Extrinsic Rewards: An Adventist Curriculum Perspective for Classroom Management

Nadine A. Joseph

Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Silang, Cavite
Email: josephn@aiias.edu

Abstract
Extrinsic rewards refer to gifts used as a form of motivation for students' to attain an academic goal, or given when that particular goal is reached. Though the use of extrinsic rewards have been proven to have some impact on' behavior change, such as academic performance, the absence of rewards can cause students' to revert to the initial unwanted behavior. Consequently, the curricula focus in the Adventist classroom should address the deeper issues that affect behavior and implement the use of strategies and techniques that instill more long-term change rather than emphasize short-term results. This theoretical paper examines the underlying tenets of extrinsic rewards rooted in the Behaviorism; the Adventist perspective of behavior change from a Biblical perspective, and the underlying problem with the use of extrinsic rewards for classroom management in the Adventist classroom. Three simple practical approaches are proposed for behavior change that supports the general goal of Adventist education.
Keywords: Extrinsic rewards, Adventist, Classroom Management, Academic Achievement

Introduction
More learning theories have been developed over the past few decades to uncover new and effective methods to improve students' behavior and academic achievement. Four of the more common theories are Information Processing, Social-Cognitive Learning, Constructivist Learning and Behavioral Learning. However, the use of extrinsic rewards has been more commonly associated with and propagated by persons using the Behaviorist approach to teaching, learning, and behavior management. As such, extrinsic rewards generally refer to any reward/ gift that are given to a person because of some achievement (Beswick, n.d; Snowman & Biehler, 2006).

Student achievement on the other hand varies from place to place, classroom to classroom and teacher to teacher. More generally, it is referred to as the achievement or realization of a goal or the attainment of an objective. Today though, authors are suggesting that the goals of student achievement should include academic achievement, life skills and responsibility to community (see Elias, Zins, Weissberg, Frey, Haynes, Kessler, Schwab-Stone & Shriver, 1997; Hobbs, 2004). For example, the use of more technologies and other literacy banks almost mandates that academic achievement be extended beyond classroom borders and should incorporate both product and process, and assessed both individually and collaboratively

(Kist, 2003). In addition, that both the product and the process focus on the students' ability to be knowledgeable about the multiple forms of representations or multi-literacy perspectives (Hobbs, 2004; Kist, 2003). Consequently, a mere focus on providing extrinsic rewards for particular outcomes are becoming less acceptable for product outcomes (specifically students' behavior or academic achievement).

Therefore, assessing factors that hinder students from being intrinsically motivated, such as students' attitude and beliefs about themselves, teacher expectations and classroom environment (Snowman & Beihler, 2006), may be more beneficial in the Adventist classroom, since the goal of Adventist education has more long-term implications. Teachers for example may need to become increasingly more creative since students engage in activities that are of interest (Allan & Tomlinson, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000); and because intrinsic motivation is generally associated with a healthy psychological well being Ryan and Deci (2000). Notably, the Adventist curriculua focuses on the development of the whole being and not just on academic knowledge (A Statement of Seventh-day Adventist Educational Philosophy (AEP), 2001).

Students' Attitudes and Beliefs

What students feel about themselves (self esteem), their awareness of how they learn (meta-cognition), their belief about what tasks they can accomplish (self-efficacy), and who is subsequently responsible for their success or failure (attribution) can have a significant impact on their achievement (Snowman & Biehler, 2006). According to Snowman & Biehler (2006), "many low-SES students may not be strongly motivated to do well in school because of lower levels of characteristics call need for achievement" (p. 145). Furthermore, there seems to be a relationship with low self-esteem and low achievement. Sterbin and Rakow (1996), for example, propose that the relationship between self-esteem and student achievement is more complex than it first appears but is significantly related to socioeconomic status, gender, and locus of control, and these variables that must be taken into account before the effects of self-esteem on achievement can be assessed. Correspondingly, the role of the Adventist teacher and the goal of the curricula are set to minister to the deeper issues of the student rather than just a focus on behavioral or academic outcomes only.

Notably, Alves-Martins, Peixoto, Gouveia-Pereira, Amaral, and Pedro (2002) found that students with low levels of academic achievement attribute less importance to school-related areas and reveal less favorable attitudes towards school. Importantly, there is still hope in what a teacher can do to help students change their attitude apart from issues directly related to developing intrinsic motivation or values to accomplish tasks. Such ideas stem from the work of Lev Vygotsky who proposes that children learn higher psychological processes through the social environment when an adult or more literate other plays an active role in that social content. A child's zone of proximal development is based primarily upon the difference between what a child can already do alone and what he or she can do with assistance from a more competent person (May & Rizzardi, 2002). As such, if teachers can provide supportive framework for students, there is a possibility for improved student achievement or behavior change; these can be with the use of, but limited to, extrinsic rewards.

