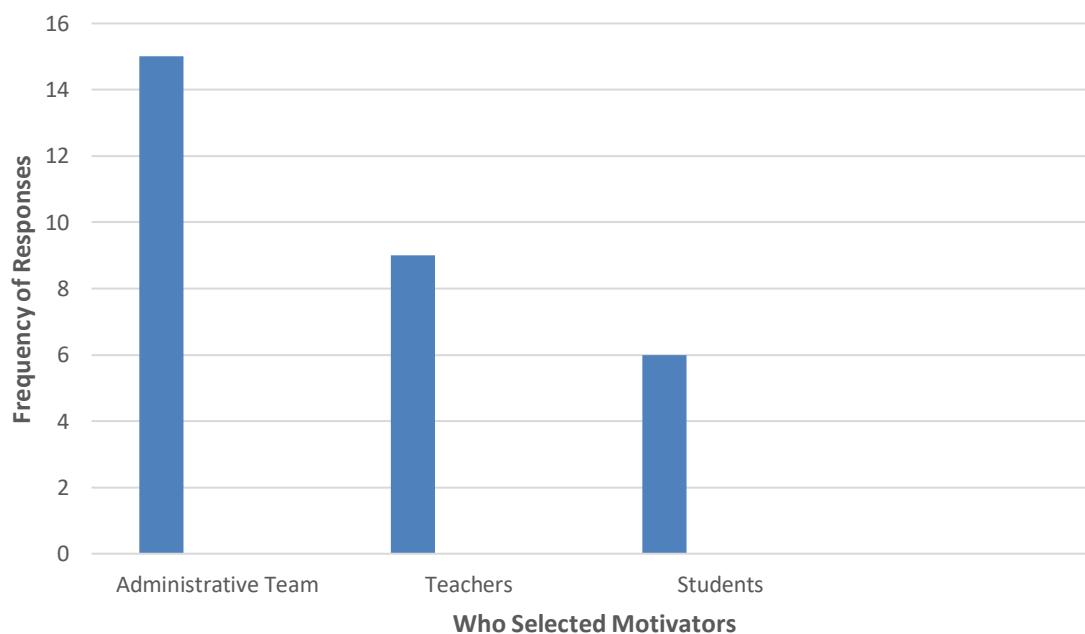

Figure 12. Who was responsible for selecting which extrinsic motivators to use. *N* =15.

Question seven. What is the process for evaluating the effectiveness of the extrinsic motivators over time?

This question was written as *check all that apply*, and the following choices were given to the participants: administration review, survey students, survey teachers, survey parents, and other. The response rate was 100%. All 15 principals reported the administration evaluates the effectiveness of selected motivators used (see Figure 13).

Five of 15 (33%) responded students are surveyed as a way to evaluate the effectiveness of extrinsic motivators. Five of 15 (33%) responded teachers are surveyed to provide input on extrinsic motivators. There was one response (6%) in which parents were surveyed for input on extrinsic motivators. There were no responses to *other*.
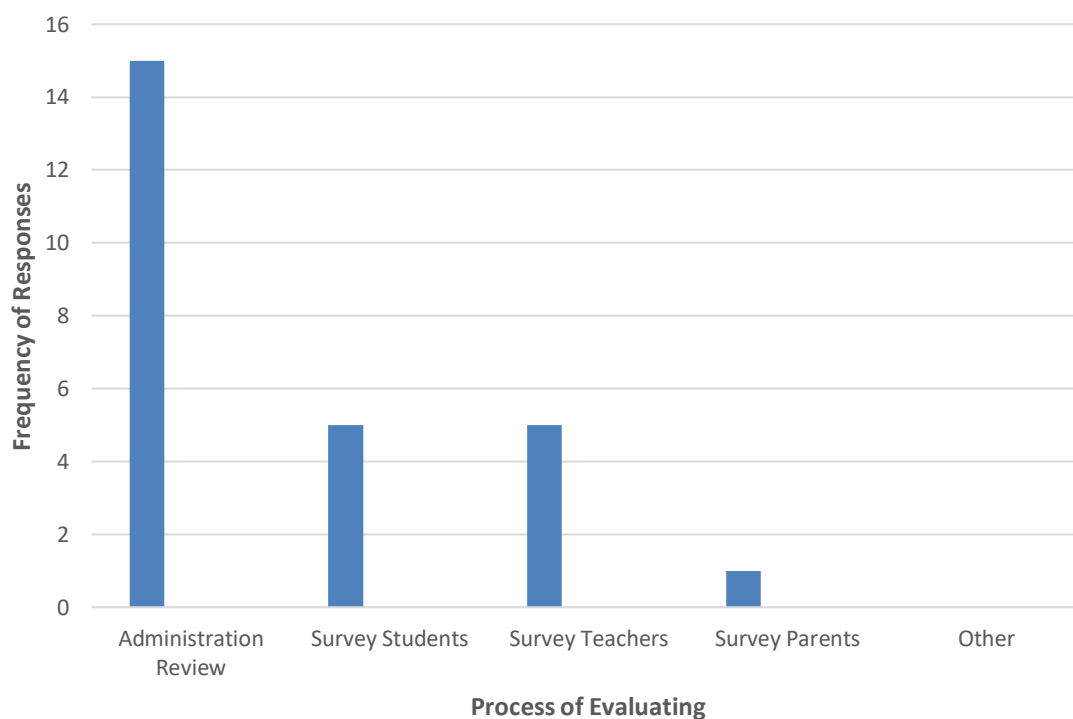

Figure 13. The process for evaluating the effectiveness of the extrinsic motivators.
$N = 15$.

Annual Performance Report Data

Each year, school districts in Missouri are given a grade card called the Annual

Performance Report (APR) (MODESE, 2015a). The APR is composed of state

assessment scores, graduation rates, college and career readiness, and attendance data

(MODESE, 2015a). Average daily attendance data are broken down by building and

total school district (MODESE, 2015a).

School principals record the attendance rate of each student and upload the data

through the Missouri Student Information System (MOSIS) at the end of each school

year, which is then reported to the MODESE (2015a). After statisticians review the data,

school districts are provided with their average daily attendance; the average daily

attendance is reported for each building and school district in the state (MODESE,

2015a). All APR data, including attendance rates, are public record and can be obtained

at the MODESE website (MODESE, 2015c).

Missouri's attendance target expectation is that 90% of students are in attendance

90% of the time, based on an individual student's attendance rates (Bauer, 2016). Data

are obtained from the MOSIS June Cycle Enrollment and Attendance file and from Core

Data Screen 10-School Calendar Information (MODESE, 2015c).

Using the end-of-the-year MOSIS June Student Enrollment Attendance, an

individual attendance rate is calculated for each student in accordance with the proportion

of the school year the student is enrolled in the school (MODESE, 2015c). For example,

a student who is in attendance over 90% of the time and is enrolled in the school for a full

year would be weighted as a 1.0, whereas a student who is in attendance over 90% of the

time and is enrolled for 522 hours in a school with a 1044-hour calendar would be weighted as a 0.5.

Total hours enrolled are the total hours of attendance plus the total hours of absence (MODESE, 2015c). Total calendar hours are the actual total calendar hours recorded in Core Data Screen 10 (MODESE, 2015c). A student's proportional weight is determined by taking the total hours enrolled in the school and dividing by the total calendar hours rounded to the thousandth (MODESE, 2015c).

The average daily attendance rates for this study were obtained through the MODESE website for the 20 schools participating in the study. Fifteen of the 20 schools used extrinsic motivators to increase high school student attendance. The attendance data were collected for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years for each school district.

