A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PARENTS' READING BELIEFS, PARENTS' GENDER, GRADE THREE STUDENTS' READER SELF-PERCEPTIONS, READING ACHIEVEMENT AND GENDER

JACQUELINE S. LYNCH

A Study of the Relationships Among Parents' Reading Beliefs, Parents' Gender, Grade Three Students' Reader Self-perceptions, Reading Achievement and Gender

By

Jacqueline S. Lynch

B.Ed (Primary)

A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

Faculty of Education

Memorial University of Newfoundland

April, 1999

St. John's Newfoundland

Abstract

This study investigated the relationships among parents' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs), grade three students' reader self-perceptions (self-concept, social feedback, physiological states, observational comparison, and progress) and their reading achievement (alphabet, meaning, and conventions). The gender of parents and children and its relationship to parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions and reading achievement was also examined in this study. This study consisted of 66 students and 92 parents involved in an early family literacy project for approximately one year. The study was conducted in a rural area in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada.

There were three instruments used in this study: a Questionnaire for Parents, a Reader Self-Perceptions Scale (RSPS) (Henk & Melnick, 1995), and a standardized reading test (Test of Early Reading Ability-2 – TERA-2). The Pearson-Product-Moment Method and t-tests were used to determine relationships in the data and to identify significant differences in scores on the instruments.

Significant positive and negative relationships were found between aspects of mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs and children's reader self-perceptions. Gender was an important variable in this study. Specifically, a significant positive relationship existed between mothers' self-efficacy for children's reading achievement and girls' self-concept as reader. Significant negative relationships existed between mothers' achievement-related beliefs and boys' self-concept as reader, fathers' self-efficacy and boys' perceptions of parents' regard for their reading, and fathers' self-efficacy and boys'

and girls' perceptions of their reading relative to other students. There was only one significant relationship between parents' reading beliefs and children's reading achievement. This relationship was a negative one. Mothers' achievement-related beliefs negatively related to boys' alphabet scores on the standardized reading test. There was a significant difference in mothers' and fathers' self-efficacy beliefs for boys' reading achievement. Mothers had stronger beliefs in their ability to improve boys' reading achievement.

In this study children's self-perceptions as readers significantly related to their reading achievement. Boys' and girls' perceptions of progress positively related to their ability to construct meaning on the reading test. As well, girls' perceptions of their reading in comparison to other students related to their alphabetic knowledge on the reading test (TERA-2). Significant differences favoring females were found in children's reader self-perceptions and their reading achievement. Girls had significantly higher perceptions of feedback from significant others. Scores measuring children's internal feelings experienced while reading were significantly higher for girls. In addition, girls had significantly higher alphabet scores on the reading test.

This study has shown that parents' reading beliefs, parents' gender, children's reader self-perceptions, reading achievement and gender, were significantly related. The findings of this study provide a basis for understanding factors related to young children's reading achievement. This study also provides insight into the role parents' beliefs play in young children's perceptions of their reading abilities and children's reading achievement.

Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful to the following people who made my goal a reality:

Dr. Joan Oldford-Matchim, my thesis supervisor, has been both a mentor and friend throughout my work on this thesis. I thank her for fostering my interest in this study area and for her unending support.

Dr. Timothy Seifert, my supervisory committee member, has provided guidance and feedback on this thesis, especially in the development of the parental construct and with the results of the statistical analysis. I thank him for his patience and guidance.

Gerry White has helped with the analysis of data in this study. I am grateful for his judgments and unlimited time.

Dr. Henry Schulz has provided helpful comments on my research data. I am very grateful to him.

Hannah Power, the SORT coordinator, as well as the **teachers, staff, parents,** and **students** in a rural community in Newfoundland, whose cooperation made my data collection not only a possible task, but an enjoyable one. I thank them all.

My family, who offered love and support and never doubted that I could achieve. I thank them for believing I could accomplish anything "I put my mind to". I am living proof of the power and influence of family efficacy beliefs.

Indeed. "***Never was so great a mistake made as by the man [sic] who did nothing because he thought he could do so little.***"

Edmund Burke
1729 - 1797

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter I

An Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The family plays a key role in children's success in school. It has often been claimed that parents are the first teachers and the home is the first school (Bandura, 1997; Morrow, 1995). According to Epstein (1990), parents contributed to their children's intellectual growth in a number of ways. Some of these ways included preparing their children for school, placing a value on education, conveying belief in their children's scholastic ability, and encouraging language development and comprehension through reading.

The importance of parents reading to their child has been previously documented. As early as 1908 in the United States, Huey suggested that children's learning in school begins with parents reading to their child at home. Because the early school years are considered an important formative period in children's development of conceptions of their intellectual ability, parents who read to their children at a young age benefited children's cognitive self-perceptions (Bandura, 1997). Halle, Kurtz-Costes and Mahoney (1997) have reported that reading development can improve development in other areas of the curriculum. "Because reading permeates the entire curriculum, learning to read is vital, and not succeeding at it can result in helplessness, frustration, and a negative self-concept" (Cook, 1988, p. 4).

According to Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, and Brissie (1992), the decision to engage in educational activities with one's children at home may reflect a sense of

personal efficacy. Further studies have shown that parental beliefs, for helping their children succeed at reading, have been related to children's self-perceptions as readers and their reading achievement (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Wagner & Phillips, 1992). Since efficacy promoting influence may not flow solely in one direction (Bradley, Caldwell, & Elardo, 1979), children's efficacy beliefs may have as an important effect on parents' beliefs as parental efficacy has on children's beliefs. Nevertheless, few studies have been conducted on the relationship among parental efficacy, children's sense of efficacy and their academic achievement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Murphey, 1992; Wagner & Phillips, 1992). In order to have a fuller understanding of children's reading success in school, it is crucial that the specific role of significant others in young children's reading success be examined.

Children's perceptions of themselves as readers have long been considered to have an effect on reading performance (Teale, 1983). It has been posited that the ways in which students view themselves are often related to reading achievement (Vereen, 1980). It is important to consider the factors that are linked to children's self-perceptions of themselves. Since parents' play such an important role in the lives of young children (Morrow & Paratore, 1993), a study of the beliefs of parents in relation to children's self-perceptions and academic achievement is warranted.

Background of the Study

Family literacy projects have been shown to benefit children's reading development and achievement (Clark, 1984; Morrow & Paratore, 1993). The Significant

Others as Reading Teachers (SORT) program, a family literacy project started by the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland, provides a framework which supports and encourages parents' involvement in their children's reading as an everyday practice. Approximately 95% of parents with children entering kindergarten in a rural community in Newfoundland enroll their children in this program. SORT is based on research findings which showed that children experience success in reading when significant others engage with them in reading activities for an extended period of time (Oldford-Matchim, 1992).

No previous study of the SORT program has examined relationships among parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions and their reading achievement, and parents' and children's gender. Specifically, there have been a limited number of studies that examined parental efficacy as a factor in children's academic achievement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Among the studies which have been conducted in this area, several have revealed a positive relationship among parental efficacy, children's self-perceptions, and children's academic achievement (e.g., Bandura et al., 1996; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992). It is important to gain a greater understanding of parents' role in children's reading success. Children's success at reading is crucial to their economic future. There seemed to be a strong correlation between poverty and illiteracy (Morrow & Paratore, 1993). Moreover, the American National Commission on Reading (National Academy of Education, 1985) had stated that "reading is a cornerstone for a child's success in school and, indeed, throughout life. Without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success

inevitably will be lost" (p. 1). Children should be provided an optimal means for achieving at reading. A fuller understanding of the role parents play in children's reading achievement is necessary for understanding children's reading success. Hence, a more literate society may result when parents' beliefs for their children's success are examined in relation to children's self-perceptions and achievement. Thus, to optimize children's reading achievement, parents must clearly conceive the relationship of their beliefs and actions to children's reading success. Parents must be educated to be effective contributers to education (Newfoundland & Labrador Home and School Association, 1992).

Purpose of the Study

This study was an investigation of the relationships among parents' reading beliefs, parents' gender, children's self-perceptions as readers, children's reading achievement, and gender in grade three students. The aspects of parents' beliefs studied include parental efficacy and parents' achievement-related beliefs. Parental efficacy involves parents' beliefs in their ability to help improve children's reading achievement. Parents' achievement-related beliefs refer to parents' beliefs in the role of effort and intelligence in children's reading achievement. The Questionnaire for Parents revealed the strength and nature of parental beliefs for helping their children succeed in reading.

The subcategories of children's reader self-perceptions studied were those identified by the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS): social feedback, physiological states, observational comparison, and progress (Henk & Melnick, 1995). Social feedback

involves direct or indirect feedback about reading from teachers, classmates, and people in the child's family. The physiological states' subcategory refers to internal feelings the child experiences during reading. Observational comparison involves how a child perceives his or her reading in comparison with the performance of classmates. The fourth subcategory, progress, is defined as how one's perception of reading performance compares with past performance.

Early reading ability was determined by a test called the Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA-2, Form A). TERA-2 was used to measure three components of reading discovered by most children during the primary grades: construction of meaning from print, knowledge of the alphabet, and conventions of the written language (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1989). The TERA-2 indicated how children were performing in reading for their grade level. The study of gender in this study facilitated understanding of the role social, cultural, and developmental differences may play in children's self-perceptions as readers and their reading achievement.

The following questions were addressed in this study:

1. Is there a relationship between parents' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and children's reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score)?

2. Is there a relationship between parents' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and children's reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

3. Are there differences in mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) for their children?

4. Are there differences in parents' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) for boys and girls?

5. Are there differences in mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) for boys and girls?

6. Does a relationship exist between mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and children's reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score)?

7. Is there a relationship between mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and children's reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

8. Is there a relationship between mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and boys' and girls' reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score)?

9. Is there a relationship between mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and boys' and girls' reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

10. Are children's reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score) related to their reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

11. Are there gender differences in children's reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score)?

12. Are there gender differences in children's reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

13. Is there a relationship between girls' reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total

score) and girls' reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

14. Is there a relationship between boys' reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score) and boys' reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

Definition of Key Terms

1) Significant others: those people important in an individual's life whose reactions and interactions indicate to the individual whether he is liked or disliked, accepted or rejected, successful or unsuccessful, worthy or unworthy. Perceptions that are formed from the opinions of significant others determine the child's self-concept (Saracho, 1980).
2) Significant Others as Reading Teachers (SORT): an intervention program to involve significant others in the early reading development of children. This program engages the child and the significant other in meaningful literacy activities (Oldford-Matchim, 1992).
3) Self-efficacy: individuals' beliefs about their ability to exercise and maintain some level of control over events which affect their lives (Bandura, 1986).
4) Social cognitive theory: human functioning is explained in terms of a model of triadic reciprocality in which behavior, cognition, and other personal factors, and

environmental events all operate as interacting determinants of each other (Bandura, 1986).

5) Parental involvement: the dedication of resources by the parent to the child within a given domain (behavioural, cognitive-intellectual, and personal) (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994).

6) Parents' achievement-related beliefs: based on major theoretical models, such as attribution theory (Weiner, 1985), expectancy-value theory (Eccles et al., 1983), and the self-efficacy approach (Bandura, 1986, 1989), which expectancies for success and perceptions of ability on different tasks play a prominent role in their motivation to perform these tasks (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992).

7) Reader self-concept: the evaluation of "self as reader" (Valencia, 1990). Reader self-perception, a social learning theory term, is used interchangeably with reader self-concept.

8) Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS): a tool for measuring how children feel about themselves as readers. It is based on the self-efficacy model in which individuals take four basic factors into account when estimating their capabilities as reader: performance (redefined as progress), observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states (Henk & Melnick, 1995).

9) Progress: the first category in the reader self-efficacy model, redefined from performance. It refers to how one's perception of present reading performance compares with past performance (Henk & Melnick, 1995).

10) Observational comparison: the second category in the reader self-efficacy model.

It refers to how a child perceives her or his reading performance in comparison with the performance of classmates (Henk & Melnick, 1995).

11) Social feedback: the third category in the reader self-efficacy model. It includes direct or indirect input about reading from teachers, classmates, and people in the child's family (Henk & Melnick, 1995).

12) Physiological states: the fourth category in the reader self-efficacy model. It includes the internal feelings the child experiences during reading (Henk & Melnick, 1995).

13) Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA-2): a version and an expansion of the Test of Early Reading Ability (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1981). It measures children's ability to attribute meaning to printed symbols, their knowledge of the alphabet and its functions, and their understanding of the conventions of print. It was designed to measure early reading development in children three through nine years old (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1989).

14) Knowledge of the alphabet: the understanding of letter naming (including numerals), alphabet recitation and oral reading (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1989).

15) Knowledge of conventions: the knowledge an individual has of conventions of print such as: a) book handling, b) response to other print conventions, and c) proofreading (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1989).

16) Construction of meaning: the ability an individual has to construct meaning from

print such as: a) awareness of print in environmental contexts, b) knowledge of relations among vocabulary items, and c) awareness of print in connected discourse (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1989).

Significance of the Study

It is necessary to examine the factors that may contribute to children's reading success in order to increase children's reading achievement. Since parents play a major role in children's cognitive development (Becher, 1984; Epstein, 1990), their role in children's reading achievement must be analyzed. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) have claimed that work to date in the specific area of parents' efficacy beliefs related to helping children succeed in school is limited. Wagner and Phillips (1992) also claimed that factors instrumental to the early acquisition of children's self-perceptions have received scant empirical attention. They proposed that parents, as the initial source of ability feedback for most children, provide an obvious focus for research.

There have been a limited number of studies conducted on relationships among parents' beliefs, children's self-perceptions, and their academic achievement. Generally, studies which have been conducted involved children from large schools in urban areas. As well, students in most studies were at the late elementary or junior high school level (e.g., Bandura et al., 1996; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). Furthermore, many studies have focused on children's self-perceptions and achievement in the area of mathematics (e.g., Collins, 1982; Zimmerman et al., 1992). Consequently, limited research justifies

the need to examine young children's reading achievements in rural areas in relation to parents' reading beliefs.

There is a need to continue literacy intervention in communities in Newfoundland where reading underachievement exists (Government of Newfoundland & Labrador, 1990). Because reading permeates the entire school curriculum (Cook, 1988), it is necessary to examine young children's reading achievement as part of children's entire academic success. Quandt and Selznick (1984) suggested that from an early age, children learn from their significant others how competent they are in activities. Thus, examining the role of parents in children's reading achievement is a necessary measure. There is some evidence from longitudinal studies that parents form their beliefs early in their child's school career and that those beliefs continue to guide later thinking and behavior (Miller, 1995). It is important for parents to understand the consequences of their beliefs in relation to children's academic attainment.

It is also important for teachers to understand the relationship among parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions and their reading achievement to maximize students' achievement. Parents and teachers ought to work together to optimize children's reading success. Teachers could design home activities for children that support parents' contribution to children's school success. In addition, teachers can provide guidelines to parents of ways to improve children's reader self-perceptions. Knowledge of some of the contributing factors to stronger reader self-concept is also of value for teaching students. Such knowledge can enhance the performance of teachers working with students.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations:

1) One of the instruments used in this study was not standardized; nor did it have proven validity. However, this instrument did have internal consistency. Nevertheless, the scores obtained from this instrument must be analyzed bearing this in mind.

2) The standardized reading test used in this study had low reliability results for the Newfoundland context. This may have been due to the lower range and slightly higher mean test scores of Newfoundland children in comparison to American children's scores on the test. This outcome must be considered when interpreting test results.

3) Lower- to upper-middle class parents involved in this study had participated in an early reading intervention program with their children. Therefore, their sense of efficacy may have been higher than parents who had not participated in this intervention program since parental efficacy has been shown to relate to parental involvement (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992). Parental efficacy scores may or may not be generalizable to other lower- to upper-middle class parents.

4) This study involved grade three children who were involved in a family literacy program for approximately one year in a rural area. The results of this study may not be generalizable to all grade three children in rural areas.

5) There are many factors in children's background experience which influence their self-concepts and are not measured (Vereen, 1980).

Chapter II

Review of the Related Literature

Introduction

This review was conducted to explore the relationships among parents' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs), children's self-perceptions as readers, and their reading achievement. Furthermore, the role of parents' and children's gender in relation to the variables stated above have been addressed. Because the term self-concept can include feelings and beliefs about one's abilities (Byrne, 1984), academic self-concept and children's self-efficacy for achievement were used interchangeably in this review of the literature. In addition, children's self-perceptions of academic abilities were used interchangeably with children's self-efficacy and academic self-concept. Parental involvement has been treated as a separate category in this literature review, despite its inclusion in the self-efficacy category for data analysis.

This study had a general basis in social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986). This theory posited a multifaceted causal structure that addressed both the development of competence and the regulation of action. In the social cognitive view, people are neither driven by inner forces nor automatically shaped and controlled by external stimuli. Rather, "human functioning is explained in terms of a model of triadic reciprocality in which behavior, cognition and other personal factors, and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants of each other" (p. 18). Perceived self-efficacy occupies a pivotal role in social cognitive theory. Beliefs of personal efficacy regulated motivation by shaping aspirations and the outcomes expected for one's efforts (Bandura,

1997). Indeed, "a capability is only as good as its execution" (p. 35). It is how self-assured people felt in their ability that determined what they achieved with their ability. Hence, self-doubts can overrule the best of skills (Bandura, 1997).

Self-efficacy Theory

Before self-efficacy can be explored as a factor in children's reading achievement, it must be explained. Self-efficacy theory is part of Bandura's social cognitive theory which centers on an individual's belief about his/her ability to exercise and maintain some level of control over events which affect his/her life (Bandura, 1986). Bandura (1977) has identified four main sources of information upon which people base their self-efficacy beliefs: performance, observational comparison, social feedback and physiological states.

According to Bandura (1977) and Gorrell (1990), performance accomplishments or experiences of personal mastery were the most powerful sources of personal information and led to greater expectations of mastery and success. This is supported in earlier research. For example, Purkey (1970) attributed strong self-concept to success experiences. Bloom (1976) determined that self-concept was linked with previous achievement. Indeed, learners who experienced success were more likely to continue to experience success (Hocko, 1993). Henk and Melnick (1995) redefined the performance accomplishments' construct specifically as progress; one's present reading performance compared with past performance.

A second element of the self-efficacy model is observational comparsion. When people observed others performing tasks successfully, they raised their expectations of personal success on the same task. How they rated their own performances relative to others had an impact on their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Wagner (1983) concluded that one contributor to the development of self-concept was comparison with others. Henk and Melnick (1995) applied this directly to reader self-concept. A child's reader self-perception was influenced by perceptions of his or her reading performance in comparison to the performance of classmates.

Social feedback, the third element of the self-efficacy model, has been included in self-concept models for many decades. Rogers (1951) described evaluations from culture and family as impacting on the development and change in self-concept. Henk and Melnick (1995) defined social feedback as the direct or indirect feedback about reading from teachers, classmates and people in the child's family.

Praise and encouragement from significant individuals toward students, as a form of social feedback, appeared to have the weakest impact on self-efficacy in comparison to other sources of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). However, research with young children (Andrews & Debus, 1978; Schunk, 1982) has demonstrated that feedback pertaining to effort may be effective in raising children's sense of efficacy and their eventual persistence in difficult tasks. As children grew older, feedback about ability, and not effort, had more influence on self-concept (Schunk, 1983a; Schunk, 1984; Schunk & Gunn, 1985; Schunk & Rice, 1984).

The fourth element of self-efficacy is emotional arousal (Bandura, 1977). This serves as an indicator to an individual that he or she is not coping well with a situation. When this internal message is received, it may inhibit performance attempts because individuals tend to associate anxiety and stress as signs of incapacities. If children experienced negative feelings, or feelings of stress and anxiety while reading, they would interpret these as signs of personal incapacities and devalue themselves as readers (Bandura, 1977). Henk and Melnick (1995) defined physiological states as the internal feelings children experienced while reading.

Byrne and Shavelson (1986) each put forward a theory of a multi-dimensional self-concept, although each developed their theory differently. Bandura's social cognitive theory, of perceptions of self as self-efficacy, involved a multi-faceted view of people and their interactions with significant others. All of these approaches have influenced the way reader self-concept was articulated.

Parents' Self-efficacy, Children's Self-perceptions, and their Academic Achievement

"Efficacy beliefs influence how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave" (Bandura, 1993, p. 118). People's beliefs in their capabilities to exercise control over their level of functioning are central to people's actions. "Unless people believe that they can produce desired effects by their actions, they have little incentive to act" (Bandura et al., 1996, p. 1206). Thus, parental beliefs were presumably important because they affected parental behavior, and parental behavior affected children's development (Miller, 1988). Parents who believed they could exercise some influence

over their children's development were more proactive and successful in cultivating their children's competencies than parents who doubted that they could do much to affect their children's developmental course (Elder, 1995; Schneewind, 1995). A study by Mondell and Tyler (1981) found that the more competent parents (defined as those who had high levels of self-efficacy) provided more direct help, gave fewer commands, and showed more positive affect in interaction with their children. Such behaviors could mediate the relationship between parents' competence and the child's own sense of competence. Grolnick, Ryan, and Deci (1991) have claimed that parents' behavior does not affect the child through skill building, as has been traditionally assumed, but through its impact on children's attitudes and motivations related to school.