Teacher Expectations & Classroom Environment

The classroom, where students spend most of their waking hours with the teacher, could be a contributing factor in behavior change and improved achievement outcomes. Even

though the teacher is not the parent, nor do they contribute to the home environment, health status or community environment, Baker (1999) suggests that supportive teachers will show an interest in student by talking with them about personal problems and providing emotional support. Even White (1952) contends that the blunder may be that "teachers often fail of coming sufficiently into social relation with their pupils" (p. 280). According to White (1952), the teachers' job is not merely to accomplish their daily tasks to please their employers by maintaining the standing for the school, but "he must consider the highest good of his pupils as individuals, the duties that life will lay upon them, the service it requires, and the preparation demanded" (p. 281).

Snowman & Biehler (2006) report on a phenomenon proposed by Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson called "'the teacher expectancy effect' also known as 'the self-filling prophecy', or *Pygmalion effect,* which occurs when teachers communicate a particular expectation about how a student will perform and the student's behavior changes so as to be consistent with that expectation" (pp. 148-152). Essentially, this adds value to the notion that teacher expectancy can affect student achievement. Rosenthal and Jacobson, inform that students who were labeled potential achievers showed significant gains in intelligence quotient (IQ) and that the reason for these gains was that their teachers expected more of these students (as cited in Snowman & Biehler, 2006, p. 148).

The Problem with Extrinsic Rewards

Proponents for extrinsic rewards such as Pavlov and Skinner were able through their experiments and theories of classical and operant conditioning, prove that behavior can indeed be altered, shaped, or redirected. However, questions or concerns pertaining to 'how long' that change in behavior can be maintained in the absence of a reward are not readily available.

The very early work of Deci (1971) argued that rewarding subjects with money and "closely related tangible rewards" for engaging in an intrinsically interesting task would decrease their subsequent interest in that task in the absence of such external rewards**.** Lisa Fitzpatrick in "*Should Students Be Paid for Good Grades?*," reports that cash for grades programs have positive, but short-term effects on student grades. Even though behavioral theories are said not to be so popular today, their ideologies still seem to dominate many classrooms. The mere fact that teachers are still using letter grades, give tokens, use time outs, use punishment, and in some cases use schedules of reinforcement to reinforce particular behaviors all suggest that behaviorism (and the use of extrinsic rewards) is still a philosophical assumption on which many classrooms are operated. Notably, Snowman & Biehler (2006) reveal that making students compete with each other for limited rewards and grading on the curve are practices that are particularly damaging to intrinsic motivation. As such, the practice of offering extrinsic rewards could be more damaging in the long run.

Some of the literature on extrinsic rewards, intrinsic rewards, motivation and student achievement suggest potential dangers in the use of extrinsic motivation (see Covington, 2002; Covington & Dray, 2002; Kohn, 1999). They believe that behavior modification programs rarely produce lasting change since changes in behavior may be temporary in the absence of extrinsic rewards, and when the reward has been obtained, the student may revert to earlier behavior (see also Kohn, 1990); students may develop a materialistic attitude toward learning and will only be motivated to learn information based on the value of the potential reward; and finally, giving students extrinsic rewards may lessen whatever intrinsic motivation they may have for that activity.

Fryer (2010) in analyzing a study conducted by Harvard University's on "Financial Incentives and Student Achievement: Evidence from Randomized Trials," where researchers conducted "cash for grades" trials in 250 urban schools, reveals that the programs lack intrinsic value. Accordingly, focusing merely on providing extrinsic rewards for student achievement without proper consideration for long-term effects of the absence of these rewards are frightening. Additionally, Lepper, Greene and Nisbett (1973), after conducting a study 'Undermining Children's Intrinsic Interest with Extrinsic Rewards: A test of 'Overjustification' hypothesis reveals that in the expected-award condition, children showed decreased interest in the drawing activity after having undertaken it in order to obtain a goal that was extrinsic to the pleasures and satisfaction of drawing in its own right. In the unexpected-award condition, on the other hand, children receiving the same extrinsic reward showed undiminished or increased interest in the activity. As such, there may be more long-term negative implications with using extrinsic reward than if intrinsic values are taught.

The Adventist Perspective
The fundamental beliefs of Adventists and the philosophical assumptions of Behaviorism appear to be in conflict as it relates to the view mankind as being created in the image and likeness of God according to Genesis 1: 27. White (1952) contends that when Adam came from the Creator's hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker"(p. 15). Conversely, Behaviorism suggests that man is like any other organism and lacks consideration for human spontaneity and creativity (Santrock, 2008). In addition, one of the major philosophical assumptions in Psychology is the issue of 'free will versus determinism' (Kalat, 2008). Behaviorism, like other psychological theories assume that human beings are devoid of free will and consequently cannot be responsible for their actions. Kalat (2008) informs that "some psychologists maintain that free will is an illusion (Wegner, 2002 as cited in Kalat, 2008, p. 5), while "other psychologists and philosophers reply that you do make decisions, in the sense that something within you initiates the action" (Baumeister, 2008, as cited in Kalat, 2008, p. 5). Further,

> "The "you" that makes your decisions is itself a product of your heredity and the events of your life. (You did not create yourself.) In a sense, yes, you have a will, an ability to make choices. But your will is not independent of all causes" (Dennett, 2003, as cited in Kalat, 2008, p. 5).