The data revealed only four of the 20 high schools recorded an increase in the APR average daily attendance during both the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years. These four schools included two high schools which used extrinsic motivators and two high schools which did not. Those using extrinsic motivation increased an average of 7.2% compared to a 2.2% increase of those not using motivators. Individual high school average daily attendance data are represented in Figures 14 and 15.
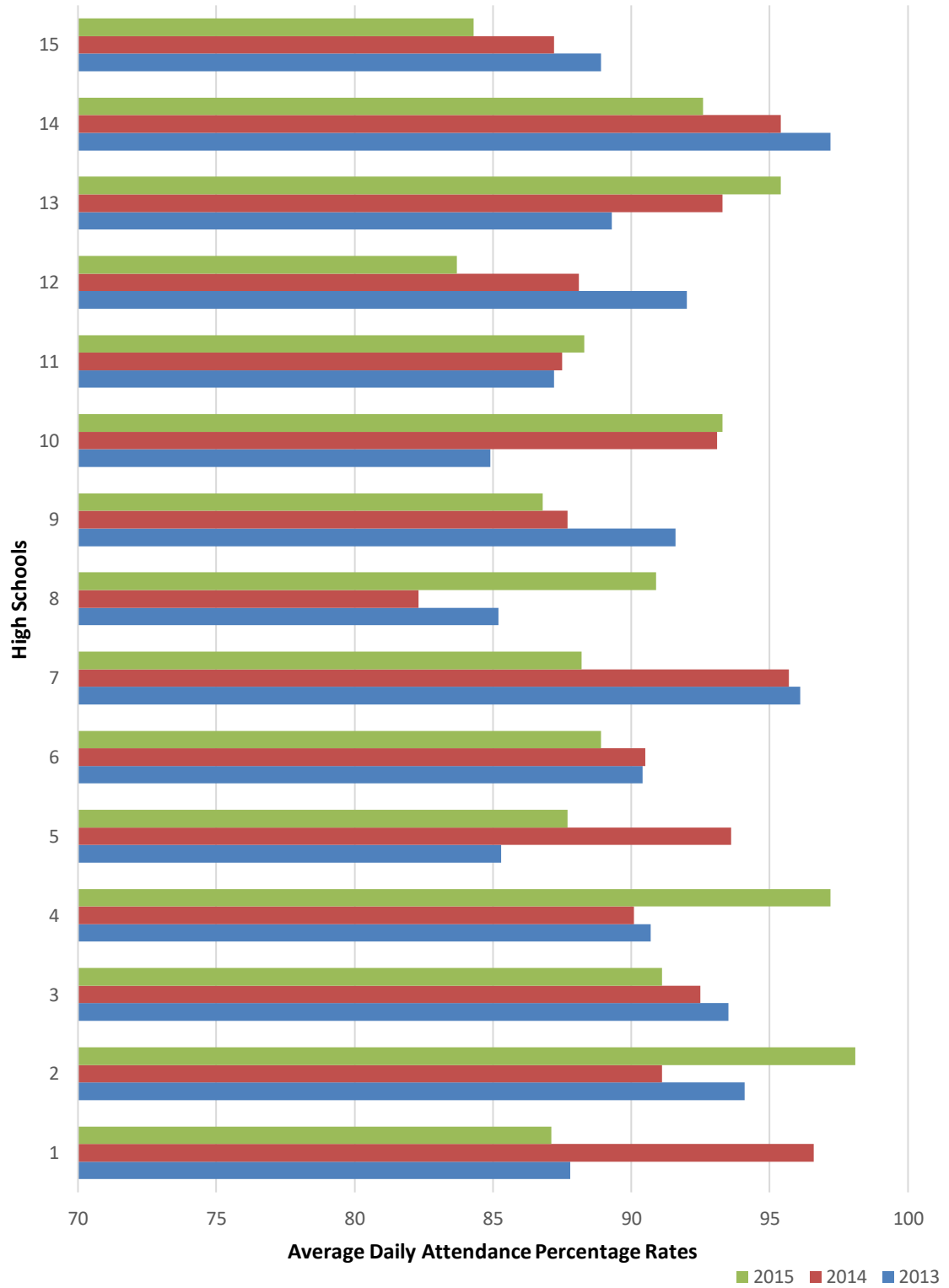
Figure 14.   Average daily attendance rate for high schools using extrinsic motivators.
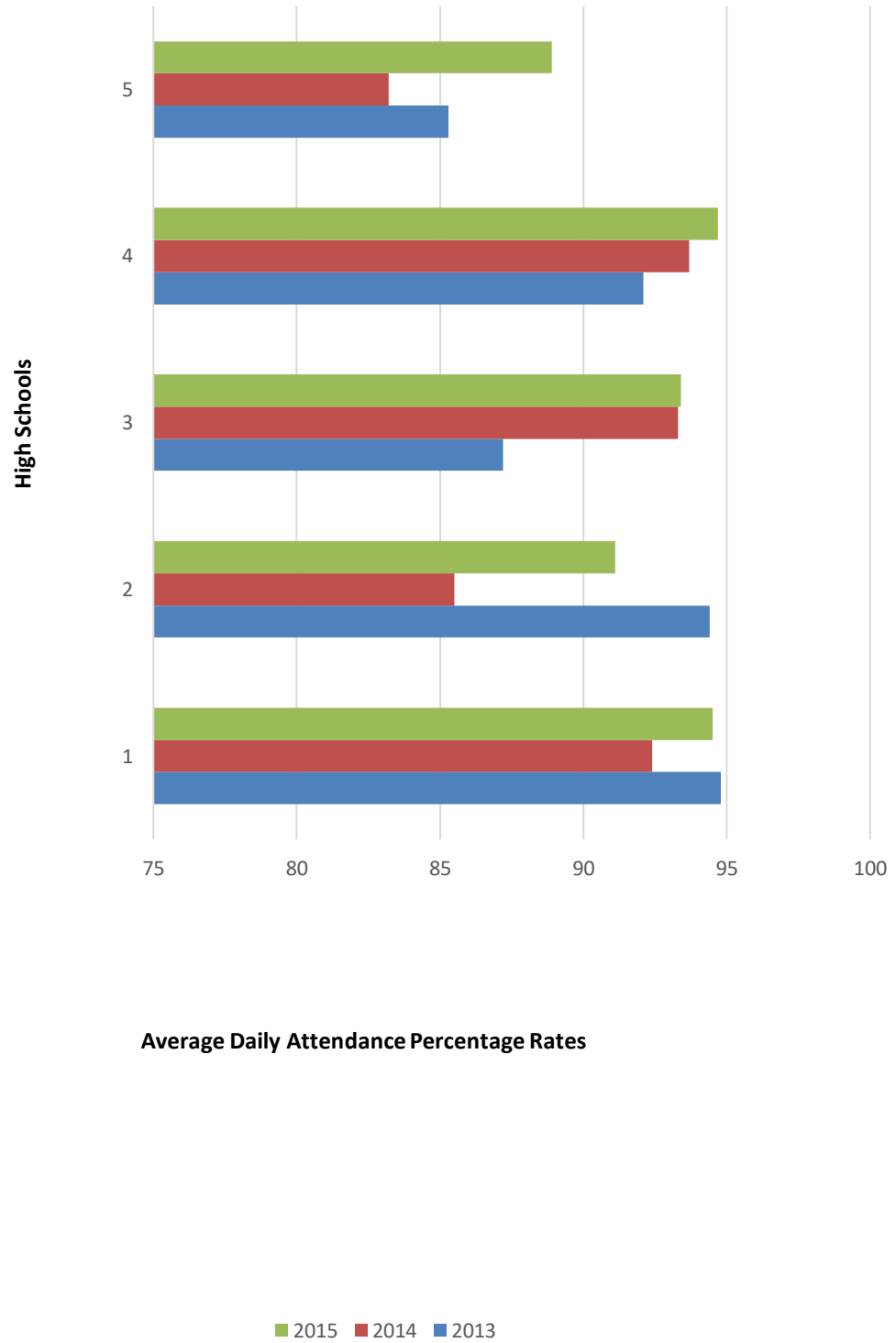
Figure 15. Average daily attendance rate for high schools not using extrinsic motivators.