Consistently, research findings have shown that parental beliefs relate to the quality of the child's cognitive development (Ladd & Price, 1986; Miller, 1988). A study by Johnson and Martin (1983) showed that parents' beliefs in cognitive developmental explanations for child development correlated with the child's academic knowledge. Similarly, positive results were reported by McGillicuddy-DeLisi (1985). Their study indicated that significant relationships exist between mothers' and fathers' beliefs and the child's cognitive level and child outcomes on various tasks. A study by Bandura et al. (1996) has shown links between parents' sense of academic efficacy and aspirations. "Parents' sense of efficacy to promote their children's academic development and the educational aspirations they hold for them enhance their children's beliefs in their own academic efficacy and raise their aspirations and academic achievement" (p. 1207). Indeed, the stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goal aspirations people

adopt and the firmer is their commitment to them (Bandura, 1991; Lock & Latham, 1990).

Further research corroborates the positive influence of parental academic aspirations on children's academic aspirations. A study by Zimmerman et al. (1992) of high school students showed that students' perceived efficacy from their parents promoted academic achievement both directly and indirectly by raising students' personal goals. However, parents' aspirations influenced children's academic achievement only indirectly through their effects on their children's personal goals. This finding has many implications for parents who try to improve their children's academic achievement. It is not enough for parents to set academic standards for their children. According to Bandura (1993): "Unless parents also build their children's sense of efficacy, they [children] are likely to view high standards as beyond their reach and disregard them" (p. 137). Wagner and Phillips' (1992) study concluded that lower perceived competence among bright students benefited from the role parents' played in the developing course of inaccurate and potential detrimental self-perceptions.

Parental efficacy, children's self-perceptions: A developmental perspective

Parsons, Kaczala, and Meece (1982) found that parents' beliefs about their fifth through eleventh grade children's competencies in mathematics had a stronger influence on children's own beliefs than did either parents' role modeling of different activities or children's own grades in school. For younger children, parents' beliefs seem to influence their achievement-related beliefs more strongly than older children' beliefs. Wigfield and

Eccles (1992) claimed that children's previous performance may not be a strong antecedent during the elementary school years. However, "by the end of elementary school and beyond, children's beliefs and their performance histories may be the strongest antecedents of current beliefs" (p. 305). They also claimed that peer influences may increase as children get older. Moreover, studies by Ginsburg and Bronstein (1993), and Okagaki and Sternberg (1993) have concluded that parents' beliefs about their young children's competence in reading and mathematics not only influenced children's beliefs about themselves, but were often more influential than young children's past achievement performance. Indeed, studies have shown that parents' beliefs were important for young children's academic achievement.

Parental efficacy, parents' socio-economic status and children's self-perceptions

The positive relationship between parental efficacy and students' own belief systems appears unaffected by parents' race and economic status. "The developmental benefits of parenting efficacy have been verified across different socioeconomic statuses and family structures, under conditions of economic adversity that severely tax parental resilience, and in different cultural milieus" (Bandura et al., 1996, p. 1208). According to Bradley et al. (1989), the level of efficacy-promoting influences in the home environment carried the major explanatory weight in the commonly observed relationship between socioeconomic background and children's cognitive functioning. Simply possessing socioeconomic advantages did not necessarily lead parents to create cognitively stimulating home environments for their children. It is what parents did with their

advantages that made the difference. Bandura et al.'s (1996) study has shown that parents' from a low socioeconomic status with a higher sense of efficacy to promote their children's educability, fostered their children's interest in academic activities. These parents linked cognitive development to future occupational options, monitored their children's school work, and had kept them out of trouble more than assisted their children directly with their academic work.

The direction of efficacy influence

Efficacy-promoting influence does not necessarily flow in one direction. Pottebaum, Keith, and Ehly (1986) suggested that self-concept and academic achievement may cause each other in a cyclical nature; that is, one may cause the other, but the magnitude of the effect may be too small to be detected. However, which comes first - high self-perceptions of self or high academic performance - appears inconclusive.

Parental enabling activities increased infants' exploratory and cognitive competence, and infant capabilities elicited greater parental responsiveness in a process of reciprocal causation (Bradley, Caldwell, & Elardo, 1979). Indeed, correlational studies only present a relationship among parents' sense of efficacy and their children's self-perceptions and achievement. Nevertheless, Hoover-Dempsey et al. (1992) have suggested that further examination of parents' and teachers' sense of efficacy in relation to children's educational outcomes may yield useful information as both sets of participants work to increase the probabilities of children's school success.

Parents' self-efficacy, children's self-perceptions, their academic achievement, and gender

Significant others play an important role in the formation of self-concepts in boys and girls. According to Entwisle and Baker (1983) and Stevenson and Newman (1986), the influence of parents and parents' expectations for their young children was stronger for females than it was for males in terms of academic self-concepts and attitudes. The researchers suggested that females tend to conform more to the perceptions of their abilities from the expectations placed on them by their parents than do males.

A study by Whitbeck (1987), of 82 young people between the ages of nine to fifteen, has shown that the self-efficacy of boys was more strongly affected by perceived parental efficacy for their academic achievement than was the self-efficacy of girls. This study revealed that the self-efficacy of girls was more affected by parents' interpersonal interaction with girls. For boys, achievement and mastery was most affected by their parents' sense of efficacy. "Evidence that parents are relatively more invested in and ambitious for boys' rather than girls' achievement suggests that parents of sons would exert more pressure to achieve on their children than would parents of daughters" (Wagner & Phillips, 1992, p. 1382).

A study by Hoover-Dempsey et al. (1992), of 390 kindergarten through fourth grade children and their parents in large public school districts, has reported no significant variations based on parents' sex for helping improve their children's learning. However, a study by Wagner and Phillips (1992) of third-grade children revealed that fathers' behavior, particularly their warmth and support in feedback, was associated with

higher levels of perceived academic competence in their children, but mother's behavior was unrelated to children's self-perception of competence. These results were surprising since mother's teaching behavior, particularly their positive emotion, has been shown to predict children's social-emotional competence (Denham, Renwick, & Holt, 1991). Clearly, further research needs to examine parents' gender in relation to parental self-efficacy, children's self-perceptions, their academic achievement, and gender.

Children's Self-perceptions and their Academic Achievement

Studies have shown that children's self-efficacy and their academic achievement were positively linked (e.g., Bandura et al., 1996; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1990; Singh, 1972). Research has also shown that the influence of parents' sense of academic efficacy on children's scholastic achievement was mediated through its impact on children's beliefs in their capability to manage their own learning and master coursework (Bandura et al., 1996). Therefore, in order to examine the relationship between parents' beliefs for their children's cognitive achievement and children's actual academic achievement, it is necessary to examine children's beliefs in their own ability to achieve.

Much research has focused on the definition and measurement of children's competence-related perceptions, and on the relationship between these views and their actual competence in specific skill domains, such as school achievement (e.g. Harter, 1982; Wheeler-Ladd, 1982). Studies have revealed correlations between children's perceived competence and achievement. A study by Ladd and Price (1986) of 114 children, ages eight to eleven, showed a .43 correlation between children's perceived

competence in reading and their reading achievement. Grolnick and Slowiaczek's (1990) study of 300 eleven to fourteen-year-old children also supported the emergent literature perspective in which children's attitudes and beliefs about themselves in school are seen as powerful determiners of school success.

A study by Collins (1982) examined the level of problem solving by children who perceived themselves to be of high or low mathematical self-efficacy at each of three levels of mathematical ability. Students' mathematical ability contributed to performance. However, at each ability level, children who regarded themselves as efficacious were more successful in solving mathematical problems than were children who doubted their abilities. Furthermore, Bandura et al. (1996), in their study of 279 children, age ranging from eleven to fourteen years, revealed links between children's beliefs in their efficacy to regulate their own learning and their academic attainment. Indeed, self-perceptions of ability were related to children's achievements in reading and other academic areas (Byrne, 1993; Good & Brophy, 1987; Schunk, 1985).

Children's perceptions of control over the learning process and their academic achievement

Children who believe they can exercise some control over their own learning and mastery of coursework appear to achieve success in their academic pursuits. Considerable research over the past several years has shown that beliefs of academic efficacy work in part by heightening motivation and fostering good strategic thinking (Bandura, 1993; Schunk, 1989; Zimmerman, 1995). Students' firm beliefs in their

efficacy to manage their own motivation and learning activities provided the staying power and enhanced performance accomplishments (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994; Zimmerman et al., 1992). A study by Harter (1981) showed that positive attitudes and self-perceptions were associated with a sense of control over reading successes and failures. Harter claimed that a perceived lack of control could grow out of a succession of failed experiences, which in turn, could cause a child to expect every event as being out of control. This could lead to decreased motivation and a deterioration of performance by children.

Children's efficacy beliefs and their career aspirations

According to Bandura et al.'s (1996) study, beliefs influenced aspirations and strength of goal commitments, level of motivation and perseverance in the face of difficulties and setbacks, resilience to adversity, quality of analytic thinking, causal attributions for successes and failures, and vulnerability to stress and depression. Indeed, the stronger students' beliefs in their efficacy, the more occupational options they considered possible, the greater the interest they showed in them, the better they prepared themselves educationally for different career pursuits, and the greater was their persistence and success in their academic coursework (Betz & Hackett, 1986; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). Thus, efficacy beliefs influenced career aspirations for many students.

Children's underestimation of competence

It has been shown that as early as third grade, some children underestimate their academic competence (Harter, 1983; Ladd & Price, 1986; Phillips, 1984, 1987). This is noteworthy, given evidence that when very young children held inaccurate perceptions, they tended to overestimate their abilities (Phillips & Zimmerman, 1990). A study by Wagner and Phillips (1992), of 74 third grade, high-achieving children, found that lower perceived competence was not merely a reflection of lower actual abilities. It was revealed that low competence scores departed strikingly from children's measured ability. Similarly, other studies have shown that even among high achieving children, some display erroneous perceptions of incompetence (Licht & Dweck, 1983; Phillips, 1984, 1987), which may, in turn, place them at risk for a wide range of academic difficulties, including avoidance of demanding tasks (Harter, 1985), relative lack of persistence and independence in their work habits, and underachievement (Phillips & Zimmerman, 1990). Indeed, studies have shown that children's perceptions of competence do not necessarily reflect their actual abilities.

It has been noted that skills can be easily over-ruled by self-doubts, so that even highly talented individuals make poor use of their capabilities under circumstances that undermine their beliefs in themselves (Bandura & Jourden, 1991; Wood & Bandura, 1989a). Research on cognitive features of depressive symptoms further suggested that negative evaluations of one's competence may place children at risk for depression and personal helplessness (Weisz, Weiss, Wasserman, & Rintoul, 1987). Indeed, children's signs of frustration, loss of concentration, and lack of persistence resembled a

constellation of behaviors similar to the helpless child identified by Dweck and colleagues (Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980). Therefore, it is important for parents to help increase children's positive self-perceptions so that self-doubts do not control children's thoughts. Parents can acknowledge and encourage the role of effort in learning. This may prevent the sense of hopelessness that may develop in children after they fail to succeed.

It is apparent that perceived self-efficacy is an important contributor to performance accomplishments, whatever the underlying skills might be. Just as studies revealed the negative consequences for student achievement because of a low self-efficacy, a resilient sense of efficacy can enable students to do extraordinary things by productive use of their skills in the face of overwhelming obstacles (White, 1982). Thus, "children who believe they can exercise some control over their own learning and mastery of coursework achieve success in their academic pursuits" (Bandura et al., 1996, p. 1217).

Parents' Involvement in their Children's Education, Parents' Self-efficacy, Children's Self-perceptions and their Academic Achievement

Parental self-efficacy and involvement

"Parental efficacy appears to facilitate increased levels of parent activity in some areas of parent involvement" (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992, p. 291). Hoover-Dempsey et al. conducted a study of 390 elementary school children and their parents. These

researchers found a correlation between parental efficacy and parent involvement in children's academic activities. It seemed that parents with a high sense of self-efficacy became more involved in their children's educational activities. "The higher parents' sense of efficacy to instruct their children, the more they guide their children's learning and participate actively in the life of the school" (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992, p. 293). A study by Grolnick et al. (1997) has revealed similar results. "When parents see themselves as efficacious and when they view their role as that of a teacher, they are more likely to become involved in cognitive stimulating activities with their children" (p. 546).

Parents who had a high sense of parenting efficacy selected and constructed environments conducive to their children's development, and served as strong advocates on their behalf in transactions with educational and other social systems (Elder & Ardelt, 1992; Elder, Eccles, Ardelt, & Lord, 1993). Hence, parents' beliefs affected their actions for helping improve their children's academic achievement. In contrast, parents who were beset by doubts about their parenting capabilities were reluctant to behave proactively, quickly aborted promotive efforts when they encounter difficulties, and fell back increasingly on negative sanctions in efforts to manage problems with their children (Gross, Fogg, & Tucker, 1995). Indeed, parents with a low sense of efficacy may be less inclined to become involved in their children's education. Nevertheless, caution must be exercised when interpreting study results on parental involvement and parental efficacy. Parents who are involved in their children's education do not necessarily have a high

sense of efficacy. Other factors, such as pressure from the children's school, may be a contributing factor in parental involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

According to Hoover-Dempsey et al. (1992), "efficacy increases the likelihood that a parent will act on his or her knowledge (or seek more information when available sources are insufficient)" (p. 291). Involvement can take many different forms. Volunteering at the school may be related to parental efficacy since the decision to volunteer required some sense that one had educationally relevant skills that could and would be used effectively (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992). Furthermore, parents who got to know their children's teachers, generally had a higher sense of efficacy than parents who were less involved with their children's classroom teachers (Bandura, 1997).

There have been several intervention strategies designed to increase parent's sense of efficacy and involvement. Bandura's work (1977, 1984, 1986) offered specific points of entry into the development of such interventions. Parent's personal efficacy expectancies should be examined in relation to parental efficacy for helping their child succeed in school. Moreover, approaches could focus on ways of increasing parents' sense of positive influence in their children's school success. For example, schools might send home relatively specific instructions for parents about strategies for helping children with specific types of homework assignments. Teachers might also routinely link some student accomplishments and positive characteristics to parent efforts as they conduct scheduled conference discussions (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992).

Teacher efficacy must also be explored as a factor in parents' involvement decisions. Schools' best interests can be served by designing approaches that focus

specifically on increasing parents' sense of positive influence in their children's school success. Even among economically disadvantaged parents, those with high academic aspirations and involvement in school activities generally had academically successful children (Kao & Tienda, 1995). Such parents supplemented their children's formal educational experiences with many after-school programs (Lareau, 1987). This created helpful social ties where parents could learn about opportunities for their children.

Parents' involvement, children's self-perceptions and their academic achievement

Most research indicated that parents' involvement in their children's education had positive educational outcomes for children (e.g., Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992, 1997; Reynolds et al., 1996). In fact, there have been increased calls for parent involvement in their children's education (Hess & Holloway, 1984; Phi Delta Kappa, 1980). However, there has been little specific examination of the ways in which parent involvement – in general or in its varied forms – functioned to produce positive outcomes for children (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992). Parental efficacy must be further studied as a factor in children's educational success.

According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995), parents' involvement in their children's educational experiences offered significant sources of efficacy development for their children. Thus, a child who perceived a parent as involved might also feel more competent (Patterson, 1986). Parents who go to school and engage in school activities may be modeling both the importance of school and a way to handle situations - a way that involves actively finding out about and confronting issues and problems. Such

involvement could affect children's own views of competency (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). "When messages about having power to exercise change are conveyed to a child, he or she may see school outcomes as more controllable and therefore may view the self as more competent" (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994, p. 249).

Grolnick et al. (1991) studied the relationships among children's perception of parental expectations, children's academic motivation, and their performance in school. The sample was composed of four hundred and fifty-six children in grade three to grade six. The data revealed that children's perceived competence on academic tasks were significantly related to how much support both parents provided for their children's autonomy, and the amount of parental involvement in children's academic work. Similarly, Stevenson and Baker (1987) have claimed that parents who were more involved in school activities, were more likely to have children who were performing well in school. Indeed, parental involvement does appear to have a positive effect on children's academic achievement. However, it is possible that children's school success may be a contributing factor to parental involvement.

Because results of studies indicated relationships among parental involvement, parental efficacy and children's achievement, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether children's achievement had a stronger influence on their parents' sense of efficacy and involvement decisions, than parents' efficacy and involvement decisions had on their children's achievement. Children, who were confident in school and felt in control of school outcomes, may have actually pushed parents to become actively involved in school (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). Furthermore, parents have felt

increased effectiveness when they observed, during their involvement activities, that their children were successful (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992). Regardless of the direction of influence between parents' involvement decisions and children's academic achievement, the relationship between these variables appeared to be a positive one.

Parents' Achievement-related Beliefs, Parents' Self-efficacy, Children's Self-perceptions and their Academic Achievement

Parents' self-efficacy and their achievement-related beliefs

Current literature has shown a link between parents' self-efficacy and parents' achievement-related beliefs (e.g., Bandura, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Work on attributions (e.g., Hartman & Maehr, 1984) has suggested that parents, who have a strong sense of efficacy for helping their children succeed in school, would also be more likely to attribute much of a child's success as well as their own success in helping the child to effort. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) have proposed that parents with a high sense of efficacy would seem most likely to view the child's ability as a quality to be increased, enhanced, or made the most of, rather than a given guarantee of success or a given limitation on performance.

Conversely, parents with a poor sense of efficacy for helping their children succeed in school, would seem likely to make few attributions to effort. While exhibiting disbelief that personal efforts would be effective in influencing child outcomes, the low-efficacy parent would seem likely to assume that child ability or luck (e.g., associated

with tests or teachers) exerted the most important influence over child learning (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). The outcomes of further work in attributions (e.g., Hartman & Maehr, 1984; Henderson & Dweck, 1990) has indicated that parents tend to persist, put forth significant effort and expect success, if they believe that they have some control over desired outcomes, in this case, children's school success.

Parents' achievement-related beliefs

Work in the area of parents' implicit theories about intelligence offers important perspectives on parents' sense of efficacy for helping children succeed in school. According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997): "Parents differ in beliefs about the malleability of their children's intelligence - that is, the extent to which children's intelligence is fixed or susceptible to change through effort" (p. 24). Theoretical work on implicit theories of intelligence, such as that by Henderson and Dweck (1990), has suggested that individuals tend to hold either an entity theory or an incremental theory of intelligence. An entity theory assumes that intelligence is fixed and not easily changed, while an incremental theory of intelligence assumes that intelligence is malleable and subject to change, most notably through effort and persistence.

Bandura (1997) has claimed that parents with a low sense of efficacy would view intelligence as a fixed trait, therefore their effort was not considered vital for helping improve children's achievement. Parents with a high sense of efficacy would be more likely to view intelligence as a trait that was changeable (i.e., through effort) (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). People who regarded themselves as highly efficacious

ascribed their failures to insufficient effort. Those who regarded themselves as inefficacious attributed their failures to low ability (Alden, 1986; Collins, 1982; McAuley, Duncan, & McElroy, 1989; Silver, Mitchell, & Gist, 1989). According to Bandura (1997), "the conception of ability as a stable internal attribute often serves as an impediment to the development of complex competencies and increases vulnerability to distress and dysfunction in the face of difficulties" (p. 124). Indeed, theories of intelligence and the role of attributions have been shown to relate to parents' sense of efficacy for helping their children succeed in school.

Parents' achievement-related beliefs, children's self-perceptions and their academic achievement

Research has shown links between attributions and academic achievement. A report by the Stevenson group focused on variables associated with elementary children's achievement in the United States, China, and Japan (Stevenson et al., 1990). This group reported that the achievement of U.S. children was well below that of their Japanese and Chinese counterparts. One of the conclusions of this study was that U.S. parents emphasized the role on innate abilities when they thought about children's performance. These parents viewed ability as a fixed trait and deemphasized the value of effort. Thus, rather than encouraging their children to work harder when they performed poorly (and rather than working harder themselves to help their children perform more effectively), these parents tended to assume that poor performance could not be changed because it was rooted in the unchanging quality of ability. Therefore, parents' sense of efficacy was

lower for helping their child succeed academically when they believed ability was a fixed trait. Indeed, parents, as the initial source of ability feedback for most children, provide an obvious focus for research aimed at understanding how some academically competent children come to underestimate their abilities (Wagner & Phillips, 1992).

"As children get older, many of them begin to view ability as a rather stable entity that cannot be changed much" (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992, p. 274). For older children, viewing ability as a fixed trait may decrease the amount of effort they would exercise when faced with a problem situation. Nicholls (1984) argued that most young children have a mastery or learning view of ability, believing that increased effort could improve their performance. This is important for young children's motivational levels. Young children would see the opportunity to improve academically. A study by O' Sullivan and Joy (1994) has shown that young children's knowledge about how to correct reading problems may be more heavily dependent on the metacognitive input from others (i.e., their beliefs about reading), rather than on their own reading experiences as a source of feedback. Therefore, significant others may have played a more important role in young children's academic beliefs than previously assumed.

A study by Wood and Bandura (1989) tested the notion that conceptions of ability affect thought processes and performance attainments through the self-efficacy mechanism. For students who viewed ability as reflecting an inherent intellectual aptitude, their perceived efficacy plummeted as they encountered problems. Wood and Bandura also reported that such students had eventual progressive deterioration in their performance. Students who viewed ability as a skill that must be developed and

practiced achieved higher attainments. Since parents' achievement-related beliefs may have been an even stronger influence on young children's rather than older children's achievement-related beliefs (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992), it is important that parents manifest efficacy in behaviors specifically focused on helping young children solve current and anticipated problems in school (Lareau, 1993; Youniss, De Santis, & Henderson, 1992). Parents low in efficacy would seem more likely to doubt their own ability to have an impact on children's learning. Therefore, parents low in efficacy would be less likely to become involved in their children's education (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992).