Yet, in absolute contrast, Genesis 3: 15-18, clearly show that God held Adam and Eve accountable for their decisions. These disparities in views of human nature then seem paramount to curricula development for the Adventist classroom since the goal of learning and behavioral outcomes would ultimately influence whether extrinsic rewards are used, or intrinsic motivation be an integral part of students' development. In addition, the Adventist teacher, knowing the true nature of man should want to spend time ensuring that students' attitudes in general, including academically, are changed because they are more interested in what happens on the inside of a child than by the outward behavior manifestations of change, especially when using extrinsic rewards to do so.

Though some scholars are positing that praise undermines intrinsic rewards (see the work of Henderlong and Lepper, 2002) the Bible is clear that 'life and death lies in the power of the tongue' (Proverbs 18: 21). As such, in building curricula for the Adventists classroom, teachers need to reinforce scriptures such as Philippians 4:13, Philippians 1:6, Jeremiah 29:11, and even James 1:5-6 in building the self-esteem and self-worth of children. Thoughts such as

"higher than the highest human thoughts can reach is God's ideal for His children" (White, 1952, pg. 18) can also be emphasized to assist students in recognizing that each one is special, unique and created for greatness. According to the Bible, 'a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver' (Proverbs 25: 11). The Adventist teacher then needs to be very skillful even with the use of praise as a means of intrinsically motivating students.

Overall, using extrinsic rewards in the Adventist classroom could limit behavioral conformity and student learning outcomes to mere externals while the goal of Adventist education is to restore human beings into the image of their Maker (AEP, 2001), a goal with much long-term implications. White (1952) for example asserts **"**The essence of true education is to develop the God endowed power which is akin to that of the creator i.e. individuality, "power to think and to do." The ultimate goal of education is that the students will be "thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thoughts" (p. 16); this seems to reflect largely intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy concepts. In addition, White (1943) discloses that "instead of educated weaklings, institutions of learning may send forth men strong to think and act, men who are masters and not slaves of circumstances, men who possess breadth of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions" (p. 61); again reflecting a student with positive self-esteem and self-worth awareness. As a result, extrinsic rewards may not create that type of student since in the real world and in the absence of rewards; students may not produce the desired behavior or academic goals.

Conclusion

Even though the use of extrinsic rewards have been associated with successful student achievement outcomes and behavior change, it seems to provide temporary measurable results that give no indication of inward change or actual learning, since the outcome is usually connected with receiving a reward. Accordingly, the curricula focus in an Adventist classroom should beyond the immediate or short-term outcome to having a greater impact or long-term change. Consequently, the concept of self-efficacy, Bandura (1982) suggest, is the most important factor in academic achievement since it affects effort, persistence, and goal setting. Additionally, Snowman and Biehler (2006) contend "self-efficacy affects choice of goals, expectations of success, attributions for success and failure" (p. 392). This would assist students in setting appropriate goals for achievement and not just make the student simply conditioned to respond in certain ways to certain stimuli and is at a loss when he/she confronts novel situations (Holmes, 1987 in Laryea, 2000).

With contending views ensuing both for and against the use of praise to enhance intrinsic motivation over the use of extrinsic rewards for academic achievement and behavior change, it is the express opinion of the author, that the use of extrinsic rewards alone should not be used in addressing issues relating to behavioral or student achievement outcomes in the Adventist classroom. Even Covington (2002) argues that the use of extrinsic rewards should depend on the purpose for which it is being used. Instead, Adventist teachers should be interested in developing more significant characteristics in their students such as self-efficacy (Bandura, 1982) self-esteem/ self-worth (Covington, 2002) and attribution. Further, it would be more beneficial if teachers/educators deal with root issues such as students' motivation, students' beliefs and attitudes; the absence of multicultural awareness in the classroom environment; teacher expectations of students because of socio-economic status; health and well-being, family environment, community influences, and socio-cultural contexts to discover how they can bring out the best in each student. Finally, Bandura (1969) contends, "the successful implementation of powerful reinforcement systems demands

considerable sensitivity as well as ingenuity on the part of the practitioner." Consequently, the Adventist teacher should plan curricula that centers on knowing each child and leading each one to become the very best they can be, through Christ.

Recommendations

1. Teachers should provide lots of verbal affirmation to students. Daily remind students that they can do anything through Christ. Biblical texts and other positive thoughts can be incorporated into the curricula and also posted around the classroom as ornamental strategies. In addition, Bandura (1982) proposes that in building self-efficacy of students, one of the four ways a teacher can accomplish that is by providing verbal persuasion; while Henderlong and Lepper (2002) suggest that sincere praise can serve as a positive reinforcer.

2. Let children know that God is always willing and ready to help if they ask. Use key texts such as, Matthew 7: 7; James 1:5; and Hebrews 1:14.

3. When using extrinsic rewards, all children should be rewarded. Those who meet the criterion can be given something extra, but no child should feel incompetent since all children may have worked hard at preparation even though the outcomes differed. Further, words of praise should always accompany the actions of the teacher and the rewards.

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