The 2013 data revealed an attendance average of 90.28% for schools using at least one extrinsic motivator compared to 90.76% for those using no motivator. The 0.48% difference is negligible when considering the number of students in the study. However, when one compares the same data for 2015, results are different.

The 2015 data indicated the average attendance rate for students in schools using extrinsic motivators was 90.24% compared to 92.52% for students in high schools with no extrinsic motivators. This resulted in a 2.28% advantage for students in schools using no extrinsic motivators (see Figure 16).
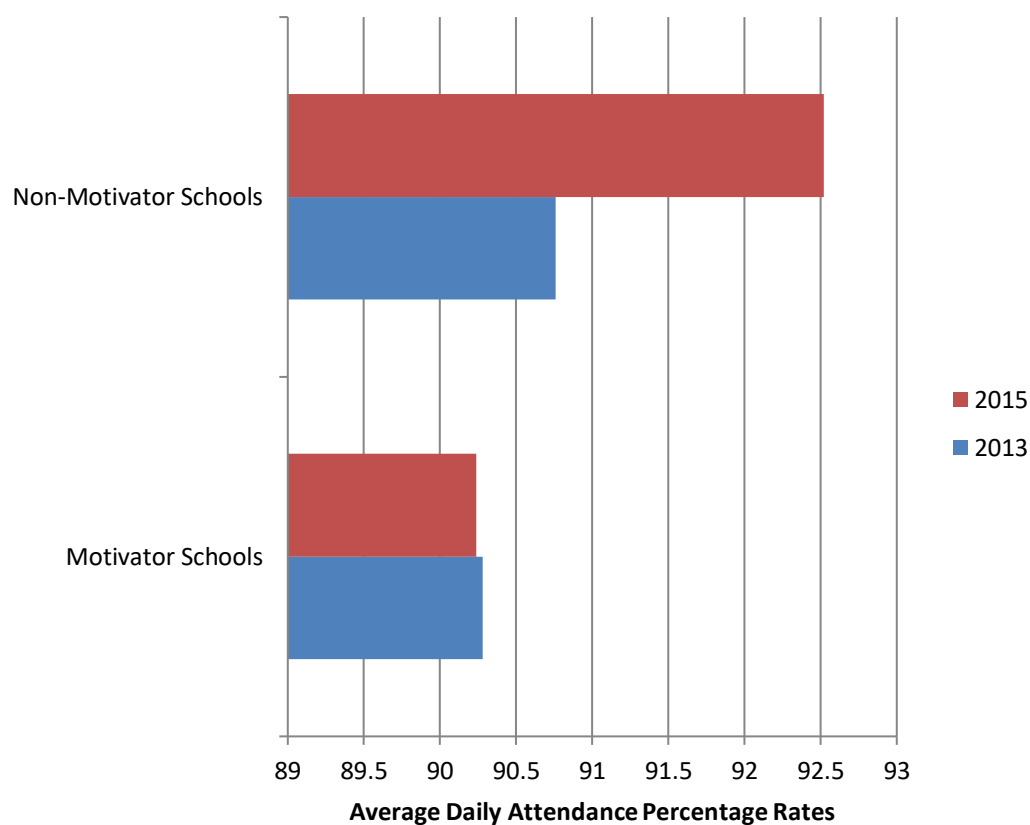
Figure 16. Average daily attendance for high schools not using extrinsic motivators compared to high schools using motivators.

When one compares the APR average daily attendance of the 15 high schools which employed extrinsic motivators to the five high schools which did not, the students in high schools without extrinsic motivators actually had better attendance than students in high schools which used motivators by 9.4%. In comparing the 2012-2013 and 2014-2015 APR average daily attendance for the schools which used extrinsic motivators, attendance rates actually decreased by 0.6%. Conversely, attendance rates for students in high schools using no motivators increased 8.8%.

Comparison of APR average daily attendance among the 20 high schools in this study revealed mixed results for school years 2012-2013 to 2014-2015. Of the 20 high schools, 10 schools increased APR average daily attendance, while 10 schools decreased in average daily attendance over the three years. Student attendance in eight of the 15 high schools which employed extrinsic motivators actually decreased in APR average daily attendance. Two of five high schools which did not use extrinsic motivators recorded declines in average daily attendance (see Figure 17).

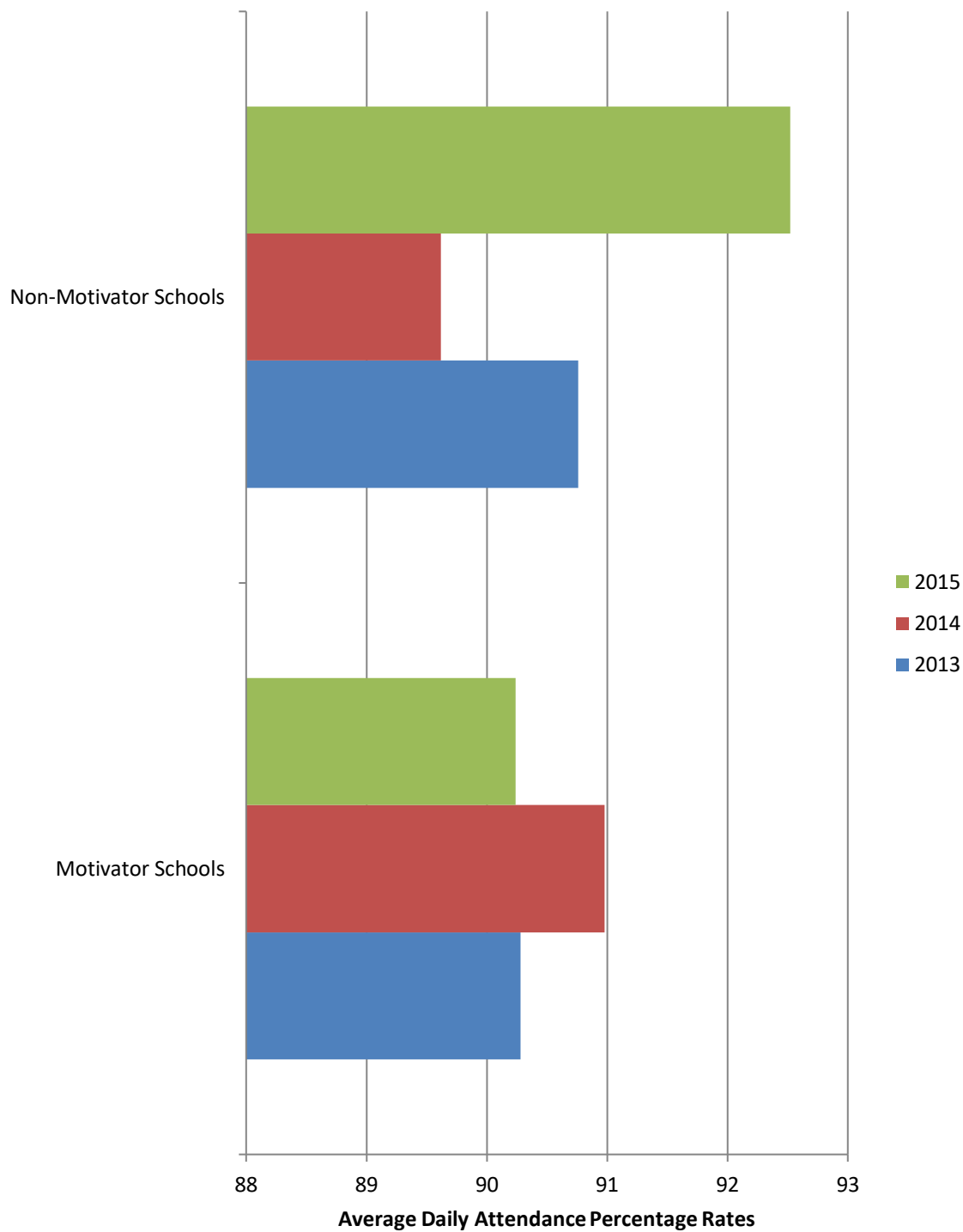*Figure 17.* Comparing average daily attendance rates of high schools using extrinsic