"Parents would involve themselves and persist until children experience success (with their children) if they believe that unstable and controllable factors (e.g., effort) are responsible for children's poor performance" (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, p. 24). Indeed, parents would push a child to put forth more effort when he or she encountered academic difficulties. Alternately, parents might opt not to involve themselves if they attribute a child's poor performance (or their own) to stable or internal factors (e.g., the child has low ability, or the parent doesn't have enough knowledge). Indeed, studies have shown that parents' achievement-related beliefs play a pivotal role in children's self-perceptions of academic competence and their academic achievement.

Children's Self-concept and Peers

Parents have a strong influence on the development of children's self-concepts, but peer relations also affect the way children see themselves in the world. Children who

felt loved and worthwhile as human beings were usually successful in peer relationships, while those who did not had more difficulty (Felker, 1974). As well, children with positive self-concepts were more likely to enjoy high status with their peers than children with low self-concepts (Richmond & White, 1971). Homze (1962) claimed that the roles of peers determined much of what behavior the child assumed. The child could identify with his or her peers because of the similarity in age. Thus, peers became the child's life models.

The relationship between peer relations and self-concept can be somewhat cyclical in nature: poor peer relations contribute to low self-concept; strong peer relations contribute to high self-concept. Children who perceived themselves as competent and confident had successful peer interactions and enjoyed more social encounters. They received acceptance from their peers (Henderson and Long, 1971; McCandless et al., 1961). These children enjoyed high peer status (Carlson, 1963; Richmond & White, 1971; Williams & Cole, 1968) and believed that people whom they like reciprocated their feelings (Simon & Bernstein, 1971).

Peer influences on achievement have shown that children's aspirations are quite similar to those of their peers. A child wishing to be accepted may choose not to work as hard in school if the peer group does not value achievement. Children who were intelligent tended to be more popular and slow-learning children tended to be less popular (Cambell, 1967; Green, 1970). Low-achieving children were more likely to be among the least accepted children in the classroom. McMichael (1980) provided evidence of

this dynamic. Boys, who were both poor readers and lacked social skills, tended to be accepted only by other boys with similar academic and social problems.

In terms of gender, a study by Oldford-Matchim (1998) of grade one students has revealed a significant difference in how girls and boys perceived their classmates' estimates of their reading. Girls perceived their classmates' regard for their reading ability more positively than did boys. However, according to Bandura (1997), the influence of peers may be less significant in determining young children's self-perceptions than older children's self-perceptions. Wigfield and Eccles (1992) also claimed that the strength of peer influences may increase as children get older, peaking during the junior high school years, but parents' influence on children's beliefs were more salient with younger children. Nevertheless, feedback from peers is an obvious focus for research on the factors related to young children's self-perceptions and their academic achievement.

Children's Self-concept and Teachers

The relationship between teachers and students play an important role in the development of children's self-concept, but the results of studies offer conflicting results in relation to children's gender and age. Elaugh and Harlow (1973) found that males received more teacher attention than females, resulting in lower self-concept for females, while Samuels' (1977) study indicated that more females than males perceived their teachers' reactions to them to be positive. O'Sullivan's (1992) study found that teachers considered their female students to be better readers and found reading easier than males.

This (1992) study also revealed that teachers felt more capable of helping male students improve in reading. Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs were higher for boys' achievement than for girls' achievement in reading despite teachers' beliefs that females were higher achievers in reading that were males. Hence, teachers' beliefs about children's achievement levels may be an important one for understanding teachers' self-efficacy beliefs.

According to Bandura (1997), a teacher's sense of efficacy was likely to be especially influential on young children because their capabilities were still relatively informal, and young children make little use of social comparison information in evaluating their capabilities. Thus, from this explanation, teacher feedback would be more important than peers' expectations and feedback in the formation of young children's self-perceptions of ability. A report by Anderson, Greene, and Loewen (1988) stated that teachers' beliefs in their instructional efficacy was a much stronger predictor of the academic attainments of younger students than of older students. According to Dillabough's (1990) study, teacher expectations may have been more influential on young children's achievement than parental expectations. In contrast, a study by Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1990) claimed that children's source of assistance for their progress shifted from parents to teachers in high school. Therefore, parents were a more important source than were teachers for which young children relied to evaluate their progress. Indeed, studies present conflicting results on the degree of importance of teachers' beliefs to young children's self-concept development.

Reader Self-perceptions

It is known with great certainty that children who have made positive associations with reading read more often, with greater intensity, and for longer periods of time. Conversely, children who have negative associations with reading read very little or avoid reading all together, or read with little involvement (Henk & Melnick, 1995). Indeed, children who demonstrated superior reading achievement read frequently (Anderson et al., 1988; Foertsch, 1992). Since reading is such an integral part of education, and so much of a child's academic success rests on his or her ability to read well, it can be accepted that motivating students to read and creating an interest in reading among students rank high as priorities for teachers (O'Flavehan et al., 1992).

Self-perceptions could either motivate or inhibit performance in all aspects of life and school (Schunk, 1982, 1983, 1983a; Zimmerman & Ringle, 1981). Judgements about one's ability to achieve affected actual achievement through influence on an individual's choice of activities, task avoidance, effort expenditure and goal persistence (Bandura & Schunk, 1981). This is borne out in classroom experience when one observes the strong readers frequently making book selections and library trips, while the poorer readers show little initiative to get through assigned books. Henk and Melnick (1995) posited that "how an individual feels about him or herself as a reader could clearly influence whether reading would be sought or avoided, the amount of effort that would occur during reading, and how persistently comprehension would be pursued" (p. 472).

Specifically, reading success and lack of success has been linked to self-concept. If children develop strong positive self-concepts as readers, they will attempt more

difficult material, enjoy reading and be apt to read more widely (Quandt & Selznick, 1984). Time spent reading is generally considered to contribute to increased reading comprehension, a phenomenon known in the reading literature as the "Matthew Effect". This is an example of "the rich becoming richer and the poor becoming poorer" (Stanovich, 1980). Thus, children with positive feelings and beliefs will read more and thereby likely improve in reading ability. This circular effect brings together all of the elements affecting the reader: feelings and beliefs about the self as a reader, and perceptions of parental and peer expectations of a child as reader. Thomas (1984) was one of the few researchers who looked specifically at the concept of reader as self, and not at global self-concept. In her study of one hundred sixth-grade students' performances on a reading comprehension test, and views of self as reader, she found a significant relationship existed between how good readers viewed their ability to read and their actual reading ability.

Reader Self-perceptions and Gender

Research on reader self-perceptions and the gender of young children has revealed different results. A study by Marsh, Smith and Barnes (1985) revealed that girls had a higher reader self-concept than boys but a lower math self-concept. In a study of reader self-perceptions by Wallbrown, Levine, and Englin (1981), they found that males tended to see themselves as having difficulty with reading. The girls, however, seemed to view reading more positively and felt positive about the feedback they were receiving from family, friends and teachers about their reading abilities. O'Sullivan's (1992) study

of grade's three, six and nine students also found that girls considered themselves to be better readers, rated reading as easier, more useful, more pleasurable and interesting.

A study by Ladd and Price (1986) revealed no gender differences between children's perceived competence and achievement. However, Ladd and Price's data did suggest that the tendency to overestimate one's competence was more common among grade-school boys, whereas the tendency to underestimate one's ability was more common among grade-school girls. A study by Wagner and Phillips (1992) of 74 grade three high-achieving children did not obtain substantial evidence of sex differences in children's perceived academic competence for this group. Nevertheless, gender effects, found for more academically diverse samples, may not have generalized to this particular sample.

Some studies conducted in Newfoundland did not support differences in children's reader self-concept based on gender. Studies by Byrne (1993), Legge (1994), Whiteway (1995), and Pink (1996) found no differences in the reader self-concepts of children when gender was examined. Byrne (1993) studied grade six children in a rural area of Newfoundland and found no differences in children's reader self-concept. Legge's (1994) study revealed no differences between the reader self-concepts of second grade boys and girls in urban classrooms. In addition, Whiteway's (1995) study of three grade five classrooms in urban Newfoundland did not support gender differences in children's reader self-concept. Another study was carried out by Pink (1996). She studied the effects of gender on the self-concepts of high ability grade four, five, and six students. Again, no differences were found. However, a study in urban Newfoundland

with grade two students found that girls had higher self-concepts as readers than did boys (Brown, 1992). O'Sullivan's (1992) study, which also showed that girls had higher reader self-concepts than did boys, was conducted in Newfoundland. Despite some study results that showed no differences in children's reader self-concept based on children's gender, when differences were found in children's reader self-perceptions, girls' were more often favored than were boys.

Development of Reading Ability

Acquiring skills specific to reading and prior linguistic and conceptual knowledge are important aspects of reading development. Learning to read involves the acquisition of a few skills specific to reading and the use of many other abilities that are common to a variety of cognitive processes. "Previously acquired linguistic and conceptual knowledge relevant for understanding oral language and interpreting visual experiences is necessary for reading" (Juola, Schadler, Chabot, McGarghey, & Wait, 1979, p. 91).

According to Frith (1985), there were three phases of development in learning to read words: logographic, alphabetic, and orthographic. Logographic, the first phase, is the use of nonphonemic visual, contextual or graphic features to read words. The alphabetic phase involves the use of grapheme-phoneme relations to process correspondences between the spellings of words and their pronunciations. The orthographic phase involves the use of spelling patterns and the ability to recognize

words. These phases were the basis of Ehri's (1994) work. Ehri (1994) further elaborated on readers' phases of word recognition.

Logographic phase

During the logographic phase, visual symbols represent words or morphemes, not phonemes. Beginning readers select and remember morphonemic visual characteristics instead of letter-sound correspondences to read words. Those readers in the logographic phase may learn to read a word by remembering the shape of one of its letters or its logo (e.g., the golden arches in McDonald's logo).

Visual cue reading is also logographic word reading (Ehri, 1987; Ehri & Wilce, 1985, 1987, 1987a). Logographic readers learn to read words using visual cues. This was labeled paired-associate learning (Gough & Hillenger, 1980; Gough et al., 1983). According to Ehri (1994):

> Readers form an association between a written word and its pronunciation or meaning in memory by selecting some visual attribute that distinguishes it from other words being learned. The next time that attribute is seen in the same or another word, the response word associated with that attribute is retrieved from memory (p. 326).

Alphabetic phase

When children stop attending primarily to pictures and have begun attempting to read print, the shift from logographic reading to alphabetic reading explains how novice beginners use alphabetic cues to read words by sight (Ehri, 1994). Phonetic cue readers must know letter names or sounds and have some phonetic segmentation skill. The access routes may be formed by only an initial letter or the final and initial letters (Ehri,

1994). Sounds such as /d/ in dog, or letter names such as 'bee' in beak are examples of various types of phonetic units in pronunciation that are linked by letters.

Studies of first-year readers (Byrne, 1992; Share, Jorm, Maclean, & Matthews, 1984; Stuart & Coltheart, 1988) revealed the best two predictors of reading achievement were letter knowledge and phonemic-segmentation skill. A series of studies by Ehri and Wilce (1987, 1987a) found that meaningfulness ratings correlated significantly with ease of learning to read among control subjects but not experimental subjects. Meaningfulness, for example, would be words deemed meaningful by the child such as the word 'snake' rather than the word 'soles'. However, Ehri and Wilce maintained that letter/sound routes provided more systematic, easily remembered links to words in memory than did semantic routes. Ehri and Wilce also found, in a study comparing the word learning of phonetic cue readers and readers who could phonologically recode words, that cue readers were more inconsistent over trials, forgetting words or mixing them up. Decoders were more accurate than cue readers in recalling the spellings of the words they learned. Cue readers did, however, remember most initial and final consonants, an indication that boundary letters were the phonetic cues they used to remember words. According to Ehri (1994), the alphabetic phase was underway when readers could phonologically recode written words into pronunciations.

Orthographic phase

At the orthographic phase, readers have the grapheme-phoneme correspondences and orthographic knowledge to read words. This phase replaced the alphabetic phase as readers consolidated grapheme-phoneme patterns that recurred across words they have

learned to read (Ehri, 1994). Massaro, Jastrzembski and Lucas' (1981) study revealed that knowledge of the orthographic structure emerged from competence in alphabetic phase reading. In reading unfamiliar words, orthographic-phase readers were thought to divide letter strings into root words, affixes, and syllables, convert these to pronunciations, and then blend them to derive a recognizable word.

Other reading models

Chall (1983) claimed there were a number of stages involved in children's learning to read. The logographic phase of Ehri's (1994) work corresponded to Chall's Stage 0, the alphabetic phase fitted into Chall's Stage 1 (decoding), and the orthographic phase emerged during Chall's Stage 2, when readers gained greater fluency. Reid, Hresko, and Hammill (1989) claimed there were specific components involved in children's learning to read. Reid, Hresko, and Hammill proposed that children learn to: a) educe the arbitrary conventions employed in reading and writing English; b) learn and use the alphabet; and c) construct meaning from print. Indeed, researchers tended to agree that there were particular aspects that children must master before learning to become fluent readers.

Reading Ability and Gender

Studies revealed mixed results in relation to children's reading ability and gender. Nevertheless, females tended to outperform males in reading ability when gender differences were found. However, studies carried out in England and Nigeria found that

boys significantly outscored girls in reading. In Canada and the United States, girls outperformed boys in reading (Johnson, 1972). According to Preston (1962), cultural and environmental factors accounted for gender differences in reading. Preston found that German boys considered reading to be a normal activity while American boys tended to perceive reading activities as feminine. Four factors were suggested by Dwyer (1973) in an attempt to explain gender differences in reading achievement which favor girls:

1. the differential rate or level of maturation (i.e., girls maturing faster than boys);
2. content of basal readers;
3. the negative treatment of boys by female teachers;
4. the differential cultural expectations for the male role.

Furthermore, in Yarborough and Johnson's (1980) research, cultural factors and teacher bias were found to account for reading achievement differences. In an international review of gender differences in reading ability, most of the investigators agreed upon cultural factors and teacher bias. It was found that until the age of ten, boys lagged behind the girls. After the age of ten, sex differences became nonsignificant.

A comprehensive study by Wallberg and Tsai (1985) found gender to be significantly correlated with achievement and attitude. Females in the study performed better than males and expressed more interest in reading. In some recent research findings, girls achieved higher in reading achievement than did boys (Cloer & Pearman, 1992; Oldford-Matchim, 1998; Ostling, 1992). In a longitudinal study by Cloer and Pearman (1992), students were assessed on their reading skills at ages nine, thirteen, and seventeen. The researchers found that girls outperformed boys in each of six reading

assignments. Their results showed that the gap between girls and boys was the same in 1990 as it was in 1971. A 1998 Canadian report (School Achievement Indicators Program - SAIP) on the reading assessment of thirteen and sixteen-year-olds showed that females occupied higher levels of reading achievement than did males for both age groups (Council of Ministers of Education, 1999).

Similarly, a study by Ostling (1992) reviewed the results of a report on the reading achievement of girls from preschool to secondary school. Results showed that girls tended to perform better on reading tasks than boys from elementary school to high school. Moreover, Oldford-Matchim (1998) found that girls possessed more knowledge of the alphabet than did boys, even at the beginning of the kindergarten school year. According to Entwisle and Baker's (1983) study, girls generally scored better marks in reading than did boys.

Newfoundland studies by Legge (1994), Byrne, (1993), Pink (1996), and Whiteway (1995) found no significant relationships between children's reading achievement and their gender. These studies covered grades two through six. These study results, however, do not corroborate the large-scale findings of Newfoundland children in the Canadian Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). The results for 1991, 1993, and 1996 on this test with grade four students showed that females were more successful in reading than were males (Government of Newfoundland & Labrador, 1991, 1993, 1996). CTBS scores for grade twelve students in 1998 also showed that females experienced more success in reading than did males (Government of Newfoundland & Labrador, 1998). Furthermore, O'Sullivan's Newfoundland study revealed that females scored

higher than males on standardized reading tests in grade's three, six and nine. Indeed, performance differences in reading often favored girls rather than boys.

Summary

The literature review has indicated relationships among the variables presented in this study: parents' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs), children's reader self-perceptions, children's reading achievement, and parents' and children's gender. Based on the studies presented, parents' sense of efficacy, as part of Bandura's social cognitive theory, positively related to children's self-perceptions as readers and their academic achievement. Parents' involvement in their children's academic development was positively linked to young children's academic achievement. Furthermore, parents' who believed that intelligence was more a fixed trait, rather than something that was malleable, tended to have a lower sense of efficacy. These parents believed their efforts were less likely to improve children's outcomes. Such beliefs negatively related to children's academic achievement. There were a limited number of studies that examined parents' gender in relation to parents' reading beliefs, children's self-perceptions and their academic achievement. These studies revealed mixed results.

The literature review has revealed that children who felt good about their reading abilities and academic performance performed better in school. Those students who felt negatively toward their reading abilities and academic achievement seemed to perform more poorly than students who were more positive toward their reading achievement. The research tended to show that boys had lower self-perceptions as readers than did

girls. Studies also favored females when gender differences were found in children's reading achievement.

Because of the limited number of studies completed on the relationships among parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions, children's reading achievement, and children's and parents' gender, the need for further research in this area was apparent. This study has attempted to contribute significant information to relationships among the above variables as well as to help clarify previous conflicting studies by addressing the following questions:

1. Is there a relationship between parents' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and children's reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score)?

2. Is there a relationship between parents' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and children's reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

3. Are there differences in mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) for their children?

4. Are there differences in parents' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) for boys and girls?

5. Are there differences in mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) for boys and girls?

6. Does a relationship exist between mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and children's reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score)?

7. Is there a relationship between mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and children's reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

8. Is there a relationship between mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and boys' and girls' reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score)?

9. Is there a relationship between mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs) and boys' and girls' reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

10. Are children's reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score) related to their reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

11. Are there gender differences in children's reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score)?

12. Are there gender differences in children's reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

13. Is there a relationship between girls' reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score) and girls' reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

14. Is there a relationship between boys' reader self-perceptions (self-concept, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress, and total score) and boys' reading achievement (alphabet, conventions, meaning, and overall score)?

Chapter III

Design and Methodology

Introduction

This study was an investigation of the relationships among parents' reading beliefs (self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs), children's self-perceptions as readers, and children's reading achievement. The relationship of parents' and children's gender to the above variables was also examined.

Sample

This study was conducted with a total of 66 third-grade students in a rural area. Most parents of students also participated in this study. A total of 92 parents (49 mothers and 43 fathers) completed a questionnaire about their beliefs for their children's reading achievement. For some students, both parents were involved; for other students, just one parent participated in this study. The sample of students included 37 girls and 29 boys. These students came from varying socio-economic backgrounds, ranging from lower-to upper-middle class.

The children in the sample were involved in a family literacy project (SORT-Significant Others as Reading Teachers) for approximately one year. This project was initiated by the Faculty of Education of Memorial University of Newfoundland, and in affiliation with an elementary school. The project encouraged significant others' involvement in young children's reading development. The literacy project was designed

to inform parents of ways to help their children become better readers (Oldford-Matchim, 1992).

Instruments

Two instruments were used with students. The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) was used to determine students' perceptions of reading (including self-concept, social feedback, observational comparison, physiological states, and progress). The Test of Early Reading Ability-2 (TERA-2) was used to determine students' knowledge of the alphabet, conventions of print, and meaning. Both instruments for students were American standardized. The Questionnaire for Parents addressed parents' reading beliefs. It included measures of self-efficacy and achievement-related beliefs.

The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS)

This instrument was used to measure how children felt about themselves as readers. The Reader Self-Perception Scale includes aspects of performance, observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states. Performance, redefined more narrowly as progress (P) by Henk and Melnick (1995), involves how one perceives present reading performance compared to past performances. The second source of self-perception as reader, observational comparison (OC), measures how a child perceives her or his reading performance in comparison with the performance of classmates. Social feedback (SF) includes direct or indirect input about reading from teachers, classmates, and family. The physiological states (PS) source refers to internal

feelings the child experiences during reading (Henk & Melnick, 1995). The RSPS also includes a question pertaining directly to reader self-concept (SC). This question was used to focus students' thinking about themselves as readers. In addition, a total score (TS) was calculated for this study.

The questionnaire was composed of 33 positively-stated items: one general item on reader self-concept to prompt children to think about their reading ability (question #1) (SC), and thirty-two items representing four scales. The four scales assessed were: progress (P), observational comparison (OC), social feedback (SF) and physiological states (PS). The answering device on the RSPS was changed from scales using words, from SA (Strongly Agree) - SD (Strongly Disagree), to corresponding Smiley faces (West & Sammons, 1991). This change occurred to better adapt to the capabilities of primary school children. The scoring device was based on a 5-point Likert scale system (5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = undecided, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree). Because the number of items varied according to the scale (SC = 1; P = 9; OC = 6; SF =9; PS = 8), the maximum scores differed for each scale (SC = 5; P = 45; OC = 30; SF = 45; PS = 40). The scale was scored by summing the raw scores for each scale. A total score was also computed for each child. Henk and Melnick (1995) provided a list of average mean scores for grade four children on the various scales of the self-perception questionnaire. Students in this study were at the end of grade three. Therefore, average mean scores for children in this study were compared with Henk and Melnick's average mean scores for grade four. Henk and Melnick's grade four students chosen for standardized scoring were similar in age to the grade three children who participated in

this study. Students in Henk and Melnick's (1995) large scale American sample were from urban, rural, and suburban school districts. Students in this study were from a rural area.

Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the Reader Self-Perception Scale (Table 3:1).

Table 3:1. Reliability analysis of the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS)

Reader Self-Perception Category	Alpha	Standardized Alpha
Self-concept (question #1) (SC)	-	-
Progress (P)	.85	.86
Observational comparison (OC)	.83	.83
Social feedback (SF)	.80	.79
Physiological states (PS)	.79	.81
Total score (TS)	.89	.90

Alpha reliabilities coefficients were also calculated for the questions used in this study to specifically examine children's perceptions of social feedback from family (F), peers (OK), and teachers (T). The category of family was used interchangeably with parents in this study since parents were generally the most important source of feedback

in the family unit for young children (Battle, 1982; Silvernail, 1985). The reliability results are given in Table 3:2. This information was collected through questions in the social feedback (SF) sub-category on the Reader Self-Perception Scale.

Table 3:2. Reliability analysis of children's perceptions of feedback from parents, peers, and teachers

Perceptions of Feedback	Alpha	Standardized Alpha
Parents (F)	.51	.56
Peers (OK)	.82	.82
Teachers (T)	.59	59

Test of Early Reading Ability-2 (TERA-2)

This norm-referenced test is a test of early reading achievement based on the work of many researchers in emergent literacy from the 1960's to present (Harp, 1996). The test was designed by Reid, Hresko, and Hammill (1989) based on current understanding of the early conceptions children have about reading. There are several purposes for using this test: identification of significant differences in individual's early reading development, documentation of children's progress in learning to read, to serve as a measure in research projects, and to suggest instructional practices (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1989, p. 5).

TERA-2 was used to measure three components of reading discovered by most young children: 1) constructing meaning from print (M), 2) knowledge of the alphabet (A), and 3) conventions of the written language (C). The ability to construct meaning was assessed by examining the child's awareness of print in environmental contexts, knowledge of relations among vocabulary items, and awareness of print in connected discourse. Knowledge of the alphabet was assessed through letter naming and oral reading. Knowledge of the conventions of written language were assessed through book handling tasks, response to other conventions of print, and proofreading (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill). An overall score (O) was also calculated for this study.

TERA-2 was composed of 46 questions representing the three categories listed above. The meaning category involved 16 questions, the alphabet category 15 questions, and the convention category 15 questions. Raw scores were calculated by allocating one point for correct answers and no points for incorrect answers and totaling the scores. Scoring procedures were determined by a correct or incorrect response. All items below the basal were scored as correct. A composite score for the three subcategories (alphabet, meaning, and conventions) was also used for statistical analysis.

Reliability scales for the TERA-2 were found in the TERA-2 manual and had a standard reliability of .89, a significant statistic that exceeded minimal requirements for reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was completed as an estimate of the reliability of the TERA-2 as presented by the TERA-2 manual. The TERA-2 manual also provided reliability analysis of the instrument for children, age's three through nine. Because this study was used with eight year-olds, a reliability coefficient for eight year-olds was

provided as a standardized alpha and is listed in Table 3. Concerning validity, the TERA-2 test showed evidence of content validity, criterion-related validity, construct validity, and item validity (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989).

A reliability analysis was performed on the TERA-2 based on the results found in this study. The reliability results were much lower for the Newfoundland context than those presented for the American context. The difference in reliability results may be due, in part, to the lower range and slightly higher means of Newfoundland children's scores in comparison to children's scores in the American context. Thus, the internal consistency of the test was lower for the Newfoundland context. The results are listed in Table 3:3.

Table 3:3. Reliability analysis of the Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA-2)

TERA-2 Category	Alpha	Standardized Alpha
TERA-2 (age 8) (American Context)	-	.92
Meaning (M)	.44	.46
Alphabet (A)	.38	.49
Conventions (C)	.49	.49
Overall (O)	.69	.67

Questionnaire for Parents

This questionnaire was designed by the researcher to measure parents' reading beliefs. The questionnaire consisted of 18 statements and involved four related categories: self-efficacy, parental involvement, achievement-related beliefs, and parents' expectations for their children's reading success. All four categories showed significant relationships to children's self-perceptions and children's academic achievement in previous research.

Each sentence of the questionnaire was a brief statement regarding parental reading beliefs. The responses to the statements of the questionnaire included one of five choices: SA = strongly agree, A = agree, U = undecided, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree. Responses on the questionnaire were scored based on the Likert scale system used for the RSPS (e.g., 5 points = strongly agree, 1 point = strongly disagree) and summed for each category. The Questionnaire for Parents was designed so that the greater parents' self-efficacy, involvement and expectations for their children's reading achievement, the higher parents' scored on this instrument. As well, parents whose achievement-related beliefs placed greater value on the role of effort in learning rather than on intelligence, scored higher on the Questionnaire for Parents.

A maximum likelihood factor analysis with varimax rotation was performed on the Questionnaire for Parents to show relationships among variables used in this instrument. After completion of the factor analysis, 10 of the 18 questions on the Questionnaire for Parents were examined in this study. This resulted in two factors

which are presented in Table 3:4. Factor one represented parents' self-efficacy beliefs for their children's reading achievement and factor two represented parents' achievement-related beliefs.

Since parents' involvement in their children's reading achievement strongly correlated with questions used to measure parents' self-efficacy, questions in these categories were combined and labeled as self-efficacy. Questions related to parental expectations for children's reading achievement did not significantly relate to each other or to any other category of the Questionnaire for Parents. Therefore, parental expectation questions were excluded from the analysis of this study. A total of seven questions were now labeled in the self-efficacy category (factor one), and three questions composed the achievement-related beliefs' category (factor two). The Cronbach's alpha for factor one was .78 and for factor two was .69.

Procedure

Before beginning research for this study, permission was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of Memorial University of Newfoundland (Appendix A). School and school board permission for the administering of the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) and the TERA-2 to children was approved as part of the SORT program (Appendix B). A letter was also sent to parents explaining the purpose of the study and a request for parents to complete a questionnaire (Appendix C).

Table 3:4. Factor analysis: Factor loadings for parents' self-efficacy and their achievement-related beliefs

	Factor 1	Factor 2
Self-efficacy beliefs		
I often tell my child about the benefits of being a good reader.	.816	
I think I can help my child become a better reader.	.705	
I pay close attention to the teacher's opinion of how well my child is reading.	.609	
As a parent/guardian, I am important in affecting my child's reading development.	.601	
My child listens to my suggestions for his or her reading.	.584	
My child and I seldom find time to read together (reverse scored).	.548	
I read to my child more often than most parents.	.441	
Variance (%)	**27.9**	
Achievement-related beliefs		
Children are good readers because they have a natural ability (reverse scored).		.732
Children who perform well in school have the 'brains' for the work (reverse scored).		.730
Intelligence is a more important factor than effort for a child to become a good reader (reversed scored).		.533
Variance (%)		**14.5**

Factor loadings less than .40 have been omitted for clarity

Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS)

The researcher administered the RSPS to each of the four grade three classes involved in this study as a whole. Before administering this questionnaire, the purpose of the questionnaire was explained to students. It was emphasized to each student that he or she should be as honest as possible in answering the questions and that there were no right or wrong answers. An example was presented to students so that students correctly understood the answering device. Each question was read carefully and explained so children understood what they should do. The questionnaire took students approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

Test of Early Reading Ability-2 (TERA-2)

The researcher administered the TERA-2 to students individually. Before administering the test, the researcher took several minutes to establish rapport with each child. This standardized reading test took approximately fifteen minutes for each student to complete. Basals and ceilings were used to shorten test time. The testing procedure began with the item that corresponded to the child's age as presented by the TERA manual (the basal). Children were tested until five consecutive items were missed (the ceiling). Most students completed approximately 22 of the 46 items on the TERA-2. Directions for the administering of each question were allocated in a box at the top of each page in the TERA-2 picture book. The researcher praised and encouraged each child consistently.

Questionnaire for Parents

The questionnaire for parents took approximately ten minutes for parents to complete. It was sent home to both parents (where applicable) by their children. The questionnaire was composed of 18 items, each a brief statement regarding parents' reading beliefs for helping improve their children's reading achievement (Appendix D). Parents were asked to complete the questionnaire independent of their spouse so that gender differences could be accounted for. As well, parents were asked to return the questionnaire, sealed in the envelope provided, to their classroom teacher within one week from the date of issue of the questionnaire.

Research Design

A correlational design was chosen for this study. The sample chosen was not a random one and there was no control group. This study investigated the relationship among parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perception, children's reading achievement and gender. According to Keppel and Zedeck (1989), correlational designs have been traditionally used to study correlations "present and existing in nature". Moreover, correlational research was used to precisely study those phenomena that the experimenter had not learned to control or could never hope to control (p. 27). Gay (1996) claimed that relationship studies were conducted in an attempt to gain insight into factors or variables that were related to complex variables such as academic achievement, motivation, and self-concept.

Chapter IV

Analysis of Data

Introduction

Chapter IV describes an analysis of the data to determine whether or not significant relationships existed among parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions and children's reading achievement. Descriptive statistics were computed for all three instruments used in this study [Questionnaire for Parents, Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS), and the Test of Early Reading Ability-2 (TERA-2)] to describe parents' and children's group responses on the instruments. T-tests were used to examine whether or not there were significant differences in the means of parents' and children's responses on the instruments when the gender of parents and children was being examined. Pearson correlations were used to examine relationships among measures of parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions, children's reading achievement and parents' and children's gender by establishing levels of association among the Questionnaire for Parents, the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS), the Test of Early Reading Ability-2 (TERA-2), and gender.

Parents' Reading Beliefs, Children's Reader Self-perceptions, Parents' and Children's Gender

A significant negative relationship was found between parents' achievement-related beliefs and children's self-concept as reader ($r = -.30$, $p < .05$) which suggested

that parents, who believed that the role of intelligence was more important than the role of effort in children's achievement, had children who evaluated themselves more highly as readers. No significant relationship existed between parents' self-efficacy beliefs and children's reader self-perceptions. However, when the gender of parents was examined, a significant positive relationship was found between mothers' self-efficacy and children's self-concept as reader ($r = .35$, $p < .05$). This indicated that the more mothers' believed in their ability to help improve children's reading achievement, the stronger children believed in their reading ability.

Significant negative relationships were found between mothers' achievement-related beliefs and children's self-concept as reader ($r = -.36$, $p < .05$), fathers' self-efficacy beliefs and children's observational comparison score ($r = -.46$, $p < .05$), and fathers' self-efficacy beliefs and children's total reader self-perception score ($r = -.34$, $p < .05$) (see Table 4:1). This suggested that mothers who believed more in role of intelligence than the role of effort for children's reading achievement, had children who had stronger beliefs in their ability as readers. The findings listed above also suggested that the more fathers' believed in their ability to help improve children's reading achievement, the less competent children felt about their reading in comparison to their peers, and the less competent children felt overall in perceptions of their reading ability.

Moderately strong relationships existed between parents' reading beliefs and children's reader self-perceptions when the gender of parents and children were examined separately. A significant positive relationship was found between mothers' self-efficacy beliefs and girls' self-concept as reader ($r = .50$, $p < .05$) which indicated

that mothers, with stronger beliefs in themselves to help improve girls' reading achievement, had daughters with higher perceptions of themselves as readers. Significant negative relationships existed between fathers' self-efficacy and boys' ($r = -.53$, $p < .05$) and girls' ($r = -.44$, $p < .05$) observational comparison score. These findings suggested that the stronger fathers' believed in their ability to help improve children's reading achievement, the lower boys and girls evaluated themselves as readers in comparison to other children. Or rather, the higher boys and girls evaluated their reading in comparison to their peers, the lower fathers believed in their ability to help improve children's reading achievement. A significant negative relationship existed between mothers' achievement-related beliefs and boys' self-concept as reader ($r = -.51$, $p < .05$). Therefore, mothers' who valued the role of intelligence more than the role of effort in children's reading achievement, had boys with stronger perceptions of themselves as readers.

A negative correlation existed between fathers' self-efficacy beliefs and boys' perceptions of social feedback (a total score of feedback from parents, teachers, and peers) ($r = -.56$, $p < .05$). This result implied that the more fathers believed in their ability to help improve children's achievement, the less positive boys perceived feedback about their reading from significant others. There was a particularly strong negative correlation between fathers' self-efficacy beliefs for improving children's reading achievement and boys' perceptions of feedback from their parents ($r = -.73$, $p < .05$). This outcome suggested that the stronger fathers believed in their ability to improve children's reading achievement, the less positive boys perceived feedback from

Table 4:1. Correlations among parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions, children's reading achievement, and parents' and children's gender

		SC	OC	SF	F	T	OK	PS	P	TS	T(A)	T(C)	T(M)	T(O)
(Parents) SE	(c)	.07	-.17	-.13	-.02	-.04	-.09	-.04	.09	-.07	-.05	.09	.09	.01
(Parents) ACH	(c)	-.30*	-.17	-.07	-.01	-.08	-.05	.02	.11	-.06	-.18	-.15	-.08	-.14
(Moth) SE	(c)	.35*	.13	.04	.14	.13	.08	.13	.15	.19	-.13	.20	.24	.10
	(g)	.50*	.05	.08	.26	.27	.23	.04	-.02	.16	-.19	.10	.21	.00
	(b)	.12	.26	-.03	-.04	-.04	-.01	.29	.36	.27	-.10	.41	.31	.32
(Moth) ACH	(c)	-.36*	-.23	.01	-.06	-.06	.06	.05	.12	-.04	-.26	-.23	-.16	-.21
	(g)	-.24	-.23	-.06	.17	-.16	-.25	-.06	.10	-.15	.10	-.23	-.21	-.16
	(b)	-.51*	-.24	.12	-.37	.06	.28	.18	.16	.06	-.46*	-.23	-.09	-.30
(Fath) SE	(c)	-.21	-.46*	-.27	-.18	-.21	-.26	-.20	.05	-.34*	.03	-.02	-.04	-.08
	(g)	-.15	-.44*	-.14	.12	-.08	-.17	-.22	.14	-.25	-.33	-.12	-.10	-.14
	(b)	-.42	-.53*	-.56*	-.73*	-.43	-.44	-.24	-.19	-.52*	.06	.15	.02	.01
(Fath) ACH	(c)	-.24	.09	-.19	.04	-.12	-.26	-.02	.08	-.09	-.09	-.06	.06	-.06
	(g)	-.28	.01	-.07	.24	.06	-.15	.08	.24	.09	.01	.02	.11	-.01
	(b)	-.25	-.23	-.41	-.28	-.35	-.42	-.16	-.20	-.33	-.22	-.25	-.02	-.22

Note: c = children, g = girls, b = boys, SE = parental efficacy, ACH = parents' achievement-related beliefs, moth = mothers' score, fath = fathers' score, SC = children's self-concept as reader (question #1), OC = observational comparison, SF = social feedback, F = feedback from parents, T = feedback from teachers, OK = feedback from peers, PS = physiological states, P = progress, TS = total score (reader self-perceptions), T(A) = alphabet score, T(C) = convention score, T(M) = meaning score, T(O) = overall score (reading achievement), * $p < .05$

parents about their reading. Indeed, fathers' self-efficacy beliefs and boys' total score of self-perceptions as readers were negatively related to each other ($r = -.52$, $p < .05$) (see Table 4:1).

Parents' Reading Beliefs, Children's Reading Achievement, Parents' and Children's Gender

There was no significant relationship between parents' reading beliefs and children's reading achievement (see Table 4:1) and there was no significant relationship between mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs and children's reading achievement. However, a significant relationship existed between mothers' and fathers' reading beliefs and boys' and girls' reading achievement. There was a negative correlation between mothers' achievement beliefs and boys' alphabet scores on the reading test ($r = -.46$, $p < .05$). Therefore, the more mothers believed in the role of intelligence for children's reading achievement, the higher boys scored on the alphabetic component of the reading test. Or rather, the greater boys' knowledge of the alphabet and its functions, the more mothers attributed children's reading achievement to natural ability. Fathers' beliefs for their children's reading achievement did not significantly correlate with either girls' or boys' reading achievement.

Parents' Beliefs for their Children's Reading Achievement, Parents' and Children's Gender

There were no significant differences in mothers' and fathers' beliefs for their children's reading achievement. The analysis showed no significant differences in mothers' and fathers' self-efficacy beliefs for helping improve children's reading achievement ($t(87) = 1.81$, $p = .07$). Nevertheless, those differences did approach significance and the effect size between the means of parents' self-efficacy beliefs for their children's reading achievement showed a weak to moderate difference (ES = .38). Mothers had higher mean efficacy scores than did fathers for their children's achievement. Parents' achievement-related beliefs did not significantly differ ($t(85) = -.88$, $p > .05$).

There were no significant differences in parents' reading beliefs for children's reading achievement when the gender of children was examined. The analysis showed that parents' self-efficacy beliefs for children's reading achievement did not significantly differ for boys and girls ($t(88) = .50$, $p > .05$). As well, parents' achievement-related beliefs for girls' and boys' reading achievement did not significantly differ ($t(86) = .41$, $p > .05$).

There was one significant difference in parents' reading beliefs for children's reading achievement when parents' and children's gender was examined. Mothers' and fathers' self-efficacy beliefs for boys' reading achievement significantly varied ($t(35) = 2.37$, $p < .05$) and this difference was a relatively large one (ES = .78). Mothers' mean

self-efficacy score was significantly higher than fathers' mean score for boys' reading achievement. This indicated that mothers had stronger beliefs in their ability to help improve boys' reading achievement than did fathers.

The analysis did not show a significant difference in mothers' and fathers' achievement-related beliefs for boys' reading achievement ($t(34) = -.06$, $p > .05$) which suggested that fathers and mothers had similar beliefs in the role of effort and intelligence for boys' reading success. The analysis did not show a significant difference in mothers' and fathers' self-efficacy beliefs ($t(50) = .49$, $p > .05$) or their achievement-related beliefs ($t(49) = -1.10$, $p > .05$) for girls' reading achievement (see Table 4:2).

Table 4:2. Descriptive Statistics: Parents' self-efficacy beliefs for children's reading achievement, parents' and children's gender

	Girls		Boys		Children	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Moth	4.27	(.47)	4.35	(.40)	4.31	(.44)
Fath	4.21	(.50)	4.01	(.48)	4.13	(.49)
Parents	4.24	(.48)	4.19	(.46)	-	

Note: **M** = mean score, **SD** = standard deviation

Descriptive Statistics: Parents' achievement-related beliefs for children's reading achievement, parents' and children's gender

	Girls		Boys		Children	
	M	**SD**	**M**	**SD**	**M**	**SD**
Moth	3.45	(.84)	3.48	(.88)	3.47	(.85)
Fath	3.69	(.71)	3.50	(.86)	3.62	(.76)
Parents	3.58	(.78)	3.50	(.85)	-	

Note: **M** = mean score, **SD** = standard deviation

Children's Reader Self-perceptions, Reading Achievement and Gender

The analysis showed significant relationships among children's reader self-perceptions, their reading achievement, and gender. A moderate correlation ($r = .37$, $p < .05$) was found between children's self-perceptions of progress and their construction of meaning scores on the reading test. This implied that children who perceived themselves as having gained in their reading achievement from past performance, had a greater ability to attribute meaning to their reading. Moreover, a significant relationship ($r = .29$, $p < .05$) was found between children's self-perceptions of progress and children's overall achievement in reading. Overall achievement included a total of children's alphabet, meaning and convention scores on the TERA-2.

When children's gender was examined, there was a moderately strong correlation between girls' observational comparison scores on the RSPS and their alphabet scores on

the TERA-2 ($r = .45$, $p < .05$). This suggested that the more girls perceived their reading in comparison to their peers to be positive, the more knowledge girls had of the alphabet and its functions. There was a significant relationship between girls' perceptions of progress scores and their construction of meaning scores on the reading test ($r = .37$, $p < .05$). As well, boys' perceptions of progress significantly correlated with their

Table 4:3. Correlations among children's reader self-perceptions, reading achievement and gender

		SC	OC	SF	(F)	(T)	(OK)	PS	P	TS
TERA(A)	c	.18	.16	.07	.13	.05	.01	-.06	.06	.09
	g	-.11	.45*	.05	.13	.00	-.01	.11	-.06	.19
	b	.28	.06	-.04	.09	-.03	-.09	-.27	.11	-.04
TERA(C)	c	.13	.20	.05	.21	.18	-.14	.04	.20	.18
	g	.07	.22	.12	.28	.24	-.15	-.05	.20	.19
	b	.20	.19	-.07	.07	.06	-.19	.09	.20	.14
TERA(M)	c	.11	.14	.04	.06	.11	-.04	-.02	.37*	.20
	g	.15	.15	.20	.10	.24	.12	.03	.37*	.29
	b	.07	.14	-.12	.02	-.03	-.20	-.05	.40*	.12
TERA(O)	c	.17	.22	.07	.19	.17	-.11	.01	.29*	.21
	g	.10	.25	.17	.25	.27	-.06	-.02	.28	.26
	b	.23	.19	-.10	.07	.02	-.22	-.03	.30	.13

Note: c = children, g = girls, b = boys, SC = children's self-concept as reader (question #1), OC = observational comparison, SF = social feedback, F = feedback from parents, T = feedback from teachers, OK = feedback from peers, PS = physiological states, P = progress, TS = total score (reader self-perceptions), T(A) = alphabet score, T(C) = convention score, T(M) = meaning score, T(O) = overall score (reading achievement), * $p < .05$

construction of meaning on the TERA-2 ($r = .40$, $p < .05$) (see Table 4:3).