motivators to high schools not using extrinsic motivators.

Most of the 20 high schools in this study recorded higher APR average daily attendance than the state's averages. In 2013, 15 of the 20 schools reported a higher average daily attendance than Missouri's 87.8% statewide average. A similar result was recorded in 2014. However, in 2015, 14 of the 20 schools scored a higher percentage than the state average. Students in the 20 schools recorded higher average daily attendance percentages than the state average by 2.6%, 2.84%, and 1.51% during the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years, respectively.

Students in the 15 high schools which used some type extrinsic motivator had higher attendance rates than the state average. Schools using extrinsic motivators outperformed the state by 2.48% in 2013, 3.08% in 2014, and 0.94% in 2015. Students in the five high schools which used no extrinsic motivators outscored the state averages at a greater rate. These students outscored the state average by 2.96% in 2013, 1.82% in 2014, and 3.22% in 2015.

The average daily attendance for individual high schools which used motivators are represented by schools numbered 1-15. The average daily attendance for individual high schools which did not use motivators are represented by schools numbered 16-20. These 20 schools were compared to the average daily attendance of the state of Missouri. These comparisons are represented in Figures 18, 19, and 20.
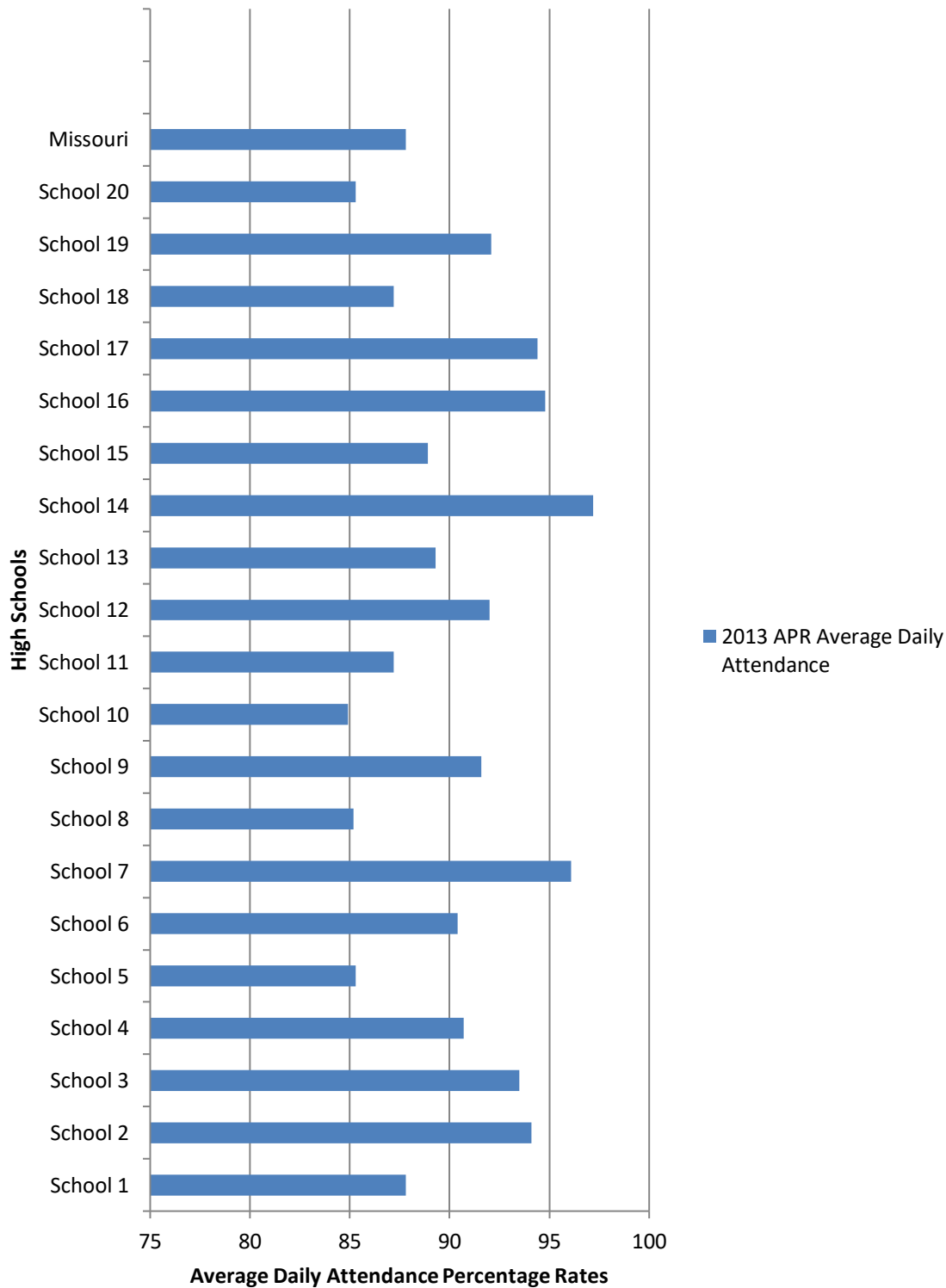
Figure 18. Comparing average daily attendance rates of 20 high schools and the

Missouri state average for 2013.
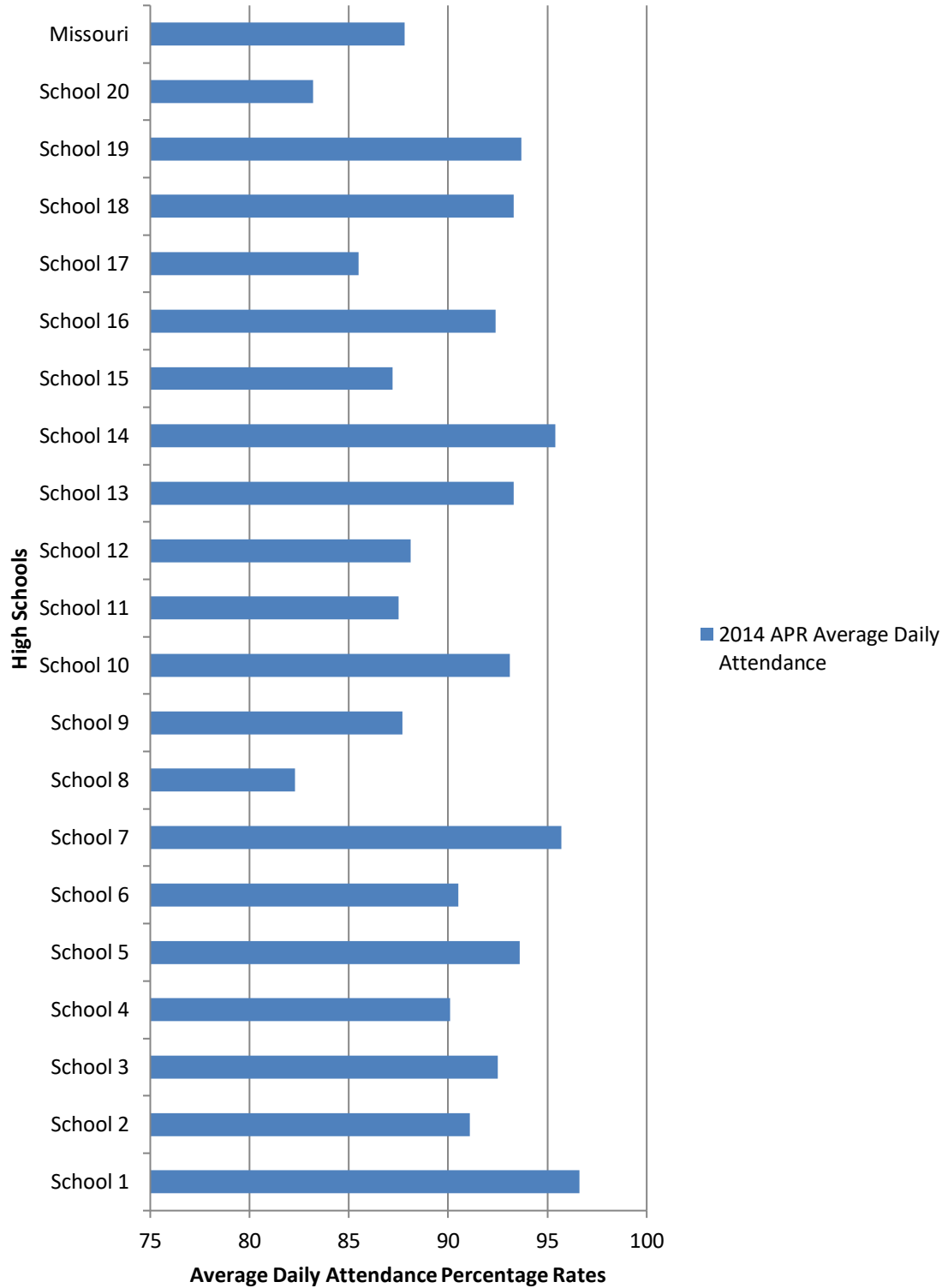
Figure 19. Comparing average daily attendance rates of 20 high schools and the

Missouri state average for 2014.
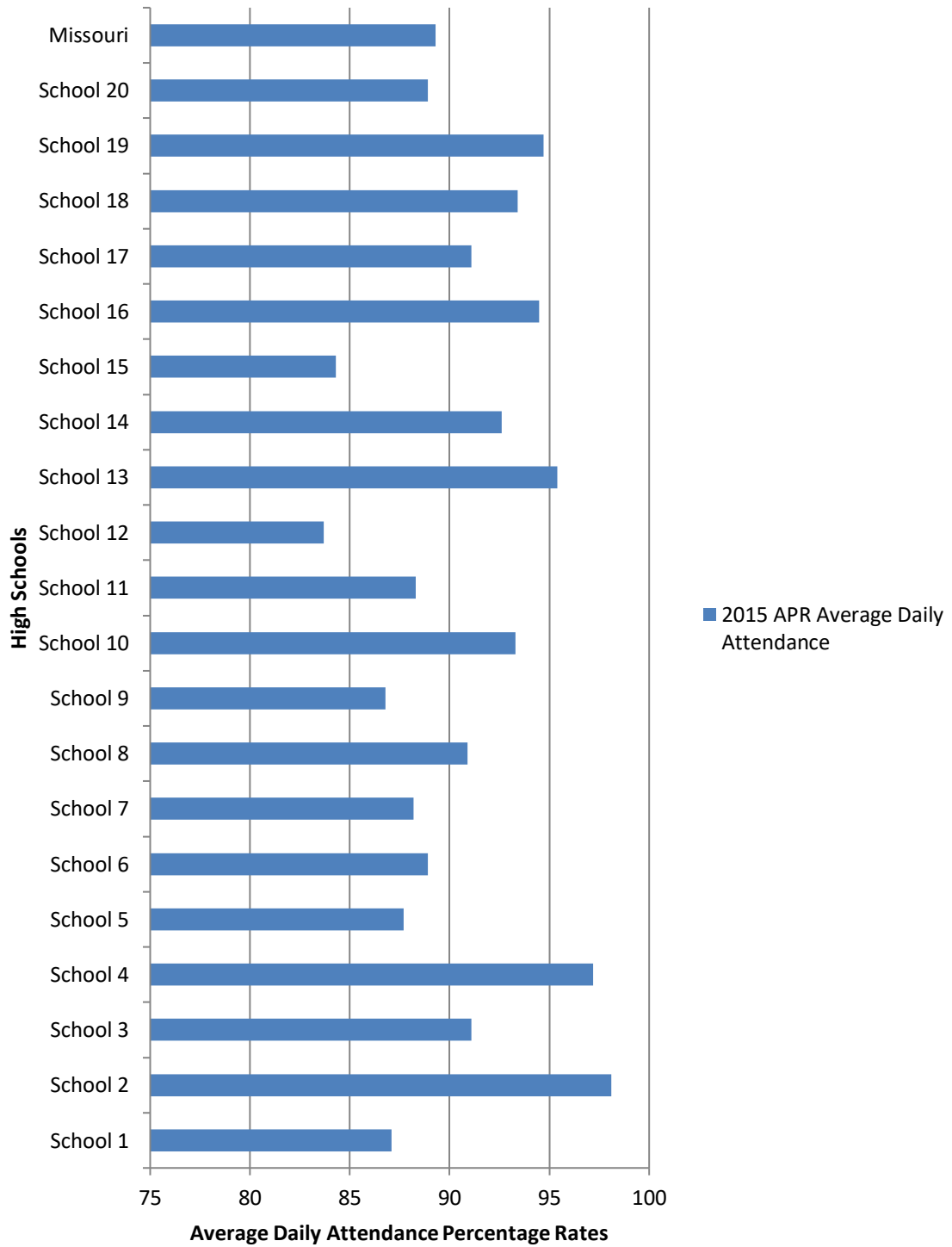
Figure 20. Comparing average daily attendance rates of 20 high schools and the

Missouri state average for 2015.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the different types of extrinsic motivators used in rural school districts in the southwest and west central regions of Missouri in an attempt to increase student attendance. A survey of small school districts with a total student population of fewer than 400 students was conducted. Of the 45 high school principals who were asked to participate, 20 principals responded.

Survey results indicated nine different motivators were used among the 20 schools with final exam exemption being the most frequently used motivator. Principals also selected the final exam exemption as being the most effective motivator. In addition, the surveys indicated the high school administrative team usually selected the type of motivators employed. The top source used to evaluate the effectiveness of the motivator was administrator review.

High school principals indicated students were usually informed about the extrinsic motivators through the student handbook. Daily announcements and parent newsletters were also used as an informational source. None of the high school principals reported the use of school board policies or school-reach phone call as an informative source.