There were significant differences in boys' and girls' reader self-perceptions. Boys' and girls' self-perceptions significantly varied in their perception of social feedback ($t(61) = 2.15$, $p < .05$) (ES = .55). Girls had significantly higher perceptions of social feedback than did boys. The social feedback category included three separate measures: children's perceptions of feedback from parents, teachers, and peers. Although there were no significant differences in boys' and girls' perceptions of social feedback when this category was divided into separate measures, the difference in boys' and girls' perceptions of reading feedback from their peers was marginally insignificant ($t(61) = 1.84$, $p = .07$). The effect size was .47, which suggested a moderately substantial difference in the mean scores of boys and girls perceptions of feedback from their peers about their reading. Girls had more positive perceptions of feedback from peers about their reading than did boys (see Table 4:4).

Despite no significant difference in children's perceptions of their teachers' regard for their reading ($t(61) = 1.80$, $p = .08$), the difference in boys' and girls' perceptions of feedback for their reading did approach significance. A moderately substantial difference existed in the means of boys' and girls' perceptions of teachers' regard for their reading (ES = .46). For this approaching significant difference, girls had a higher mean score than did boys. The close to significant differences in children's perceptions of feedback from peers and teachers for their reading may explain the significant difference found in boys' and girls' overall perceptions of feedback from significant others for their reading.

Boys and girls significantly differed in their physiological states as readers ($t(61) = 2.17$, $p < .05$) (ES = .41). This result indicated that girls felt better internally when they read than did boys. There was only one significant difference in children's reading achievement when gender was examined. Boys' and girls' mean alphabet scores on the reading test significantly differed ($t(63) = 2.95$, $p < .05$) (ES = .74). The difference in mean scores for boys' and girls was a particularly strong one. Girls scored higher than did boys on this measure of reading achievement (see Table 4:4).

Summary of Findings

The following are a list of the significant findings found in this study:

1. Parents' achievement-related beliefs (ACH) and children's self-concept as reader (SC) ($r = -.30$, $p < .05$).

2. Mothers' self-efficacy beliefs (SE) and children's self-concept as reader (SC) ($r = .35$, $p < .05$).

3. Mothers' achievement-related beliefs (ACH) and children's self-concept as reader (SC) ($r = -.36$, $p < .05$).

4. Fathers' self-efficacy beliefs (SE) and children's observational comparison scores (OC) ($r = -.46$, $p < .05$).

5. Fathers' self-efficacy beliefs (SE) and children's reader self-perception total score (TS) ($r = -.34$, $p < .05$).

Table 4:4. Descriptive Statistics and t-test - Children's reader self-perceptions, reading achievement, and gender

	Girls		Boys		t-test	
	M	SD	M	SD	t (df)	p
SC	4.69	(.67)	4.52	(.70)	t (61) = 1.01	.32
OC	22.31	(4.80)	22.37	(5.00)	t (61) = -.05	.96
SF	39.44	(4.10)	36.93	(5.18)	t (61) = 2.15	.04
F	14.31	(1.45)	13.89	(1.34)	t (61) = 1.17	.25
T	13.06	(1.77)	12.19	(2.06)	t (61) = 1.80	.08
OK	12.03	(2.04)	10.85	(3.05)	t (61) = 1.84	.07
PS	34.81	(4.45)	32.00	(5.83)	t (61) = 2.17	.03
P	41.25	(5.54)	40.48	(5.72)	t (61) = .54	.59
TS	142.50	(12.97)	136.30	(16.56)	t (61) = 1.67	.10
TERA(A)	13.94	(.23)	13.59	(.68)	t (63) = 2.95	.00
TERA(C)	13.31	(1.89)	13.07	(1.69)	t (63) = .53	.60
TERA(M)	14.81	(1.06)	14.79	(.90)	t (63) = .05	.96
TERA(O)	42.06	(2.68)	41.45	(2.47)	t (63) = .94	.35

Note: M = mean score, SD = standard deviation, t = t-statistic, p = probability, df = degrees of freedom, SC = children's self-concept as reader (question #1), OC = observational comparison, SF = social feedback, F = feedback from parents, T = feedback from teachers, OK = feedback from peers, PS = physiological states, P = progress, TS = total score (reader self-perceptions), TERA(A) = alphabet score, TERA(M) = meaning score, TERA(C) = convention score, TERA(O) = overall score (reading achievement)

6. Mothers' self-efficacy beliefs (SE) and girls' self-concept as reader (SC) ($r = .50$, $p < .05$).

7. Fathers' self-efficacy beliefs (SE) and girls' observational comparison scores (OC) ($r = -.44$, $p < .05$).

8. Mothers' achievement-related beliefs (ACH) and boys' self-concept as reader (SC) ($r = -.51$, $p < .05$).

9. Fathers' self-efficacy beliefs (SE) and boys' observational comparison scores (OC) ($r = -.53$, $p < .05$).

10. Fathers' self-efficacy beliefs (SE) and boys' perceptions of social feedback (SF) ($r = -.56$, $p < .05$).

11. Fathers' self-efficacy beliefs (SE) and boys' perception of their parents feedback about their reading (F) ($r = -.73$, $p < .05$).

12. Fathers' self-efficacy beliefs (SE) and boys' total score (TS) of reader self-perceptions ($r = -.52$, $p < .05$).

13. Mothers' achievement-related beliefs (ACH) and boys' alphabet scores (A) on the TERA-2 ($r = -.46$, $p < .05$).

14. Mothers' and fathers' self-efficacy beliefs (SE) for boys' reading achievement ($t(35) = 2.37$, $p < .05$).

15. Children's self-perceptions of progress (P) and their construction of meaning (TERA-M) ($r = .37$, $p < .05$).

16. Children's self-perceptions of progress (P) and their overall reading achievement (TERA-O) ($r = .29$, $p < .05$).

17. Girls' observational comparison scores (OC) and their alphabet scores (A) on the TERA-2 ($r = .45$, $p < .05$).

18. Girls' perceptions of progress (P) and their construction of meaning scores (M) on the TERA-2 ($r = .37$, $p < .05$).

19. Boys' perceptions of progress (P) and their construction of meaning scores (M) on the TERA-2 ($r = .40$, $p < .05$).

20. Boys' and girls' perceptions of social feedback (SF) ($t(61) = 2.15$, $p < .05$).

21. Boys' and girls' physiological states (PS) as readers ($t(61) = 2.17$, $p < .05$).

22. Boys' and girls' alphabet scores (A) on the TERA-2 ($t(63) = 2.95$, $p < .05$).

Chapter V

Summary, Findings and Conclusions, Discussion, Educational Implications, and Recommendations for Further Research

Introduction

Chapter V presents a summary and discussion of the findings revealed by the statistical analysis of data collected during the investigation. Educational implications have been drawn from the findings and recommendations have been delineated for further research.

Summary

The research literature has generally indicated positive relationships among parents' reading beliefs (self-efficacy), children's reader self-perceptions, and children's reading achievement. The literature also indicated that parents who valued the role of effort more than the role of intelligence in children's reading development, generally had children with higher reader self-perceptions and reading achievement.

The research literature, in its examination of boys' and girls' reader self-perceptions, tended to show that girls had higher reader self-perceptions than did boys. Studies also indicated that students with positive reader self-perceptions exhibited higher reading achievement levels. When research showed differences in boys' and girls' reading achievement, girls were often favored.

There have been few empirical studies conducted on the relationship between parents' beliefs and children' academic self-perceptions. Moreover, few studies have examined the role of parents' and children's gender in relation to parents' beliefs for their children's reading achievement. Little research has also been carried out in the area of young children's self-perceptions. Perhaps the latter finding was owing to the skeptical notion of young children's ability to differentiate their self-concept (Harter, 1986).

Findings and Conclusions

Parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions, parents' and children's gender

Surprisingly, the relationship between parents' self-efficacy beliefs for their children's reading achievement and children's self-perceptions as readers was not found to be significant. Previous studies have shown a positive relationship between these variables (e.g., Bandura, 1997; Zimmerman et al., 1992). There was one significant relationship between parents' achievement-related beliefs and children's self-concept as reader. This relationship was a negative one. Thus parents, who believed that intelligence was more important than the role of effort for children's reading achievement, had children with higher self-concepts as readers. Since this was a correlational study, there is another way of interpreting the significant relationship between parents' achievement-related beliefs and children's reader self-concept. Children with higher self-concepts as readers had parents who viewed the role of

intelligence as more important than the role of effort for reading achievement. This finding was also unexpected considering studies have claimed that parents who viewed the role of effort as being more important than natural ability for achievement, were more likely to become involved in children's academic activities and help increase children's sense of efficacy and achievement (Bandura, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

When the gender of parents was examined in this study, there was a significant positive relationship between mothers' self-efficacy beliefs and children's reader self-concept. Parental involvement questions were included in the self-efficacy measure on the Questionnaire for Parents. A study by Grolnick, Ryan, and Deci (1991) has shown that maternal involvement was positively associated with children's perceived competence. It is possible that mothers in this study were more involved than were fathers in reading activities with their children. This may have contributed to mothers' higher self-efficacy score than fathers' score. Children's responses on the question pertaining directly to reader self-concept were very positive. Mothers higher self-efficacy mean score than fathers' score related to children's reader self-concept. In previous studies (e.g., Bandura et al., 1997; Zimmerman et al., 1992), parental self-efficacy has been shown to positively relate to children's self-perceptions.

A significant negative relationship existed between fathers' self-efficacy beliefs and children's observational comparison scores. Thus, fathers' self-efficacy beliefs negatively related to how children perceived their reading performance in comparison with the performance of classmates. Fathers' self-efficacy scores were generally lower than mothers' self-efficacy scores for their children's achievement, and children's

observational comparison scores were above the standard average mean according to studies conducted in the United States (Henk & Melnick, 1995). These results suggested that fathers believed less in their ability to help improve children's reading achievement when children had stronger perceptions of their reading performance in comparison to other children. Perhaps children, with high views of their reading performance, revealed to fathers that their help was not as necessary for reading success. It may also have been the case that some fathers, with high self-efficacy beliefs, conveyed high expectations for their children's reading achievement. Therefore, some children may have felt less assured in perceptions of their reading performance, in comparison to peers, when fathers had high self-efficacy beliefs in their ability to help improve children's reading achievement.

There was a significant negative relationship between fathers' self-efficacy beliefs and children's overall reader self-perceptions. This result was contradictory to studies on parents' self-efficacy and children's self-perceptions which showed a positive relationship between these variables (e.g., Bandura, 1996; Zimmerman et al., 1992). There was no significant relationship between children's perceptions of parents' feedback on their reading and fathers' self-efficacy for helping improve children's reading achievement.

When parents' and children's gender were examined in the relationship between parents' reading beliefs and children's reader self-perceptions, mothers' self-efficacy beliefs had a significant positive relationship with girls' self-concept as readers. Fathers' self-efficacy beliefs for children's reading achievement negatively correlated with boys'

and girls' perceptions of themselves as readers in comparison to other children. Fathers' self-efficacy mean score for children's reading achievement was lower than mothers' score, and boys' and girls' perceptions of their reading were above average mean norms presented by Henk and Melnick (1995). Research on parental efficacy beliefs in relation to children's reader self-perceptions and achievement has received scant empirical attention (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Murphey, 1992; Wagner & Phillips, 1992). Research examining the role of gender in relation to these variables has received even less attention.

Fathers' self-efficacy beliefs had many significant negative relationships with various aspects of boys' reader self-perceptions. Fathers' self-efficacy beliefs negatively correlated with boys' perceptions of social feedback. Social feedback included a total score of children's perceptions of feedback from teachers, peers, and parents. The negative relationship was especially surprising because of the strength of the negative correlation between fathers' self-efficacy beliefs and boys' perception of feedback from parents about their reading. Fathers' self-efficacy mean score was lower for boys' reading achievement than for girls' achievement. Furthermore, fathers' self-efficacy mean score was significantly lower for boys' reading achievement than was mothers' self-efficacy mean score for boys' reading achievement. Boys' self-perceptions of feedback from parents for their reading were above American standard averages (Henk & Melnick, 1995). Hence, the relationship between boys' perceptions of feedback from parents and fathers' efficacy beliefs for their children's reading achievement was a negative one. It is possible that fathers' low self-efficacy beliefs and perhaps less

involvement in helping their sons achieve in reading, conveyed more acceptance for boys' current reading levels. Therefore, boys would have high self-perceptions as readers because of less pressure to succeed in reading from their fathers. McClelland, Atkinson, Clark, and Lowell's (1953) study indicated that the more sons' felt loved and accepted by their fathers, the lower was their need for achievement. It is possible that boys may have higher perceptions of their reading performance because of contentment with their current reading achievement level due to lower expectations from fathers.

Since this was a correlational study, the negative relationship between fathers' self-efficacy beliefs and boys' self-perceptions as readers revealed that the stronger fathers' believed in their ability to help boys achieve in reading, and perhaps the more they were involved in their boys' reading development, the lower were boys' perceptions of themselves as readers. It is possible that fathers' involvement with boys' reading conveyed high expectations for their sons, which related to lower reader self-perceptions for some boys. Such findings between fathers' expectations and their children's self-perceptions have been reported by Legge (1994) in her study of grade two students and their parents in urban Newfoundland. It is also probable that fathers had stronger beliefs in their ability to help improve boys' reading achievement when boys had lower perceptions of their reading performance. O'Sullivan's (1992) study of grade's three, six, and nine students showed that teacher efficacy was higher for boys' reading achievement, despite teacher's beliefs that boys' reading performance was lower than that of girls.

Mothers' achievement-related beliefs were significantly related to boys' self-concept as readers. This relationship was a negative one. Therefore, mothers who

viewed the role of intelligence as more important than the role of effort in children s learning, had sons with higher self-concepts as readers. Boys with lower reader self-concepts had mothers who viewed effort as more important than intelligence for achievement. A study by Okagaki and Sternberg (1993) of parents' beliefs and primary children's school performance revealed that Anglo-American parents placed more importance on innate cognitive abilities while Asian-American parents believed working hard (i.e., exercising effort) was part of what it meant to be intelligent. Mothers, in this study, scored in favor of intelligence as a natural ability on the Questionnaire for Parents for both children in comparison to fathers' scores on the Questionnaire. Clearly, mothers believed that boys who gave less effort to achieve in reading were better readers than boys who exercised effort to achieve in reading.

Parents' reading beliefs, children's reading achievement, parents' and children's gender

There were no significant relationships between parents' reading beliefs and children's achievement. Scores on the standardized reading test did not vary considerably because many students had reached the ceiling of this test, despite the test's reliability up to age nine. The test scores may have contributed to the insignificant relationship between parents' reading beliefs and children's reading achievement. Low variability often suppresses the number of correlations in a study. Regardless of the little variation among children's test results, results of this study were surprising since

previous studies have shown a positive relationship between parents' reading beliefs and children's achievement (e.g., Bandura, 1996; Halle et al., 1997).

There was no significant relationship between parents' reading beliefs and children's reading achievement when parents' gender was examined in this study. However, there was a significant correlation between these variables when the gender of parents and their children were examined. Mothers' achievement-related beliefs negatively correlated with boys' alphabet scores on the reading test. Therefore, when mothers' believed that natural ability was more important than the role of effort in children's reading success, boys' scored higher on the alphabetic component of the reading test. Boys' alphabetic knowledge may have influenced mothers' reading beliefs for their sons. Boys, who achieved higher in their knowledge of the alphabet and its functions, had mothers' who attributed their reading achievement more to natural ability rather than to the role of effort. Perhaps mothers viewed children's effort in reading as indicating a lack of natural ability for success in reading. Therefore, the higher children's reading achievement, the more mothers attributed their success to natural ability.

Parents' beliefs for their children's reading achievement, parents' and children's gender

The results of a t-test revealed a significant difference in parents' beliefs for their children's reading achievement only when parents' and children's gender were examined. Fathers' and mothers' self-efficacy beliefs significantly differed for helping improve boys' reading achievement. Mothers had stronger beliefs than did fathers in their ability to help

improve boys' reading achievement. It is possible that mothers were more involved with boys' in reading activities than were fathers since involvement questions were included in the self-efficacy measure on the Questionnaire for Parents. Research findings have shown that mothers were more involved than were fathers in children's education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

Research was rather limited in the examination of parents' gender to parents' beliefs for helping improve children's reading achievement. Nevertheless, Hoover-Dempsey et al. (1992) reported no significant variations in parents' beliefs, based on their gender, for helping improve children's school outcomes. This study involved 390 parents of children in kindergarten through fourth grade in an urban setting.

O'Sullivan (1992) found no differences in parents' sense of efficacy for helping improve young boys' and girls' reading achievement. Furthermore, O'Sullivan found that parents did not distinguish between sons and daughters in the role of effort (or the role of insufficient effort) as a cause of reading problems. These results were similar to this present study which showed no significant difference in parents' self-efficacy or their achievement-related beliefs for boys' and girls' reading achievement. The gender of parents was not examined in her study.

Children's reader self-perceptions, reading achievement and gender

The results of this study supported previous studies (e.g., Bandura et al., 1996; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1990) that concluded children's self-perceptions were related to their academic achievement. Students' self-perceptions of progress were related to

children's overall reading achievement. A significant relationship also existed between children's self-perceptions of progress and their construction of meaning scores on the reading test. Progress was defined as one's perception of present reading performance compared with his or her past performance (Henk & Melnick, 1995). According to Reid, Hresko, and Hammill (1989), children's construction of meaning related to the background knowledge that was brought to reading. Therefore, it was not surprising that children's perceptions of past performance and their background knowledge related to each other in this study.

According to Bandura (1977) and Gorrell (1990), performance accomplishments or experiences of personal mastery were the most powerful sources of personal information and led to greater expectations of mastery and success. Similarly, Dweck and Elliot (1983) and Nicholls (1984) claimed that competence and satisfaction were defined in terms of progress and effort for young children. They claimed that competence was later evaluated through social comparison norms. In contrast, Wigfield and Eccles' (1992) research findings claimed that children's previous performance may not be a strong antecedent during the elementary school years. They claimed that by the end of the elementary school years and beyond, children's beliefs and their performance histories may be the strongest antecedents of current beliefs. Results of this present study have shown that young children's perceptions of how they performed in reading (i.e., their progress) were related to their overall reading achievement.

When gender was examined in the relationship between children's reader self-perceptions and their reading achievement, girls' perception of their reading ability, in

comparison with their classmates, significantly correlated with their alphabet scores on the reading test. Indeed, it was not surprising that girls' perceptions of their reading in comparison to their peers, as well as their perceptions of progress, were significantly related to their reading test results. "Social comparison with one's agemates reinstates the diagnosticity of rate of progress and level of achievement in the judgement of personal capabilities" (Phillips & Zimmerman, 1990, p. 52). In contrast, Bandura (1997) claimed that young children make little use of social comparison information in the evaluation of their capabilities.

Children's reader self-perceptions

Females showed higher mean scores on all measures of the reader self-perception scale, except for the measure of observational comparison. Both males and females had means for this measure of almost equal value, with boys scoring slightly higher than did girls. Therefore, boys, despite their lower perceptions than girls of feedback from significant others about their reading, maintained positive views of their own reading performance, especially in comparison to their peers.

Significant gender differences existed in children's self-perceptions of social feedback, with girls scoring higher on this measure. Social feedback included a total measure of children's perceptions of feedback from parents, teachers, and peers. Particularly, in the social feedback category, an approaching significant difference existed between boys' and girls' perceptions of feedback on their reading from other children and their teachers. The effect size showed a moderate difference in boys' and

girls' mean scores of peer (ES = .47) and teacher (ES = .46) feedback. Girls' mean scores were higher than were boys' scores. Oldford-Matchim's (1998) research revealed a significant difference in girls' and boys' perceptions of their classmates' views of their reading. Girls had more positive perceptions of classmates' regard for their reading. Some studies have also shown that girls had more positive perceptions of feedback from teachers on their reading (Samuels, 1977; Wallbrown, Levine, & Englin, 1981). Samuels (1977) found that more females than males perceived their teachers' reactions to their reading to be positive.

There was a significant difference in the internal feelings children experienced while reading (children's physiological states (PS) measure on the RSPS). Emotionally, girls felt better as readers. Emotional arousal experienced during reading relates to children's attitudes toward reading. Smith (1990) defined reading attitude as "a state of mind, accompanied by feelings and emotions, that make reading more or less probable" (p. 215). The results of this study were similar to other studies that examined children's attitude and gender. Brown (1992) found that grade two boys had less positive reading attitudes than did girls. A study by Wallbrown, Levine, and Englin (1981) of grade five and six students revealed that girls had more positive attitudes toward reading than did boys. Byrne's (1993) research also showed differences in grade six students' attitudes toward reading. The differences favored females in her study.

It has been claimed that higher self-perceptions by females may be the outcome of a cultural phenomenon where reading was considered a more 'female activity' (Preston, 1962). Nevertheless, boys were able to maintain positive perceptions of their own

reading ability, especially in comparison to other children in this study, despite less positive perceptions of feedback on their reading from their teachers and peers.

Children's reading achievement

Girls' mean scores on all sections of the reading test were higher than boys' scores. These results were similar to the self-perception scale where girls scored higher than did boys on most aspects of the scale.