Attendance data from the APR for each high school were used. The data revealed only four of the 20 high schools recorded an increase in APR average daily attendance during both the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years. It should be noted the majority of the 20 high schools' attendance rates were higher than the average daily attendance rate of the state.

In Chapter Five, the summary of methods are discussed. The findings, in response to each research question, are presented. The conclusion, implications for practice, and future recommendations are detailed.

Chapter Five: Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings and conclusions for this study. Due to the demands placed on students with performance-based testing, substantial research has been conducted in the area of motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Ayub, 2010; Usher, 2012). Student absenteeism has become a concern for stakeholders in education, as there has been a link between academic performance and attendance rate (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Richard & Wanga, 2012).

This study was designed to examine and evaluate the extent of usage of extrinsic motivators in small high schools in southwest and west central Missouri. More specifically, the study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What percentage of public high schools in rural southwest and west central Missouri use extrinsic motivators to improve attendance?

2. What types of extrinsic motivators are used in high schools in southwest and west central Missouri districts to increase attendance?

3. Which extrinsic motivators lead to a yearly increase in attendance?

4. What process is used to implement extrinsic motivators and sustain improved attendance?

Summary of Methods

High school principals from 45 southwest and west central Missouri districts were invited to participate. Each of the 45 high schools was considered small due to the school district having a total enrollment of fewer than 400 students. Of the 45 principals asked to participate, 20 principals completed the survey, which resulted in a response rate of

44%. Though a larger return rate would have been ideal, 20 randomly selected participants provided a sufficient sample size.

The survey used was designed by the researcher. The survey questions were created to correspond to the research questions. The survey was revised after feedback from non-participating high school principals. Following approval from Lindenwood University IRB, the researcher emailed a personal letter of request to participate, including the timeline, to high school principals in small school districts.

Findings

Following analyses of the obtained data, the research questions which guided the study were considered.

Research question one. What percentage of public high schools in rural southwest and west central Missouri use extrinsic motivators to improve attendance?

From the responses of the 20 high school principals, 75% reported using extrinsic motivators to encourage student attendance. Five of the 15 high schools (33%) used only one extrinsic motivator. Likewise, five other high schools used two motivators (33%). Twenty percent of the high schools incorporated three different motivators to improve attendance. Two high schools used multiple motivators in an attempt to raise attendance rates. One high school used four different motivators, and one other high school implemented six.

The use of extrinsic incentives for high school students in public school districts has grown in favor as a way to increase student achievement (Allan & Fryer, 2011). When students do not see an intrinsic value in education, they are not motivate to attend school (Usher, 2012). Education leaders must find new ways of extrinsically motivating

students to want to attend school. Students need to attend school daily to succeed (Balfanz & Chang, 2013).

    Research question two. What types of extrinsic motivators are used in high schools in southwest and west central Missouri districts to increase attendance?

    Final exam exemption, field trips, gift card, food/drinks, watch a movie, field day, homework pass, and gas card were identified as the extrinsic motivators used in the high schools. Although technology gifts was listed as a choice, none of the high schools used this motivator. The two most common extrinsic motivators used were the final exam exemption and field trips. Sixty percent of the schools surveyed used gift cards for motivation, and 53% used field trips. Gift cards were used by 40% of school districts, followed closely by the usage of food or drink and a movie, which were both used by 26% of the high schools. A field day was utilized by 13% of school districts, while 6% of the districts used either a gas card or homework pass. None of the schools surveyed used the technology gift as a choice for extrinsic motivator.

    Countless reward programs have been implemented around the country but are seldom formally studied. Some are district-wide while others may affect only one school or sometimes just one classroom (Ash, 2008). Some incentive programs have included cash rewards in an attempt to motivate student behavior, increase test scores, and achieve higher attendance rates (Ash, 2008; Miller, 2008).

    Other incentive programs offer non-cash rewards, such as Pizza Hut certificates, McDonald's Happy Meals, or other snacks (Ash, 2008). Some school administrators have given away iPods, cars, or televisions for good test scores or perfect attendance (Chute, 2014; Leff, 2012; Ruiz, 2015; Springfield Public School District, 2015;

Vandemark, 2014). These are usually awarded by entering the top-performing students into a drawing to win (Wallace, 2009).

Research question three. Which extrinsic motivators lead to a yearly increase in attendance?

Based on the data, extrinsic motivators leading to an increase in attendance were not found. The average daily attendance of schools using extrinsic motivators and schools not using motivators were compared. Attendance in schools using extrinsic motivators decreased by 0.6% during the targeted school years, while during the same time frame, attendance rates for students in high schools not using motivators increased 8.8%. Of note was the finding schools using motivators realized attendance rates higher than the Missouri average attendance rates.

The goal of motivation should be to encourage students to develop habits such as good attendance, academic growth, interacting responsibly, and being accountable for one's own successes (Jones, 2011). Motivators should encourage skills which make students successful in school and in adulthood (Jones, 2011). Many school districts have implemented an extrinsic reward system in an attempt to garner these improvements (Jones, 2011).

Research question four. What process is used to implement extrinsic motivators and sustain improved attendance?

According to the survey responses, 100% of the principals reported the administrative team decided which extrinsic motivators were offered to the students. Nine of the 15 principals included teachers in the selection process, while six high schools included students in their responses. When questioned as to how the motivators

were evaluated over time, 100% of the responses cited the administrative team. Principals noted teachers (5/15), students (5/15), and parents (1/15) were surveyed to determine the effectiveness of the motivators.

School leaders must assume a more supportive approach when working with students who are chronically absent (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). This additional support entails school leaders embracing the difficult challenge of exploring student absenteeism by evaluating the schools current attendance practices and policies (García-Gracia, 2008). School leaders must identify and take ownership of occurrences related to student attendance, whether positive or negative (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Educators must recognize and respond to the positives and negatives related to their actions, attempting to improve the system and how it affects absenteeism.

Conclusions

Conclusions were drawn based on the data provided by the 20 participants. This was a return rate of 44%. Though the sample size was approximately 45, the study still allowed for pertinent information to be learned from high school principals for those interested in the effects of extrinsic motivation on attendance rates.

Investigation indicated 15 of the 20 schools in the sample used some mode of extrinsic motivation to encourage students to attend school. Although the number of motivators used in high schools ranged from zero to six, very small differences in the APR average daily attendance rate were found when the comparing ADA averages of the sample high schools from 2012-2013 through 2014-2015. The most frequently used mode of extrinsic motivation was forgiveness of final exams.

In fact, when comparing students' APR average daily attendance between high schools using at least one type of extrinsic motivator and high schools using no motivator, data indicated students in schools using no motivator actually had higher attendance rates. When comparing the progress of attendance rates over the past three years, data revealed only 20% of the high schools consistently improved over that time span. In addition, only half of the high schools recorded an increase in APR average daily attendance during 2014-2015 compared to the base year, 2012-2013.

The number of motivators offered by a high school appeared to have no effect on the APR average daily attendance. Data indicated there was no benefit for the high schools that offered multiple motivators. In fact, the high schools that offered no motivators had higher APR average daily attendance. This could possibly be attributed to the fact these districts initially had higher APR attendance rates, and therefore, did not need motivators to achieve higher rates.