A significant difference existed between boys' and girls' TERA alphabet scores. Girls scored higher than did boys on this component of the reading test. Alphabet scores related to children's graphophonemic knowledge. According to Reid, Hresko, and Hammill (1989), parents who read to their children enhanced the development of children's graphophonemic knowledge. Thus, parents' involvement with young children's reading development may be related to differences in children's alphabet scores. Perhaps girls had more literacy-related experiences than did boys which developed this component of learning to read. A longitudinal study by Stevenson and Newman (1986) showed that young children's development of letter names and ability to associate visual and verbal stimuli was related to their high school reading achievement. Indeed, the alphabetic component of reading was an important one for long term reading success.

Oldford-Matchim's (1998) longitudinal research showed a significant difference in the alphabetic knowledge of boys and girls involved in this study when they entered school. Girls scored significantly higher on this measure of reading achievement.

O'Sullivan's (1992) research claimed sex differences in children's reading achievement were well established by grade three. It is interesting that the gender difference in children's alphabetic scores in this present study did not change as these children progressed through the primary grades. Unfortunately, "sex differences in reading (which favor females) have received far less publicity than sex differences in mathematics (which favor males)" (O'Sullivan, 1992, p. 19). Large scale studies conducted in Newfoundland have shown that gender differences exist in children's reading achievement (Government of NF & LAB, 1991, 1993, 1996). These differences have favored females.

Discussion

Parents' beliefs for their children's reading achievement, parents' and children's gender

Fathers' self-efficacy mean score for helping their children succeed in reading was significantly lower than mothers' self-efficacy mean score for boys. It is possible that fathers were less involved than were mothers in children's reading development, which related to their lower efficacy beliefs for boys' reading achievement. Fathers have traditionally been less involved in children's schooling than were mothers (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). Indeed, less involvement on the part of fathers in young children's reading development has often been the case for many rural Newfoundland families where fathers were more responsible for the economic livelihood of the family, and

mothers were responsible for children's schooling. Thus, it is possible that mothers believed more strongly in their ability to help improve their sons' reading achievement than did fathers in this study, perhaps because of the greater opportunity to share in their sons' reading-related experiences. Previous research has shown a positive relationship between parents' involvement in children's academic activities and their self-efficacy for children's achievement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). It is also possible that fathers expected less from their sons' reading achievement because of beliefs that girls were better readers than were boys. Lower expectations by fathers for boys' reading achievement may have related to the significant difference in mothers' and fathers' self-efficacy score for helping boys' succeed in reading. Bandura (1997) had claimed that a positive relationship existed between one's expectations for success and their self-efficacy beliefs.

In this study, fathers' self-efficacy beliefs for children's achievement had a significant negative relationship with boys' reader self-perceptions. Boys' self-perceptions, although generally lower than those of girls, were above standardized norms as presented by Henk and Melnick (1995). Most boys had very positive perceptions of feedback from their parents for their reading. It is possible that boys' perceptions of feedback from their parents focused more on mothers' rather than on fathers' regard for their reading. As well, boys may have perceived their fathers' feedback for their reading positively despite fathers' lower self-efficacy beliefs than mothers' beliefs for helping improve boys' reading achievement.

Mothers' self-efficacy beliefs had a significant positive relationship with girls' self-concept as reader. This suggested that mothers' beliefs in their ability to help improve children's reading achievement related positively to girls' perceptions of themselves as readers. Girls' reader self-concept was not significantly related to fathers' self-efficacy beliefs. It can be assumed that fathers' self-efficacy beliefs were not as important as mothers' self-efficacy beliefs in relation to girls' reading achievement. Perhaps, fathers' reading behaviors were more important for girls' high self-concept as reader.

Overall, fathers valued the role of effort in children's reading achievement more than did mothers in this study as revealed by mothers' and fathers' achievement-related belief scores. This finding was consistent with previous research that had claimed that mothers were more likely to emphasize the role of innate ability in children's academic learning than were fathers (Lee, Ichikawa & Stevenson, 1987). Perhaps, more mothers than fathers believed hard work and thus more effort reflected a lack of talent (i.e., natural intelligence) for young children's achievement. Since it is possible that mothers were more involved with children's reading experiences than were fathers in this study, mothers may have recognized that their children gave effort in their reading but were not achieving to the same degree as other children. Thus, mothers would have more realistic beliefs about the role of effort and intelligence in children's reading achievement than would fathers for children's reading achievement. Mothers' beliefs, in the importance of intelligence for children's learning, did significantly relate to boys' reading achievement.

Girls' and boys' reader self-perceptions and their reading achievement

Girls had significantly higher reader self-perceptions than did boys in their perceptions of social feedback. In the category of social feedback, there was an insignificant relationship between boys' and girls' perceptions of feedback from teachers and peers, although a marginally substantial difference existed in boys' and girls' mean scores as revealed by effect size scores. Girls had more positive perceptions of feedback from their peers and teachers than did boys. The difference between boys' and girls' mean scores may continue to differ as children progress through school. It has been proposed that the strength of peer and teacher influences increase as children get older (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990).

Boys and girls in this study differed in the internal feelings they experienced while reading. Girls in this study had more positive attitudes toward reading than did boys. It is plausible that boys, with less positive attitudes toward reading, may not choose to read as often as do girls. Children who enjoy reading generally read more often. Such reading habits could improve children's reading achievement (Pink, 1996). Stevenson and Newman (1986) claimed that attitudes toward reading become more differentiated as boys and girls progress through school.

Significant differences existed in boys' and girls' alphabet scores on the reading test. Girls' scored higher on this measure of early reading achievement. Reid, Hresko, and Hammill (1989) have claimed that knowledge of the alphabet and its functions often develops early in children's schooling and before children enter school. Perhaps, boys in this study had not engaged in early literacy activities in the home environment to the

same extent as did girls. Significant differences had been found in alphabet scores for the children in this study when they entered kindergarten (Oldford-Matchim, 1998).

Children's perceptions of progress significantly related to children's reading achievement in this study. This relationship was consistent with studies that have shown that children's perceptions as readers were related to their reading achievement (e.g., Bandura et al., 1996; Byrne, 1993; Ladd & Price, 1986).

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, relationships existed among parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions and their reading achievement. The role of parents' and children's gender was crucial for understanding the relationships among these variables. Surprisingly, negative relationships were found between fathers' self-efficacy and boys' self-perceptions. Therefore, the higher fathers' self-efficacy beliefs for helping improve boys' reading achievement, the lower boys' perceived themselves as readers. The aspects of boys' reader self-perceptions which negatively related to fathers' self-efficacy beliefs included boys' perceptions of their reading performance in comparison to their peers, and boys' perceptions of feedback from parents on their reading. Fathers' self-efficacy beliefs for their children's reading achievement also negatively related to girls' perceptions of their reading performance in comparison to their peers. According to Bandura's (1996) and Zimmerman et al. (1992), parental efficacy positively related to children's self-perceptions and their academic achievement.

Mothers' self-efficacy beliefs did positively relate to girls' reader self-concept in this study, which was consistent with previous research findings.

Mothers, who believed the role of intelligence was more important than the role of effort for children's reading achievement, had sons with higher reader self-concepts and reading achievement. This finding was in contrast to previous studies which claimed that parents who believed the role of effort was more important than natural ability for academic achievement, had children with higher self-efficacy beliefs and academic achievement (Schunk, 1982; Stevenson et al., 1990).

Children's perceptions of progress were related to their overall reading achievement in this study. This finding exemplified the importance of young children's perceptions of previous reading performance in relation to their current reading achievement. Furthermore, girls' perceptions of their reading performance in comparison to their classmates positively correlated with their reading achievement. This result signified the relevance of peer comparison to grade three girls' reading achievement. Girls had more positive perceptions of feedback from significant others in this study and achieved higher than boys in their knowledge of the alphabet and its functions on the reading test. This study has shown that girls had higher reader self-perceptions and reading achievement than did boys. These findings were consistent with previous research (Oldford-Matchim, 1998; O'Sullivan, 1992).

Parents and children in this study were involved in a family literacy project. Therefore, it was not surprising that the reader self-perceptions of students in this study were above standard average scores presented by Henk and Melnick (1995). Students'

reading achievement scores were also above American averages (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1989). Despite some unexpected findings, this study revealed significant relationships among parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions and their reading achievement. The gender of parents and children was vital for understanding the relationships among the variables.

Educational Implications

This study has a number of implications for teachers, school principals, parents and students.

1. Boys' perceptions of social feedback (a total measure of feedback from teachers, parents, and peers) were lower than that of girls. Moreover, there was an approaching significant difference in girls' and boys' perceptions of how teachers and other children viewed their reading. Girls had higher perceptions of feedback from other children and their teachers. If boys perceived their peers as being less supportive of their reading, then it would not be surprising that boys may choose to read less often than would girls (Henk & Melnick, 1992). This may lead to lower reading achievement for boys. It is important for classroom teachers to provide many opportunities for both girls and boys to receive positive feedback from peers on their reading. It is also important for classroom teachers to be aware of differences in boys' and girls' perceptions of feedback from their teaching and for teachers to

examine their own behaviors and responses in relation to boys' and girls' reading achievement.

2. Girls felt better internally when they read than did boys in this study. In order for boys to feel more comfortable about their reading, encouragement from significant others appears warranted. Perhaps more male role models engaging in and enjoying reading would be beneficial for establishing reading as both a pleasurable and successful activity for males, not just for females.

3. Since children's perceptions of their reading progress significantly related to their reading achievement, it is important that children maintain high self-perceptions of their reading progress. Teachers can encourage positive perceptions of progress by providing many opportunities for children to evaluate their own work. Furthermore, students can collect their completed work throughout the year in folders. This will provide the opportunity for students to view the progress they have made in their reading.

4. The role of effort should not be underestimated in girls' and boys' reading achievement. The role of effort in learning has often led to increased performance (Wood & Bandura, 1989). Mothers' stronger beliefs than fathers' beliefs in the role of intelligence for children's reading success may be detrimental to children's later reading achievement. It has been shown in this study that mothers' beliefs in the importance of intelligence in children's reading achievement positively related to boys' reader self-perceptions and their reading achievement. The role of effort, signifying a lack of intelligence for children, usually begins to develop during the

elementary school years (Shell, Colvin, & Bruning, 1995). Boys, who believe their less than optimal performance is due to natural ability, may not try harder to succeed in reading. It has been noted that an internal, stable, and global attribution to failure, such as, ability, has resulted in depressed affect, diminished self-esteem, low expectations for future success, and deteriorated performance (Craske, 1988, p.152). Indeed, the role of effort and the use of strategies for achievement should not be ignored by parents, teachers, or students. Research findings have shown a positive relationship between strategic reading and children's reading achievement (Byrne, 1993). It is important for students to recognize that success is more likely with effort and for significant others to acknowledge its role in students' reading achievement as well as set challenging tasks for students.

5. Mothers' self-efficacy beliefs were shown to significantly relate to girls' self-perceptions in this study. Whether girls' reader self-perceptions had influenced mothers' self-efficacy beliefs for their children's achievement or girls' reader self-perceptions had influenced mothers' self-efficacy beliefs, it is important that mothers maintain strong beliefs in their ability to help their daughters achieve in reading. Parental efficacy beliefs had many positive benefits for young children's reading achievement (Bandura, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

6. Children's perceptions of feedback from parents for their reading was not significantly related to children's reading achievement in this study. Nevertheless, children perceived parental feedback very positively according to standardized scores (Henk & Melnick, 1995). Perhaps the home environment was an important

contributor to children's perceptions of feedback about their reading from their parents. A family environment that supported and promoted reading may have influenced children's self-perceptions as readers. A home environment rich in literature and literacy opportunities has often served to increase children's reading achievement (Halle et al., 1997). In this study, children's reader self-perception and their reading achievement scores were above standardized averages. It is important that projects providing quality literature to parents and students, and encouraging parents' involvement in young children's reading development, continue to exist in rural Newfoundland.

7. Grade three children in this study had significant differences in their knowledge of the alphabetic component of reading development. A previous study with these children had revealed significant gender differences in their alphabetic knowledge before entering kindergarten (Oldford-Matchim, 1998). Girls' scores were significantly higher than were boys' scores. It is important that parents engage with their sons in reading activities that develop this component of reading at an early age. Engaging boys in a variety of literacy activities, including frequent reading aloud with boys, should enhance development of this aspect of learning to read (Reid, Hresko & Hammill, 1989). Teachers should also make an effort to ensure that specific intervention occurs when such differences exist in children's reading achievement. Boys' later reading achievement may be dependent on such intervention.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Mothers' self-efficacy beliefs were shown to positively relate to girls' self-concept as reader both in previous studies and this current one. Results of studies often point to the positive benefits for children when parents have strong beliefs in their abilities to help improve children's achievement. Further research should examine ways of increasing parental efficacy. Such results may improve children's reader self-perceptions and their reading achievement.

2. There was a significant difference in girls' and boys' perceptions of social feedback for their reading in this study. Social feedback included a total measure of children's perceptions of feedback from parents, teachers, and peers. It would be interesting to examine whether boys' and girls' perceptions of social feedback continue to differ as they progress through school and to examine such differences in relation to children's reading achievement.

3. Further research should examine the role of parents' gender in relation to children's self-perceptions. Children's perceptions of feedback from parents' on their reading should examine mothers and fathers separately. This will lead to a greater understanding of the role of parents' gender in relation to children's reader self-perceptions and their reading achievement.

4. It would be interesting to investigate whether a relationship exists between parents' achievement-related beliefs and parents' beliefs about how intelligent their children are in reading. This may provide critical insight into the reasons why parents

have specific achievement-related beliefs. Parents' and children's gender would also be important variables in such a study.

5. It would be beneficial to examine changes in parent's reading beliefs and children's reader self-perceptions and achievement as children proceed through school. A longitudinal study would provide a closer examination of the significance of the results presented in this study.

6. This research was carried out in a rural area. A similar study in an urban center may lead to an increased understanding of the role of cultural factors in the relationships among parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions, children's reading achievement, and parents' and children's gender.

7. There was no control group used in this study. It would be interesting to conduct this study with children and parents not involved in a literacy project. This would allow possible examination of the role the intervention project played in the research findings of this study.

8. Teacher efficacy was not examined in this study. Since teachers are also important significant others in young children's lives (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992), such examination may shed further light on factors related to young children's reader self-perceptions and their reading achievement.

9. It is important to continue research on the relationships among parents' reading beliefs, children's reader self-perceptions, children's reading achievement, and parents' and children's gender. Few empirical studies have examined this relationship in detail. Furthermore, as revealed by this study, there were a number of

findings that were contradictory to the limited studies that exist on the relationships among the above variables. Indeed, it is important to further explore why fathers' self-efficacy beliefs for their children's reading achievement negatively related to boys' reader self-perceptions.

REFERENCES

Abramson, L., Seligman, E., & Teasdale, J. (1978). Learned helplessness in humans: critique and reformulation. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 70, 154-166.

Alden, L. (1986). Self-efficacy and causal attributions for social feedback. Journal of Research in Personality, 20, 460-473.

Alexander, K., & Entwisle, D. (1988). Achievement in the first two years of school: Patterns and processes. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 53 (Serial No. 218).

Amato, P., & Ochiltree, G. (1986). Family resources and development of child competence. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 48, 47-56.

Anderson, H., Fielding, L., & Wilson, P. (1988). Growth in reading and how children spend their time outside of school. Reading Research Quarterly, 23, 285-303.

Anderson, M., Tollefson, N., & Gilbert, E. (1985). Giftedness and reading: A cross-sectional view of differences in reading attitudes and behaviors. Gifted Child Quarterly, 29, 186-189.

Anderson, R., Greene, M., & Loewen, P. (1988). Relationships among teachers' and students' thinking skills, sense of efficacy, and student achievement. The Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 34, 148-165.

Andrews, G., & Debus, R. (1978). Persistence and causal perceptions of failure: Modifying cognitive attributions. Journal of Educational Psychology, 70, 154-166.

Arlin, M. (1976). Open education and pupil's attitudes. Elementary School Journal, 76, 219-303.

Bandura, A. (1969). Social learning theory of identifactory processes. In D. A. Goslin, (Ed.), Handbook of socialization theory and research. Chicago: Rand/McNally.

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioural change. Psychological Review, 84, 191-215.

Bandura, A. (1982). Self-efficacy mechanism and human agency. American Psychologist, 37, 122-147.

Bandura, A. (1984). Recycling misconceptions of perceived self-efficacy. Cognitive Theory and Research, 8, 231-255.

Bandura, A. (1986). Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory. Englewood cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bandura, A. (1986a). The explanatory and predictive scope of self-efficacy theory. Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 4, 359-373.

Bandura, A. (1989). Regulation of cognitive processes through perceived self-efficacy. Developmental Psychology, 25, 729-735.

Bandura, A. (1989a). Human agency in social cognitive theory. American Psychologist, 44, 1175-1184.

Bandura, A. (1991). Self-regulation of motivation through anticipatory and self-regulatory mechanisms. In R. Dienstbier (Ed.), Perspectives on motivation: Nebraska symposium on motivation (Vol. 38, pp. 69-164). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Bandura, A. (1993). Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning. Educational Psychologist, 28, 117-148.

Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.

Bandura, A., Barbaranelli, C., Caprara, G., and Pastorelli, C. (1996). Multifaceted impact of self-efficacy beliefs on academic functioning. Child Development, 67, 1206-1222.

Bandura, A., & Jourden, F. (1991). Self-regulatory mechanisms governing the impact of social comparison on complex decision making. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 60, 941-951.

Bandura, A., & Kupers, C. (1964). Transmission of patterns of self-reinforcement through modelling. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 69, 1-9.

Bandura, A., & Schunk, D. (1981). Cultivating competence, self-efficacy and intrinsic interest through proximal self-motivation. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 41, 586-598.

Battle, J. (1982). Enhancing self-esteem and achievement: A handbook for professionals. Seattle: Special Child Publications.

Bauch, P. (1993). Improving education for minority adolescents: Toward an ecological perspective of school choice and parental involvement. In N. Chavkin (Ed.), Families and schools in a pluralistic society (pp. 121-146). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Becher, R. (1984). Parent involvement: A review of research and principles of successful practice. Urbana, Il: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 346 082).

Betz, N., & Hackett, G. (1986). Applications of self-efficacy theory to understanding career choice behavior. Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 4, 279-289.

Bloom, B. (1976). Human characteristics and school learning. NewYork: McGraw-Hill.

Blumenfeld, P., Pintrich, P., Meece, J., & Wessels, K. (1982). The formation and role of self-perceptions of ability in elementary classrooms. Elementary School Journal, 82, 401-420.

Boersma, F., Chapman, J., & MacGuire, T. (1979). The student perception of ability scale: An instrument for measuring academic self-concept in elementary school children. Educational and Psychological Measurement, 39, 135-141.

Bouffard-Bouchard, T., Parent, S., and Larivee, S. (1991). Influence of self-efficacy on self-regulation and performance among junior and senior high-school age students. International Journal of Behavioral Development, 14, 153-164.

Bradley, R., Caldwell, B., & Elardo, R. (1979). Home environment and cognitive development in the first two years: A cross-lagged panel analysis. Developmental Psychology, 15, 246-250.

Bradley, R., Caldwell, B., Rock, S., Barnard, K., Gray, C., Hammond, C., Gottfried, A., & Johnson, D. (1989). Home environment and cognitive development in the first three years of life: A collaborative study involving six sites and three ethnic groups in North America. Developmental Psychology, 25, 217-235.

Briggs, L. (1987). A poor attitude: A deterrent to reading improvement. Reading Horizons, 27, 202-208.

Brookover, W., & Gottlieb, D. (1964). A Sociology of Education (2nd ed.). New York: American Book Company.

Brown, L. (1992). A study of the relationships among self-concept, reading attitude and reading comprehension in second grade readers. Unpublished master's thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada.

Burns, R. (1979). The self-concept: Theory, measurement, development of self. New York: Longman Group Ltd.

Butkowsky, I., & Willows, D. (1980). Cognitive motivational characteristics of children varying in reading ability: Evidence for learned helplessness in poor readers. Journal of Educational Psychology, 72, 408-422.

Byrne, A. (1993). An investigation of the interrelationships among grade six readers' concepts of self, metacognitive awareness, gender and reading comprehension. Unpublished master's thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada.

Byrne, B. (1984). The general/academic self-concept nomological network: A review of construct validation research. Review of Educational Research, 54, 427-456.

Byrne, B. (1992). Studies in the acquisition procedure for reading: Rationale, hypothesis and data. In P. Gough, L.Ehri, & R. Treiman (Eds.), Reading Acquisition. (pp. 1-34). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Byrne, B., & Shavelson, R. (1986). On the structure of adolescent self-concept. Journal of Educational Psychology, 78, 473-481.

Campbell, P. (1967). School and self-concept. Educational Leadership, 24, 510-515.

Campbell, N., & Hackett, G. (1986). The effects of mathematics task performance on math self-efficacy and task interest. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 28, 149-162.

Carlson, R. (1963). Indentification and personality structure in preadolescents. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 67, 566-573.

Chall, J. (1976). The great debate: ten years later, with a modest proposal for reading stages. Paper presented at the Conference on Theory and Practice of Beginning Reading Instruction, University of Pittsburgh, Learning Research and Development Center.

Chall, J. (1983). Stages of reading development. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Chavkin, N. (Ed.) (1993). Families and schools in a pluralistic society. New York: State University of New York Press.

Clark, M. (1984). Literacy at home and at school: Insights from a study of young fluent readers. In H. Goelman, A. Oberg, and F. Smith (Eds.), Awakening to literacy (pp.122-130). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Clay, M. (1973). Reading: The patterning of complex behaviour. Auckland, NZ: Heinemann.

Cloer, T., & Pearman, B. (1992). The relationship of gender to attitudes about academic and recreational reading. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Reading Forum. Sanibel Island, FL.

Cohen, S., McDonell, G., & Osborn, B. (1989). Self-perceptions of "at risk" and high achieving readers: Beyond reading recovery achievement data. In S. McCormick & J. Zutell (Eds.), Cognitive and social perspectives for literacy research and instruction (pp. 117-122). Chicago: National Reading Conference.

Collins, J. (1982, March). Self-efficacy and ability in achievement behavior. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York.

Cook, C. (1988). Self-concept and the disabled reader: An annotated bibliography. Indiana: Indiana University Press (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 298 440).

Coopersmith, S. (1967). The antecedents of self-esteem. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman & Co.

Correro, G., & Turner, J. (1985). Self-concept measures of kindergarten children. Biloxi, Miss.: Midsouth Educational Research Conference.

Council of Ministries of Education (1999). School achievement indicators program (SAIP): 1998 Report on reading and writing assessment. Toronto, Ont.: Author.

Craske, M. (1988). Learned helplessness, self-worth motivation and attribution retraining for primary school children. British Journal of Educational Psychology, 58, 152-164.

Crews, M. (1978). A study of various factors in terms of attitudes toward reading, 1900-1977. Doctoral Dissertation, The Louisiana State University and agricultural and mechanical college, Louisiana, U.S.

Cronbach, L. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. Psychometrika, 16, 297-334.

Damon, W., & Hart, D. (1982). The development of self-understanding from infancy through adolescence. Child Development, 53, 841-864.

Darling, N., and Steinberg, L. (1993). Parenting style as context: An integrative model. Psychological Bulletin, 113, 487-496.

Dauber, S., and Epstein, J. (1993). Parent's attitudes and practices of involvement in inner-city elementary and middle schools. In N. Chavkin (Ed.), Families and schools in a pluralistic society (pp. 53-71). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1990). Literacy for empowerment: The role of parents in children's education. New York: Falmer Press.

Delagado-Gaitan, C. (1992). School matters in the Mexican-American home: Socializing children to education. American Educational Research Journal, 29, 495-513.

Denham, S., Renwick, S., & Holt, R. (1991). Working and playing together: Prediction of preschool social-emotional competence from mother-child interaction. Child Development, 62, 242-249.

Diener, C., & Dweck, C. (1978). An analysis of learned helplessness: Continuous changes in performance, strategy and achievement cognitions following failure. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 36, 451-462.

Diener, C., & Dweck, C. (1980). An analysis of learned helplessness: 2. The processing of success. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 39, 940-952.

Dillabough, J. (1990). The domain specific nature of children's self-perceptions of competence: An exploratory paradigm for understanding the social construction of self-knowledge in children. Unpublished master's thesis, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Dix, M. (1976, November 25-27). Are reading habits of parents related to reading performance of their children? Paper presented at the 66th Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, Chicago, Illinois.

Durkin, D. (1966). Children who read early. New York: Teachers College Press.

Dweck, C. (1986). Motivational processes affecting learning. American Psychologist, 41, 1040-1048.

Dweck, C. & Elliot, E. (1983). Achievement motivation. In P. Mussen & E. Hetherington (Eds.), Handbook of child psychology (4th ed., pp. 643-691). New York : Wiley.

Dweck, C., & Gilliard, D. (1975). Expectancy statements as determinants of reactions to failure: Sex differences in persistence and expectancy change. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 32, 1077-1084.

Dwyer, C. (1973). Sex differences in reading: An evaluation and critique of current trends. Journal of Educational Research, 43, 455-467.

Eccles, J. (1983). Expectancies, values, and academic behaviors. In J. Spence (Ed.), Achievement and achievement motives: Psychological and sociological approaches (pp. 75-146). San Fransisco: W. H. Freeman.

Eccles, J., & Harrold, R. (1993). Parent-school involvement during the early adolescent years. Teachers College Record, 94, 568-587.

Ehri, L. (1987). Learning to read and spell words. Journal of Reading Behaviour, 19, 5-31.

Ehri, L. (1994). Development of the ability to read words: Update. In R. Ruddell, M. Rapp Ruddell, & H. Singer (Eds.), Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading (pp. 323-358). Delaware: International Reading Association.

Ehri, L., & Wilce, L. (1985). Movement into reading: Is the first stage printed word learning visual or phonetic? Reading Research Quarterly, 20, 163-179.

Ehri, L., & Wilce, L. (1987). Does learning to spell help beginners learn to read real words? Reading Research Quarterly, 18, 47-65.

Ehri, L., & Wilce, L. (1987a). Cipher versus cue reading: An experiment in decoding acquisition. Journal of Educational Psychology, 79, 3-13.

Elaugh, C., & Harlow, H. (1973). Behaviour of male and female teachers as related to behaviours and attitudes of elementary school children. Peoria, Illinois: Bradley.

Elder, G., & Ardelt, M. (1992, March). Families adapting to economic pressure: Perspectives on the strategies of parenting. Paper presented at biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development, New Orleans, LA.

Elder, G., Jr., Eccles, J., Ardelt, M., & Lord, S. (1993, March). Inner city parents under economic pressure: Perspectives on the strategies of parenting. Paper presented at biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development, New Orleans, LA.

Elder, G. (1995). Life trajectories in changing societies. In A. Bandura (Ed.), Self-efficacy in changing societies (pp. 46-68). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Entwisle, D., & Baker, D. (1983). Gender and young children's expectations for performance in arithmetic. Developmental Psychology, 19, 200-209.

Entwisle, D., Alexander, K., Pallas, A., & Cadigan, D. (1987). The emergent academic self-image of first-graders: Its response to social structure. Child Development, 58, 1190-1206.

Epstein, J. (1985). Home and school connections in the future: Implications of research on parent involvement. Peabody Journal of Education, 62, 18-41.

Epstein, J. (1990). School and family connections: Theory, research, and implications for integrating sociologies of education and family. In D. Unger and M. Sussman, Families in community settings: Interdisciplinary perspectives (pp. 99-126). New York: Haworth.

Epstein, J. (1991). Effects on student achievement of teachers' practices of parent involvement. In S.B. Silvern (Ed.), Advances in reading/language research: Vol 5. Literacy through family, community, and school interaction (pp. 261-276). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Felker, D. (1974). Building positive self-concepts. Minneapolis: Burgess.

Foertsch, M. (1992). Reading in and out of school: Factors influencing the literacy achievement of American students in grades 4, 8 and 12 in 1988 and 1990 (Vol. 2). Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics.

Frey, K. & Ruble, D. (1987). What children say about classroom performance: Sex and grade differences in perceived competence. Child Development, 58, 1066-1078.

Frith, U. (1985). Beneath the surface of developmental dyslexia. In K. Patterson, J. Marshall, & M. Coltheart (Eds.), Surface Dyslexia (pp. 301-330). London: Erlbaum.

Garrison, J. and Garrison, K. (1979). Measurement of oral communication apprehension among children: A factor in the development of basic skills. Communication Education, 28, 122.

Gay, L. (1996). Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application (5th Edition). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Gecas, V., Calonico, J., & Thomas, D. (1974). The development of self-concept vs. the child: Mirror theory versus model theory. Journal of Social Psychology, 92, 67-76.

Gecas, V., & Pasley, K. (1983). Birth order and self-concept in adolescence. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 12, 521-535.

Gigliotti, R., & Brookover, W. (1975). The learning environment: A comparsion of high and low-achieving elementary schools. Urban Education, 10, 245-259.

Ginsburg, G., & Bronstein, P. (1993). Family factors related to children's intrinsic/extrinsic motivational orientation and academic performance. Child Development, 65, 1541-1545.

Good, Y., & Brophy, J. (1987). Looking in Classroom (4th ed.). New York: Harper and Row.

Goodman, Y. (1980). The roots of literacy. In M. Douglas (Ed.), Forty-fourth yearbook of the Claremont Reading conference. Claremont, CA: Claremont Graduate School.

Goodman, Y. (1996). Revaluing readers while readers revalue themselves: Retrospective miscue analysis. The Reading Teacher, 49, 600-609.

Goodnow, J. (1984). Parents' ideas about parenting and development: A review of issues and recent work. In M. Lamb, A. Brown, and B. Rogoff (Eds.), Advances in developmental psychology (Vol.3, pp. 193-242). Hilsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Goodnow, J. (1998). Parents' ideas, actions, and feelings: Models and methods from developmental and social psychology. Child Development, 59, 286-320.

Gorrell, J. (1990). Some contributions of self-efficacy research to self-concept theory. Journal of Research and Development in Education, 23, 73-81.

Gough, P., & Hillenger, M. (1980). Learning to reading: An unnatural act. Bulletin of the Orton Society, 30, 180-196.

Gough, P., Juel, C., & Roper-Schneider, D. (1983). Code and cipher: A two-stage conception of initial reading acquisition. In J. Niles and L. Harris (Eds.), Searches for meaning in reading language processing and instruction (32nd Yearbook of the National Reading Conference, pp. 207-211). Rochester, NY: National Reading Conference.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador: Division of evaluation and research (1990). Education statistics. St. John's, NF: Department of Education Newfoundland and Labrador.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador: Evaluation, testing, and certification (1991). Grade 4 testing standards: Canadian test of basic skills (CTBS). St. John's, NF: Department of Education Newfoundland and Labrador.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador: Evaluation, testing, and certification (1993). Grade 4 testing standards: Canadian test of basic skills (CTBS). St. John's, NF: Department of Education Newfoundland and Labrador.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador: Evaluation, testing, and certification (1996). Grade 4 testing standards: Canadian test of basic skills (CTBS). St. John's, NF: Department of Education Newfoundland and Labrador.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador: Evaluation, testing, and certification (1998). Grade 12 testing standards: Canadian test of basic skills (CTBS). St. John's, NF: Department of Education Newfoundland and Labrador.

Green, R. (1970). The feasibility of teaching selected concepts related to the particle nature of matter to students in grades two through six. Ph.D. Dissertation. The University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin, Missouri.

Greenberger, E., and Goldberg, W. (1989). Work, parenting, and the socialization of children. Developmental Psychology, 25, 22-35.

Greene, C. (1988). Using a literature-based reading/writing program in a grade 11 classroom to improve children's reading achievement, self-concept, and attitudes towards reading and writing. Unpublished master's thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada.

Grolnick, W., Benjet, C., Kurowski, C., & Apostoleris, N. (1997). Predictors of parent involvement in children's schooling. Journal of Educational Psychology, 89, 538-548.

Grolnick, W., Ryan, R., and Deci, E. (1991). Inner resources for school achievement: Motivational mediators of children's perceptions of their parents. Journal of Educational Psychology, 83, 508-517.

Grolnick, W., and Slowiaczek, M. (1994). Parents' involvement in children's schooling: A multidimensional conceptualization and motivational model. Child Development, 64, 237-252.

Gross, D., Fogg, L., & Tucker, S. (1995). The efficacy of parent training for promoting positive parent-toddler relationships. Research in Nursing and Health, 18, 489-499.

Guidubaldi, J., & Cleminshaw, H. (1985). The development of the cleminshaw-guidubaldi parent satisfaction scale. Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 14, 293-298.

Hackett, G., & Campbell, N. (1987). Task self-efficacy and task interest as a function of performance on a gender-neutral task. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 30, 203-215.

Halle, T., Kurtz-Costes, B, & Mahoney, J. (1997). Family influences on school achievement in low income African American children. Journal of Educational Psychology, 89, 527-537.

Hamachek, D. (1971). Encounters with the self. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Handel, R. (1992). The partnership for family reading: Benefits for families and schools. The Reading Teacher, 46, 116-126.

Hansen, J. (1989). ILCK (in the classroom). The Reading Teacher, 43, 186-187.

Harp, B. (1996). The handbook of literacy assessment and evaluation. Northwood, MA: Christopher Gordon Publishers, Inc.

Harter, S. (1981). A model of mastery motivation in children: Individual differences and developmental change. In W.A. Collins (Ed.), Minnesota symposium on child psychology (pp. 215-255). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Harter, S. (1982). The perceived competence scale for children. Child Development, 53, 87-97.

Harter, S. (1983). Developmental perspectives on the self-system. In E.M. Hetherington (Ed.), P.H. Mussen (Series Ed.), Handbook of child psychology: Vol 4. Socialization, personality and social development (pp. 275-385). New York: Wiley.

Harter, S. (1985). Competence as a dimension of self-evaluation: Toward a comprehensive model of self-worth. In R. Leahy (Ed.), The development of the self (pp. 55-121). New York: Academic Press.

Harter, S. (1986). Processes underlying the construction, maintenance, and enhancement of the self-concept of children. In J. Suls & A. Greenwald (Eds.), Psychological perspectives on the self. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Hartman, A., & Maehr, M. (1984). In search of a remedy: Desegregation and achievement motivation. In D. Bartz & M. Maehr (Eds.), Advances in motivation and achievement: Vol 1. The effects of school desegregation on motivation and achievement (pp. 37-72). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Henderson, E., & Long, B. (1971). Personal-social correleates of academic success among disadvantaged school beginners. Journal of School Psychology, 9, 101-113.

Henderson, V., & Dweck, C. (1990). Motivation and achievement. In S. Feldman & G. Elliott (Eds.), At the threshold: The developing adolescent (pp. 308-329). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Henk, W., & Melnick, S. (1992). The initial development of a scale to measure "perception of self as reader". In C. Kinzer & D. Leu (Eds.), Literacy research, theory and practice: Views from many perspectives. 41st Yearbook of the National Reading Conference (pp. 111-117). Chicago: National Reading Conference.

Henk, W., & Melnick, S. (1995). The reader self-perception scale (RSPS): A new tool for measuring how children feel about themselves as readers. The Reading Teacher, 48, 470-482.

Hess, R., & Holloway, S. (1984). Family and school as educational institutions. In R. Parke, R. Emde, H. McAdoo, & G. Sackett (Eds.), Review of child development research (Vol. 7): The family (pp. 179-222). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hiebert, E., & Adams, C. (1987). Fathers' and mothers' perceptions of their preschool children's emergent literacy. Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, 44, 25-37.

Hocko, E. (1993). The effect of self-esteem on reading achievement. Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Kean College, New Jersey.

Homze, A. (1962). Reading and the self-concept. Elementary English, 39, 210-215.

Hoover-Dempsey, K., Bassler, O., and Brissie, J. (1992). Parent efficacy, teacher efficacy, and parent involvement: Explorations in parent-school relations. Journal of Educational Research, 85, 287-294.

Hoover-Dempsey, K., and Sandler, H. (1995). Parental involvement in their children's education: Why does it make a difference? Teachers College Record, 95, 310-331.

Hoover-Dempsey, K., and Sandler, H. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? Review of Educational Research, 67, 3-42.

Huey, E. (1908). The psychology and pedagogy of reading. New York: Macmillan.

Johnson, D. (1972). An investigation of sex differences in reading in four English speaking nations. Technical Report No. 209. Washington, D.C.: Office of Education.

Johnson, D. (1981). Naturally acquired learned helplessness: The relationship of school failure to achievement behavior, attributions and self-concept. Journal of Educational Psychology, 73, 174-180.

Johnson, J., & Martin, C. (1983,October). Family environments and kindergarten children's academic knowledge. Paper presented at the meeting of the Northeastern Educational Research Association, Ellenville, NY.

Johnston, C., & Mash, E. (1989). A measure of parenting satisfaction and efficacy. Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 18, 167-175.

Jourden, F., Bandura, A., and Banfield, J. (1991). The impact of conceptions of ability on self-regulatory factors and motor skill acquisition. Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 8, 213-226.

Juliebo, M., & Elliott, J. (1984). The child fits the label. Technical Report. Edmonton, Alberta.

Juola, J., Schadler, M., Chabot, R., McCarghey, M., & Wait, J. (1979). What do children learn when they learn to read? In L. Resnick., & P. Weaver (Eds.), Theory and Practice of Early Reading. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Kao, G., & Tienda, M. (1995). Optimism and achievement: Educational performance of immigrant youth. Social Science Quarterly, 76, 1-19.

Keppel, G.and Zedeck, S. (1989). Data analysis for research designs. New York: Norton.

Kernis, M. (Ed.) (1995). Efficacy, agency, and self-esteem. New York: Plenum Press.

Kimiecik, J., Horn, T., & Shurin, C. (1996). Relationships among chidren's beliefs, perceptions of their parents' beliefs, and their moderate-to-vigorous physical activity. Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 67, 324-336.

LaBenne, W., & Greene, B. (1969). Educational implications of self-concept theory. Pacific Palisades, California: Goodyear.

Ladd, G., & Price, J. (1986). Promoting children's cognitive and social competence: The relation between parents' perceptions of task difficulty and children's perceived and actual competence. Child Development, 57, 446-460.

Lareau, A. (1987). Social class differences in family-school relationships: The importance of cultural capital. Sociology of Education, 60, 73-85.

Lareau, A. (1993). Home advantage: Social class and parental intervention in elementary education. Great Britain: The Falmer Press.

Lee, S., Ichikawa, V. & Stevenson, H. (1987). Beliefs and achievement in mathematics and reading: A cross-cultural study of Chinese, Japanese, and American children and their mothers. In M. Meahr & D. Kleiber (Eds.), Advances in motivation and achievement: Enhancing motivation (Vol. 5, pp. 149-179). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Legge, J. (1994). The interrelationships among and the gender effects of parental expectations, children's attitudes toward reading, children's self-concepts as readers and children's reading comprehension. Unpublished master's thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada.

Leitch, M., and Tangri, S. (1988). Barriers to home-school collaboration. Educational Horizons, 66, 70-74.

Lent, R., Brown, S., & Hackett, G. (1994). Toward a unifying social cognitive theory of career and academic interest, choice, and performance. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 45, 79-122.

Leseman, P. & de Jong, P. (1998). Home literacy: Opportunity, instruction, cooperation and social-emotional quality predicting early reading achievement. Reading Research Quarterly, 33, 294-318.

Le Unes, A., Nation, J., & Turley, N. (1980). Male-female performance in learned helplessness. Journal of Psychology, 104, 255-258.

Liben, L. & Bigler, R. (1987). Reformulating children's gender schemata. In L. Liben & M. Signorella (Eds.), New directions for child development (Vol. 38). San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass.

Licht, B., & Dweck, C. (1983). Sex differences in achievement orientations: Consequences for academic choices and attainment. In M. Marland (Ed.), Sex differentiation and schooling (pp. 72-97). London: Heinemann Educational Books.

Licht, B., & Dweck, C. (1984). Determinants of academic achievement: The interaction of children's achievement orientations with skill area. Developmental Psychology, 20, 628-636.

Locke, E., and Latham, G. (1990). A theory of goal setting and task performance. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

Lyman, R., Prentice-Dunn, S., Wilson, D., & Bonfilio, S. (1984). The effect of success or failure on self-efficacy and task persistence of conduct-disordered children. Psychology-in-the-Schools, 21, 516-519.

Maccoby, E. (1980). Social development: Psychological growth and the parent-child relationship. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Incorporated.

Maccoby, E. & Jacklin, C. (1974). The psychology of sex differences. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Macleod, F. (Ed.) (1989). Parents and schools: The contemporary challenge. Great Britian: The Falmer Press.

Marklund, I., & Hanse, M., (Eds.) (1984). Learning to read: Project No. 2239. School Research Newsletter, 5.

Marsh, H., Smith, I., & Barnes, J. (1985). Multidimensional self-concepts: Relationships with sex and academic ability. Journal of Educational Psychology, 77, 581-596.

Marsh, H., Smith, I., Barnes, J., & Butler, S. (1983). Self-concept: Reliability, stability, dimensionality, validity and the measurement of change. Journal of Educational Psychology, 75, 722-790.

Marshall, H., & Weinstein, R. (1984). Classroom factors affecting students' self-evaluation: An interactional model. Review of Educational Research, 54, 301-325.

Martinez-Pons, M. (1996). Test of a model of parental inducement of academic self-regulation. Journal of Experimental Education, 64, 213-227.

Maruyama, G., Rubin, R., & Kingsbury, G. (1981). Self-esteem and educational achievement: Independent constructs with a common cause? Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 5, 962-975.

Mason, J. (1984). Early reading from a developmental perspective. In P.D. Pearson (Ed.), Handbook of reading research (pp. 505-543). New York: Longman.

Mass, L. (1982). Developing concepts of literacy in young children. The Reading Teacher, 35, 670-675.

Massaro, D., Jastrzembski, J., & Lucas, P. (1981). Frequency, orthographic regularity, and lexical status in letter and word perception. In G. Bower (Ed.), The psychology of learning and motivation (Vol.15, pp. 163-200). New York: Academic.

McAuley, E., Duncan, T, & McElroy, M. (1989). Self-efficacy cognitions and causal attributions for children's motor performance: An exploratory investigation. The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 150, 65-73.

McCandless, B., Bilous, C., & Bennett, H. (1961). Peer popularity and dependence on adults in preschool age socialization. Child Development, 32, 511-518.

McClelland, D., Atkinson, J., Clark, R., & Lowell, E. (1953). The achievement motive. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

McGillicuddy-DeLisi, A. (1985). The relationship between parental beliefs and children's cognitive level. In I.E. Sigel (Ed.), Parental belief systems (pp. 7-24). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

McKenna, M., & Kear, D. (1990). Measuring attitude toward reading: A new tool for teachers. The Reading Teacher, 43, 626-639.