The theoretical framework for this study was guided by the self-determination sub-theory of organismic integration theory developed by Deci and Ryan (2000). The self-determination theory addresses the behaviors of a person who is amotivated, extrinsically motivated, and intrinsically motivated (McInerney, 2004). There are four different levels of extrinsic motivation: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and intergraded regulation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This study focused on how school districts are extrinsically motivating students to attend school. Each student requires different levels of motivation based on the value seen in the task, the type of extrinsic rewards being offered, feelings of obligation to the task, and if the task is consistent with the student's overall goal (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Research question number two focused on the types of extrinsic motivators used. This would correlate with the external regulation component of the self-determination theory. Based on external regulation, students attend school based on the reward being presented (Gagne, 2014). Students need to find value and interest in the reward; therefore, the reward the principal selects for students may not be the same as students would chose themselves.

Data collected to answer research question number three indicated high schools which provided no extrinsic motivators for attendance actually earned a higher rate of attendance compared to high schools which used motivators. This study did not address the individual student's perception on which of the four levels of extrinsic motivation is needed for attendance. A future study comparing individualized student extrinsic motivation levels would allow researchers to study how many students see value in attending school and if attending school is consistent with their overall goals

Data comparing the 20 high schools in this study with the total APR average daily attendance rates of Missouri revealed these small high schools consistently outperformed the attendance rates of Missouri. Howse (2013) once stated:

> It isn't motivation that creates success but habit and action. The most successful people in the world definitely have passion for what they do but passion without action is useless. It is your habits, more than anything that will lead to your eventual success. (p. 1)

Among these good academic habits is consistent attendance.

Implications for Practice

Student attendance is extremely important. To encourage high attendance rates,

school administrators must be aware of different strategies available to motivate students to attend school daily. There are many different motivators and strategies which may help convey to students the importance of being in school regularly. Translating the importance of attendance to students, parents, and the community is not a one-time event. Good attendance must become a daily occurrence which develops into an expected habit at school.   Second only to academic test scores, good attendance has been identified to be the strongest indicator of academic performance (Chorneau, 2014).

Administrators must become cognizant of various methods and systems which will help bolster attendance rates. It is difficult, if not impossible, for educators to have high expectations for achievement if students are not present. Hence, administrators must become transparent and aggressive with their vision that high attendance rates will increase academic achievement.

Educators are increasingly held accountable for high levels of academic performance of students. Regular attendance is one of the main keys to student success. Although this study has not provided definitive answers as to the extent an extrinsic motivator might help, it has helped raise awareness of strategies which might be used to increase attendance. This study has contributed to research with respect to the effects of the types of extrinsic motivators on attendance rates in small high schools.

This study likely raises more questions than it answers, because no two school buildings are the same, communities differ, social economic levels vary; no matter the situation, regular attendance is important in all daily activities, especially at work. It is important school-age children make good attendance a habit at an early age. These traits will follow the student throughout adulthood.

School administrators must evaluate the school district's mores, school atmosphere, traditions, and community dynamics before embarking on a system or strategy to improve student attendance. This study indicated extrinsic motivation might have some impact on attendance; however, careful consideration in selecting the "right" motivators should be a priority, especially for schools with extremely low attendance rates. The number of students enrolled, the wealth of the community, and the support of parents have a great impact on student attendance.

These factors must be taken into consideration before administrators can develop an effective attendance policy. It is incumbent upon all school leaders to focus adequate resources to approve student attendance rates. As studies have shown, students need to attend school daily to succeed (Balfanz & Chang, 2013).

Recommendations for Future Research

This study addressed the use of extrinsic motivators in small high schools in southwest and west central Missouri to improve student attendance. Also identified were the motivators used and the frequency of usage. Based on the process of identifying a sample, creating an instrument, utilizing secondary data, and collecting and analyzing the data, the following are recommendations for future research in related areas.

A study of the effectiveness of motivators in elementary and middle school schools, to include an examination of the effects of extrinsic motivators on student attendance, grades, and achievement, should be considered. A comparison of the effectiveness of motivators at each grade span would likely provide different results.

Because most of the high schools that participated in this current study already had high APR attendance rates, different results are possible if high schools with low

attendance rates were studied. A researcher could obtain the lowest APR attendance rates from high schools in Missouri and survey the usage of and effectiveness of extrinsic motivators. A comparison of the types of motivators used by high- and low-performing high schools could result in different findings.

A study involving urban or suburban schools could be advantageous. One could desegregate the data into categories of race, gender, language spoken in the home, and socio- economic status. In addition, researching the make-up of families and family backgrounds such as single-parent families, students living with relatives, and homeless students could provide interesting results.

Jones (2011) emphasized instructional systems should motivate students to be engaged in school. Some research has indicated teachers' instructional methods can have a major impact on student performance (Jones, 2011). Different students and communities have similar needs, but in most cases, one should attempt to motivate students by improving teaching methods, making curricula relevant, and addressing larger socio-economic problems such as poverty and adequate access to learning resources (Jones, 2011).

A comparable study of medium and large school districts could glean different results. The medium-size districts would range from 400 to 1,000 total students, while the large districts would have over 1,000 students. One might look at the complications of using motivators in large populations.

A study of students' perceptions of the effectiveness of extrinsic motivators on their attendance could be valuable. Students could be asked their preference in

motivators. This information would likely differ according to the grade levels responding and the backgrounds of the students.

A survey of teachers' perceptions of the value of extrinsic motivators on attendance could be productive. The teachers' opinions concerning the most powerful motivators could be beneficial. These data would likely differ according to the grade span taught.

A study of the effects of motivators on state assessment scores could be useful. This research could compare state assessment results and effective motivators. It could also compare attendance rates with building state assessment results.

This research did not address the effects of negative extrinsic motivators. Some high schools have policies where class credits are forfeited for excessive absenteeism. Other schools take away privileges, such as junior-senior prom attendance, extra-curricular activities, and athletics.

A survey of parents' perceptions of the values of extrinsic motivators on their child's attendance could be advantageous. The parents' opinions could include the effectiveness of each motivator. The parents could suggest positive motivators that are not currently being use. This information could be differentiated according to grade level, social economic status, and environment.

Research involving the motivation of parents could have interesting results. For example, parents who have children with superb attendance could be placed in a drawing for a prize such a cruise, weekend stay at a resort, Wal-Mart gift cards, or other monitory rewards. Research is not available where school personnel have attempted to motivate parents.

This researcher would recommend careful consideration of the usage of extrinsic motivators to increase student attendance. This research indicated little, if any, benefit was observed when comparing students who were extrinsically motivated when compared to students who received no extrinsic rewards. However, all the high schools in this study had initial attendance rates higher than the state average. Hence, another study focusing on high schools with the lowest attendance rates could result in different findings.

Summary

Chapter One was the introduction to extrinsic motivation and student attendance. It is believed students need to attend school daily in order to be successful (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Attendance and grades have been shown to be a strong predictor of student performance (Chorneau, 2014). However, there is a nationwide problem in which millions of students are chronically absent from school each year (Balfanz & Chang, 2013).

Chapter One described the need to address frequent absenteeism in an effort to help all students be successful. Identification factors which contribute to good attendance were identified. Techniques used by school administrators to improve attendance were evaluated, and the value of extrinsic motivators or rewards were discussed.

The purpose of the study was described to examine if the extrinsic motivators which are currently being used in school districts were increasing student attendance rate. The research questions were developed to seek answers to the purpose of the study. The significance of the study was to enrich the current literature regarding student motivation with special emphasis on student attendance rates. By identifying factors that contribute

to good attendance, each district can take steps and develop strategies which can benefit students' academic progress. The greater knowledge educators acquire through research regarding motivational techniques, the better the likelihood students will be successful.