McMichael, P. (1980). School intervention with disadvantaged children. Educational Studies, 6, 65-77.

Miller, D. (1991). Handbook of research design and social measurement (fifth edition). California: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Miller, S. (1988). Parents' beliefs about children's cognitive development. Child Development, 59, 259-285.

Miller, S. (1995). Parents' attributions for their children's behavior. Child Development, 66, 1557-1584.

Miller, S., & Davis, T. (1992). Beliefs about children: A comparative study of mothers, teachers, peers, and self. Child Development, 63, 1251-1265.

Miller, S., Manhal, M., & Mee, L. (1991). Parental beliefs, parental accuracy, and children's cognitive performance: A search for causal relations. Developmental Psychology, 27, 267-276.

Mitman, A., & Lash, A. (1988). Students' perceptions of their academic standing and classroom behavior. The Elementary School Journal, 89, 55-68.

Monaghan, E. (1983, April). A four-year study of the acquisition of letter-sound correspondences. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Mondell, S., & Tyler, F. (1981). Parental competence and styles of problem-solving/play behavior with children. Developmental Psychology, 17, 73-78.

Morrow, L. (1993). Literacy development in the early years: Helping children read and write. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Morrow, L. (Ed.) (1995). Family literacy: Connections in schools and communities. New Jersey: International Reading Association Incorporated.

Morrow, L., & Paratore, J. (1993). Family literacy: Perspectives and practices. The Reading Teacher, 47, 194-200.

Murphey, D. (1992). Constructing the child: Relations between parents' beliefs and child outcomes. Developmental Review, 12, 199-232.

Napier, S. (1976). Grading and young children. In S. Simon & J. Bellanca (Eds.), Degrading the Grading Myths: A primer of alternatives to grades and marks (pp. 232-327). Washington, DC: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

National Academy of Education: Commission on Reading (1985). Becoming a nation of readers: The report of the commission on reading. Pittsburgh, PA: National Academy of Education.

Newfoundland and Labrador Home and School Association (1992). Response of the NF and LAB home and school association to the royal commission of inquiry into the delivery of programs and services in primary, elementary, and secondary education. St. John's, NF.

Nicholls, J. (1978). The development of perception of concept of effort and ability, perceptions of academic attainment, and the understanding that difficult tasks require more ability. Child Development, 49, 800-814.

Nicholls, J. (1984). Achievement motivation: Conceptions of ability, subjective experience, task choice, and performance. Psychological Review, 91, 328-346.

Nicholls, J. & Miller, A. (1984). Development and its discontents: The differentiation of the concept of ability. In J. Nicholls (Ed.), The development of achievement motivation (pp. 185-218). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

O'Flavehan, J., Gambrell, L., Guthrie, J., Stahl, S., Baumann, J., & Alvermann, D. (1992). Roll results guide activities of research center. Reading Today, 10, 7-11.

Okagaki, L., and Sterberg, R. (1993). Parental beliefs and children's school perfromance. Child Development, 64, 36-56.

Oldford-Matchim, J. (1992). S.O.R.T.: Significant Others as Reading Teachers (pamphlet). St. John's, NF: MUN Printing Services.

Oldford-Matchim, J. (1998, July 21 - 24). Significant Others as Reading Teachers (SORT) program: A longitudinal study of the reading achievement of kindergarten children participating in family literacy (ages 4-9). A paper presented at the 17th World Congress on Reading of the International Reading Association, Ocho Rios, Jamaica.

Ostling, R. (1992). Is school unfair to girls? Time, 139, 62.

O' Sullivan, J. (1992). Reading beliefs and reading achievement: A developmental study of students from low income families. In L. Phillips & S. Norris (Eds.), Summary reports of paths to literacy and illiteracy in Newfoundland and Labrador (Report #6). St. John's, NF: Memorial University of Newfoundland.

O' Sullivan, J., & Howe, M. (1996). Causal attributions and reading achievement: Individual differences in low-income families. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 21, 363-387.

O' Sullivan, J. & Joy, R. (1994). If at first you don't succeed: Children's metacognition about reading problems. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 19, 118-127.

Paris, S., Cross, D., Jacobs, J., Oka, E., DeBritto, A., & Saarino, D. (1984). Improving children's metacognition and reading comprehension with classroom instruction. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans.

Paris, S., Lipson, M., & Wixon, K. (1983). Becoming a strategic reader. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 8, 239-316.

Parker, A., & Paradis, E. (1986). Attitude developmental trend toward reading in grades one through six. Journal of Educational Research, 79, 313-315.

Parsons, J., Adler, T., & Kaczala, C. (1982). Socialization of achievement attitudes and beliefs: Parental influences. Child Development, 53, 310-321.

Parsons, J., Kaczala, C., & Meece, J. (1982). Socialization of achievement attitudes and beliefs: Classroom influences. Child Development, 53, 322-339.

Patterson, G. (1986). Performance models for antisocial boys. American Psychologist, 41, 432-444.

Peterson, M. (1981). All children bright and beautiful: But why can't they read? Contemporary Education, 53, 34-38.

Phi Delta Kappa (1980). Why do some urban schools succeed? Bloomington, IN: Author.

Phillips, D. (1984). The illusion of incompetence among academically competent children. Child Development, 58, 1308-1320.

Phillips, D. (1987). Socialization of perceived academic competence among highly competent children. Child Development, 58, 1308-1320.

Phillips, D., & Zimmerman, M. (1990). The developmental course of perceived competence and incompetence among competent children. In R. Sternberg & J. Kolligian (Eds.), Competence considered (pp. 41-66). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Phillips, J. (1997). A study of the relationships among reader self-perceptions, early reading ability and gender in grade one students. Unpublished master's thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada.

Piers, E., & Harris, D. (1969). The Piers-Harris children's self-concept scale. Nashville, TN: Counsellor Recordings and Tests.

Pink, G. (1996). Interrelationships among reading comprehension, reader self-concept, attitude, gender and grade in high ability elementary language arts students. Unpublished Master's Thesis: Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Pottebaum, S., Keith, T., & Ehly, S. (1986). Is there a causal relationship between self-concept and academic achievement? Journal of Educational Research, 79, 140-144.

Preston, R. (1962). Reading and achievement of German and American children. School and Society, 90, 350.

Pretty, G., and Seligman, C. (1984). Affect and the overjustification effect. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 46, 1241-1253.

Purkey, W. (1970). Self-concept and school achievement. Englewood Cliffs: NJ: Prentice Hall.

Quandt, I., & Selznick, R. (1984). Self-concept and reading. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Ransbury, M. (1973). An assessment of reading attitude. Journal of Reading, 17, 25-28.

Read, C. (1975). Children's categorization of speech sounds in English. (Research report No. 17). Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers.

Reid, D., Hresko, W., and Hammill, D. (1989). TERA-2. Texas: PRO-ED, Inc.

Relich, J., Debus, R., & Walker, R. (1986). The mediating role of attribution and self-efficacy variables for treatment effects on achievement outcomes. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 11, 195-216.

Revicki, D. (1981). The relationship between self-concept and achievement: An investigation of reciprocal effects. Dissertation Abstracts International, 42, 2484-A.

Reynolds, A., Mavrogenes, N., Bezruczko, N., & Hagemann, M. (1996). Cognitive and family-support mediators of preschool effectiveness: A confirmatory analysis. Child Development, 67, 1119-1140.

Richmond, B., & White, W. (1971). Sociometric predictors of the self-concept among fifth and sixth grade children. Journal of Educational Research, 64, 425-429.

Rogers, C., Smith, M., & Coleman, J. (1978). Social comparison in the classroom: The relationship between academic achievement and self-concept. Journal of Educational Psychology, 70, 50-57.

Rosenburg, M. (1965). Society and the adolescent self-image. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rosenburg, M. (1979). Conceiving the self. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Russell, G. & Russell, A. (1982). Mother, father, and child beliefs about child development. Journal of Psychology, 110, 297-306.

Samuels, S. (1977). Enhancing self-concept in early childhood. New York: Human Sciences Press.

Saracho, O. (1980). The role of the teacher in enhancing the child's self-concept. In T. Yawkey (Ed.), The Self-concept of the young child (pp. 99-108). U.S.A.: Brigham Young University Press.

Schneewind, K. (1995). Impact of family processes on central beliefs. In A. Bandura (Ed.), Self-efficacy in changing societies (pp.114-148). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Schunk, D. (1982). Effects of effort attributional feedback on children's perceived self-efficacy and achievment. Journal of Educational Psychology, 74, 548-556.

Schunk, D. (1983). Ability versus effort attributional feedback. Differential effects on self-efficacy and achievement. Journal of Educational Psychology, 75, 848-856.

Schunk, D. (1983a). Developing children's self-efficacy and skills: The roles of social comparative information and goalsetting. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 8, 76-86.

Schunk, D. (1984). Self-efficacy perspective on achievement behavior. Educational Psychologist, 19, 48-58.

Schunk, D. (1985). Self-efficacy and classroom learning. Psychology in the schools, 22, 208-223.

Schunk, D. (1989). Self-efficacy and cognitive skill learning. In C. Ames & R. Ames (Eds.), Research on motivation in education: Vol 3. Goals and cognitions (pp. 13-44). San Diego: Academics.

Schunk, D., & Gunn, T. (1985). Modeled importance of task strategies and achievement beliefs: Effect on self-efficacy and skill development. Journal of Educational Psychology, 78, 201-209.

Schunk, D., & Rice, J. (1984). Strategy self-verbalization during remedial listening comprehension instruction. Journal of Experimental Education, 53, 49-54.

Seginer, R. (1983). Parents' educational expectations and children's academic achievement: A literature review. Merrill Palmer Quarterly, 29, 1-23.

Share, D., Jorm, A., Maclean, R., & Matthews, R. (1984). Sources of individual differences in reading acquisition. Journal of Educational Psychology, 76, 466-477.

Shell, D., Colvin, C., & Bruning, R. (1995). Self-efficacy, attribution, and outcome expectancy mechanisms in reading and writing achievement: Grade level and achievement level differences. Journal of Educational Psychology, 87, 386-398.

Shomow, L., Vandell, D., & Kang, K. (1996). School choice, family characteristics, and home-school relations: Contributions to school achievement? Journal of Educational Psychology, 88, 451-460.

Silver, W., Mitchell, T., & Gist, M. (1989). The impact of self-efficacy on causal attributions for successful and unsuccessful performance. Unpublished manuscript, University of Washington, Seattle.

Silvernail, D. (1985). Developing positive student self-concept. Washington: National Education Association.

Simon, W., & Bernstein, E. (1971). The releationship between self-esteem and perceived reciprocal linking: A sociometric test of the theory of cognitive balance. Journal of Psychology, 79, 197-201.

Singh, A. (1972). Self-concept of ability and school achievement of seventh grade students in Newfoundland. Ph.D. Thesis, Michigan State University.

Smith, J. (1978). Personality correlates of continuation and outcome in mediation and erect sitting control treatments. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 46, 272-279.

Smith, M. (1971). Home and school: Focus on reading. Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company.

Smith, M. (1990). The development and use of an instrument for assessing adults attitudes toward reading. Journal of Research and Development in Education, 23, 156-161.

Song, I., & Hattie, J. (1984). Home environment, self-concept, and academic achievement: A causal modeling approach. Journal of Educational Psychology, 76, 1269-1281.

Stanovich, K. (1980). Toward an interactive compensatory model of individual differences in the development of reading fluency. Reading Research Quarterly, 16, 32-71.

Stevenson, D., & Baker, D. (1987). The family-school relation and the child's school performance. Child Development, 58, 1348-1357.

Stevenson, H., Lee, S., Chen, C., Stigler, J., Hsu, C., & Kitamura, S. (1990). Contexts of achievement: A study of American, Chinese, and Japanese children. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 55 (1-2, Serial No. 221).

Stevenson, H., & Newman, R. (1986). Long-term prediction of achievement and attitudes in math and reading. Child Development, 57, 646-659.

Stipek, D. (1981). Children's perceptions of their own and their classmates ability. Journal of Educational Psychology, 73, 404-410.

Stuart, M., & Coltheart, M. (1988). Does reading develop in a sequence of stages? Cognition, 30, 139-181.

Teale, W. (1983). Assessing attitudes toward reading: Why and how. In J. Thomas and R. Loring (Eds.), Motivating children and young adults to read (pp. 3-6). Phoenix, Arizona: Orynx press.

Thomas, L. (1984) Readers' metacognition and comprehension: Are they related? Research/Technical Report, Alabama.

Thomas, M., & Hartley, G. (1980). Self in dyslexic children. Academic Therapy, 16, 19-36.

Thompson, M., Alexander, K., & Entwisle, D. (1988). Household composition, parental expectations and school achievement. Social Forces, 67, 424-451.

Trent, J. (1986). The relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of kindergarten students. Research/Technical Report, Ohio.

Tunmer, W., Herriman, J., & Nesdale, A. (1988). Metalinguistic abilities and beginning reading. Reading Research Quarterly, 23, 338-340.

Valencia, S. (1990). A portfolio approach to classroom reading assessment: The whys, whats and hows. The Reading Teacher, 43, 338-340.

Venezky, R. (1976). Prerequisites for learning to read. In J.R. Levine, & V.L. Allen (Eds.), Cognitive learning in children: Theories and strategies. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Vereen, M. (1980). Reading and achievement and self-concept of fifth grade students. New Jersey: Union (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 192-264).

Wagner, B., & Phillips, D. (1992). Beyond beliefs: Parent and child behaviors and children's perceived academic competence. Child Development, 63, 1380-1391.

Wagner, J. (1983). Self-concept: Research and educational implications. Studies in Educational Evaluation, 9, 239-251.

Walberg, H., & Tsai, S. (1985). Correlates of reading achievement and attitude: A national assessment study. Journal of Educational Research, 78, 159-167.

Wallbrown, F., Levine, M., & Engin, A. (1981). Sex differences in reading attitudes. Reading Improvement, 18, 226-234.

Wattenberg, W., & Clifford, C. (1964). Relation of self-concept to beginning achievement in reading. Child Development, 35, 461-467.

Weisz, J. (1983). Can I control it? The pursuit of veridical answers across the life span. In P. Baltes (Ed.), Life-span development and behavior (Vol. 5, pp. 233-300). New York: Academic Press.

Weisz, J., Weiss, B., Wasserman, A., & Rintoul, B. (1987). Control-related beliefs and depression among clinic-referred children and adolescents. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 96, 58-63.

West, A., & Sammons, P. (1991). The measurement of children's attitudes toward school: The use of the smiley scale. London: London School of Economics and Political Science, Center for Educational Research.

Wheeler, V., & Ladd, G. (1982). Assessment of children's self-efficacy for social interactions with peers. Developmental Psychology, 18, 795-805.

Whitbeck, L. (1987). Modeling efficacy: The effect of perceived parental efficacy on the self-efficacy of early adolescents. Journal of Early Adolescents, 7, 165-177.

White, J. (1982). Rejection. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.

Whiteway, R. (1995). A study of the interrelationships among fifth grade students' concepts of parental relationships, peer relationships, reader self-concept, gender, reading attitude and comprehension. Unpublished master's thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada.

Wigfield, A., and Eccles, J. (1992). The development of achievement task values: A theoretical analysis. Developmental Review, 12, 265-310.

Williams, R., & Cole, S. (1968). Self-concept and school adjustment. The Personnel and Guidance Journal, 46, 478-481.

Wood, R. & Bandura, A. (1989). Impact of conceptions of ability on self-regulatory mechanisms and complex decision making. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 56, 407-415.

Wood, R., & Bandura, A. (1989a). Social cognitive theory of organizational management. Academy of Management Review, 14, 361-384.

Wooster, A., & Carson, A. (1982). Improving reading and self-concept through communication and social skills training. British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 10, 83-87.

Yarborough, B., & Johnson, R. (1980). A six year study of sex differences in intellectual functioning, reading/language arts achievement and affective development. The Journal of Psychology, 106, 55-61.

Youniss, J, DeSantis, J., & Henderson, S. (1992). Parents' approaches to adolescents in alcohol, friendship, and school situations. In I. Sigel, A. McGillicuddy-DeLisi, & J. Goodnow (Eds.), Parental belief systems: The psychological consequences for children (pp. 199-216). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Zimmerman, B, (1995). Self-efficacy and educational development. In A. Bandura (Ed.), Self-efficacy in changing societies (pp. 202-231). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Zimmerman, B., & Bandura, A. (1994). Impact of self-regulatory influences on writing course attainment. American Educational Research Journal, 31, 845-862.

Zimmerman, B., Bandura, A., & Martinez-Pons, M. (1992). Self-motivation for academic attainment: The role of self-efficacy beliefs and personal goal-setting. American Educational Research Journal, 29, 663-676.

Zimmerman, I., & Ringle, J. (1981). Effects of model persistence and statements of confidence on children's self-efficacy and problem solving. Journal of Educational Psychology, 73, 749-754.

Appendix A

GH-3000, Field Hall Residence, Memorial University
St. John's, Newfoundland
A1B 3R5

May 22, 1998

Dr. Timothy Seifert
Chairperson
Ethical Review Committee
Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland

Dear Dr. Seifert:

In order to complete the requirements for a Master of Education degree in Teaching and Learning at Memorial University of Newfoundland, I wish to conduct a study with a group of grade three students and their parents this spring. The study is designed to test the relationships among parental beliefs for improving their children's reading achievement, children's perception of themselves as readers, and children's reading achievement. The relationship of gender to these variables will also be examined. Written consent will be required from the parent (s) or guardian (s) for their participation in this study. Permission to administer a reading test and questionnaire to children has been previously obtained through the Significant Others as Reading Teachers (SORT) program. Please find enclosed copies of my research proposal, the parental consent form, the questionnaire for parents, as well as other correspondence required for this investigation.

Thank-you for considering my request.

Yours sincerely,

Jacqueline Lynch

Appendix B

A certificate of approval confirming that the protocol and procedures of the research conform to Memorial University's guidelines for research involving human subjects was approved as part of the overall ethical approval of the Significant Other as Reading Teachers Project [SORT (1994)] by the Faculty Committee for the Ethical Review of Research Involving Human Subjects.

Appendix C

Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland
A1B 3X8

June 1, 1998

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s):

I am a graduate student in the Master of Education program at Memorial University and am completing a study about reading under my supervisor Dr. Joan Oldford-Matchim, director of the S.O.R.T. program. The study investigates the relationships among parents' beliefs for helping improve their children's reading achievement, children's self-perceptions as readers, and children's reading achievement. The role of gender will also be a factor in this study. This study has received approval from the Ethics Review Committee at Memorial University.

To complete this study, it is necessary that I administer a questionnaire to you, the parents of children in the S.O.R.T. program. The questionnaire will take approximately ten minutes to complete. If you have any questions about this study, you may contact Dr. Linda Phillips, Associate Dean of Graduate Programs and Research at (709) 737-8587. Please sign below and return this letter with the questionnaire to your child's classroom teacher by June 10th, 1998, in the envelope provided. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this study.

Sincerely,

Jackie Lynch

I,_____,**(parent/guardian)** do agree to participate in this study.

I,_____,**(parent/guardian)** do not agree to participate in this study.

Appendix D

Questionnaire for Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Name: _____

- Parents' names are required to explore relationships between parents' responses and their children's responses. Only the researcher will have access to the identification of the subjects used in this study. Parents' and students' names will be coded with numbers in this study and at no time will names be revealed. This study has received approval from the Faculty of Education's Ethics Review Committee at Memorial University. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this study. Please return this questionnaire, sealed in the envelope provided, to your child's classroom teacher by Wednesday, June, 10th. The researcher will be returning to St. John's on that day.

- Please answer each question keeping in mind how **you** feel as a parent without consulting with another family member. It is important that you complete this questionnaire independent of your spouse (if applicable) so that the relationship of gender, to parents' beliefs for helping improve their children's reading achievement, can be examined.

- Circle the letters that show how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

  Use the following:

SA = Strongly Agree
A = Agree
U = Undecided
D = Disagree
SD = Strongly Disagree

1. Children are good readers because they have a natural ability.

   SA A U D SD

2. By reading to my child, I can help my child become a better reader.

   SA A U D SD

3. Children who perform well in school have the 'brains' for the work.

SA A U D SD

4. I expect my child to be as good at reading as other school subjects.

SA A U D SD

5. I can overcome difficulties my child experiences with reading.

SA A U D SD

6. I pay close attention to the teacher's opinion of how well my child is reading.

SA A U D SD

7. It is not important what I expect of my child in reading.

SA A U D SD

8. I read to my child more often than most parents.

SA A U D SD

9. If my child encounters difficulty with reading, it is because he/she did not give enough effort.

SA A U D SD

10. I expect my child to be a good reader.

SA A U D SD

11. My child listens to my suggestions for his or her reading.

SA A U D SD

12. I have little effect on my child's interest in reading.

SA A U D SD

13. My child does not know what I expect of him/her in reading.

SA A U D SD

14. I think I can help my child become a better reader.

SA A U D SD

15. My child and I seldom find time to read together.

SA A U D SD

16. Intelligence is a more important factor than effort for a child to become a good reader.

SA A U D SD

17. I often tell my child about the benefits of being a good reader.

SA A U D SD

18. As a parent/guardian, I am important in affecting my child's reading development.

SA A U D SD