Chapter Two provided an overview of current literature and educational studies on the different types of extrinsic motivation and its possible effects on attendance. The study was framed around the self-determination sub-theory, the organismic integration theory (OIT), by Deci and Ryan (2000). The OIT describes the different levels of motivations ranging from amotivation, extrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation. The majority of the OIT is framed around the different levels of extrinsic motivation and how individuals react and think during each of these levels.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 placed an increased emphasis on attendance (Smink & Reimer, 2005). Over 37 state agencies use attendance measures as part of their adequately yearly progress reporting system (Smink & Reimer, 2005). Due to attendance requirements in the Missouri School Improvement Program, much emphasis has been placed on improving attendance. Student dropout and implications were discussed. Educators are in need of finding factors to help students choose to stay in school. School leaders must assume a more supportive approach when working with students who are chronically absent (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002).

Extrinsic motivation used in school districts was presented in detail. School districts have used anything from stickers and candy to money and cars as extrinsic motivators. School districts are challenged in finding which extrinsic motivator is correct for their school district and students. In Chapter Two, an attempt was made to highlight various research pertaining to motivation of attendance.

Chapter Three described the methodology used in this study. The population for this study was Missouri's accredited public school districts. Specifically, the sample included public school districts in southwest and west central Missouri with 400 or fewer students in grades K-12. A survey was developed based on literature reviewed involving extrinsic motivation. The survey was electronically mailed to 45 school districts. The analysis for this study was directed by quantitative methodology. In this study, survey data were collected using SurveyMonkey and analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Public schools in Missouri are required to meet the standards set forth in the MSIP 5th cycle (MODESE, 2014c). The performance standard for attendance is 90% of the students are to be in attendance 90% of the time. (MODESE, 2014c). The attendance data were obtained through the MODESE website for all 20 principals who participated in the study. Attendance data were obtained for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years for grades 9-12. The methodology involved examination of different extrinsic motivators which high school principals used and the influence extrinsic motivation had on attendance rates.

Chapter Four explored the different types of extrinsic motivators used in the sample high schools. The researcher attempted to survey 45 school districts in southwest and west central Missouri. The return rate was 44% with 20 principals returning the survey.

Discussed in Chapter Four were the survey results from the high schools that used extrinsic motivation to improve student attendance rates. Out of the 20 principals completing the survey, 15 of the school districts used extrinsic motivators to increase

student attendance. Survey results indicated nine different motivators were used among the 20 schools with final exam exemption being the most frequently used motivator followed by field trips.

The study also looked at the different types of extrinsic motivation used and the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of each motivator. Most of the 20 high schools in this study recorded higher APR average daily attendance than Missouri's state averages during the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years. Principals selected the exam exemption as being the most effective motivator. In addition, the surveys indicated the high school administrative team usually selected the type of motivators employed. The top source used to evaluate the effectiveness of the motivator was administrator review.

In conclusion, the study focused on the effects of extrinsic motivators on the APR average daily attendance of high school students in southwest and west central Missouri. The researcher created a survey to ascertain the extent to which high school principals use extrinsic motivation as a way to increase high school student attendance. Average daily attendance rates were compared and contrasted to the number of extrinsic motivators used.

The data indicated there was little or no benefit to attendance rates based on the number of motivators used. The 20 high schools in this study had high attendance rates from the inception; therefore, more studies need to be performed using high schools with lower attendance rates. A comment made by a former high school principal effectively

summed up the meaning behind this study: "I have always worked diligently to instill in students the importance of good attendance in everything they do including school and especially work" (S. Daggett, personal communication, August 22, 2016).

Appendix A

Survey Questions

Name_____   School District_____

Please answer the following questions related to extrinsic motivators and promoting

student attendance rates within your high school. Extrinsic motivators are defined as

tangible rewards or consequences related to an activity. An example of extrinsic

motivation is students receiving pizza for reading books.

1. Have you used extrinsic motivators as a way to promote or increase student

   attendance rates?   Yes or No

2. Which of the following extrinsic motivators were used? Check all that apply.

   _____ Gift Card

   _____ Gas Card

   _____ Field Trip

   _____ In-School Activities

   _____ Movie

   _____ Field Day

   _____ Homework Pass

   _____ Final Exam Exemption

   _____ Technology Gifts

   _____ Food/Drinks

3. Which extrinsic motivators were the most effective? List the top three.

    a. _____

    b. _____

    c. _____

4. Which extrinsic motivators were the least effective? List the top three.

    a. _____

    b. _____

    c. _____

5. How were students informed of attendance incentives? Check all that apply.

_____ Student Handbook

_____ Board Policy

_____ Newsletters

_____ Daily Announcements

_____ School-reach Call

6. How were motivators selected? Check all that apply.

_____ Administration Team

_____ Teachers

_____ Students

7. What is the process for evaluating the effectiveness of the extrinsic motivators

    over time? Check all that apply.

    _____ Survey Students

    _____ Survey Parents

    _____ Survey Teachers

    _____ Administration review of attendance data

    _____ Other: _____

Appendix B

Recruitment Letter

My name is Eric Wilken, and I am a doctoral student at Lindenwood University.

As part of my program requirements, I am conducting a study which will be documented

in a dissertation titled, *The Effects of Extrinsic Motivation on High School Attendance*.

The purpose of this study is to explore the different types of extrinsic motivations

used to increase high school attendance rates in rural Southwest and West Central

Missouri.

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to complete a brief online survey.

The survey questions are focused on types of extrinsic motivations your district has used

to promote attendance rate of high school students.

The amount of time required of you to take the survey is approximately five

minutes.

Your identity will be protected, and any documents will be locked in a cabinet or

password-secured by the researcher. Three years after the completion of the study, all

electronic data and paper documents will be deleted or destroyed using secure shred.

If you are willing to participate in the survey, please read the attached letter of

Informed Consent. Assurances of confidentiality and anonymity are explained. Please

let me know, at any time, if you have questions about the survey or research project.

Thank you for your time!

Respectfully,

Eric Wilken, Researcher

Doctoral Student
School of Education
Lindenwood University

Appendix C

LINDENWOOD

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

"The Effects of Extrinsic Motivation on High School Attendance"

Principal Investigator: Eric Wilken

Telephone: 417- ████████   E-mail: ████████████████

Participant _____ Contact information _____

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Eric Wilken under the guidance of Dr. Sherry DeVore.   The purpose of this research is explore the different types of extrinsic motivations used to increase high school attendance rates in rural Southwest and West Central Missouri.

2. a) Your participation will involve completing an online survey regarding the different types of extrinsic motivations your district has used to promote higher attendance rates in high school students.

   b) The amount of time involved in your participation will be five minutes. Approximately 45 high school principals will be involved in this research.

3. There are no 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 extrinsic motivation and increasing high school attendance rate.

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, Eric Wilken, at ███████████, or the Supervising Faculty, Dr. Sherry DeVore, at 417-881-0009. 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 may retain a copy of this consent form for my records.

I consent to my participation in the research described above by completing the survey.

Appendix D

LINDENWOOD

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

DATE: March 8, 2016

TO: Eric Wilken
FROM: Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board

STUDY TITLE: [860299-1] Extrinsic Motivation and High School
                    Attendance Rate
IRB REFERENCE #:
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: March 8, 2016
EXPIRATION DATE: March 8, 2017
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research project.
Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board has APPROVED your submission.
This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the
risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this
approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal
regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the
study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form.
Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the
researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a
copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this
office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to the IRB.

This project has been determined to be a Minimal Risk project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the completion/amendment form for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of March 8, 2017.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

If you have any questions, please contact Megan Woods at (636) 485-9005 or mwoods1@lindenwood.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

If you have any questions, please send them to mwoods1@lindenwood.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board's record

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Vita

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