Exploring the Efficacy of the Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) Program at Promoting Student Motivation

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EXPLORING THE EFFICACY OF THE ADVANCEMENT VIA INDIVIDUAL DETERMINATION (AVID) PROGRAM AT PROMOTING STUDENT MOTIVATION

by

Nya Janet’ Thompson

A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College

Oxford, MS
May 2024

Approved By

Advisor: Professor Joshua R. Eyler

Reader: Tom Brady

Reader: Jennifer L. Parsons
DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this work to my mom. Her guidance, grace, and willing to give is incomparable. Without her, I wouldn't have the joy of my brother, Oliver, and my sister, Kia. Furthermore, the women in my life at home, work, academia, and church serve as my beacons of strength and determination. I also dedicate this work to the students I have had the privilege to learn alongside, and the students I will learn from in the future.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College and the Mississippi Excellence in Teaching Program have been indescribably supportive throughout my undergraduate career. The professors and staff who have taken the time to know me for more than just words on a paper have forever shaped my mindset of higher education. The Stamps Foundation’s support has been an invaluable blessing through mentorship and research opportunities. I am especially appreciative of Dr. Eyler’s, Dr. Brady’s, and Dr. Parsons’ guidance and involvement in polishing this research for the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.
ABSTRACT

Exploring the Efficacy of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program At Promoting Student Motivation (Under the direction of Dr. Joshua R. Eyler)

The Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program was founded by Mary Katherine Swanson in 1980 in Southern California. She created the program as a social justice initiative to provide additional resources to her students of marginalized backgrounds (e.g., low socioeconomic status, racial and ethnic backgrounds) to prepare them to graduate high school and be accepted into colleges. Decades later, the AVID program is nationwide, but there is only one school district in Mississippi with this program that is founded on the roots of equity. In this specific school district located in Northern Mississippi, the AVID program is available in elementary, middle, and high schools. This study analyzes the effectiveness of the 7th-8th grade middle school AVID program, and answers the research question, ‘To what extent does AVID promote motivation to the 7th-8th graders who have chosen to participate in the AVID elective?’ The research enacted in this study will analyze student motivation through Ryan and Deci’s Self-Determination Theory, which identifies intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, self-determination, and the promotion of student autonomy. The study found that out of 56 students, all showed a positive correlation with AVID’s efficacy in promoting their intrinsic motivation,
community involvement, preparation for college and careers, and their self-determination. This study is crucial to students of lower socioeconomic classes, students of historically marginalized backgrounds (e.g., Black, Latinx), and students who are in the ‘academic middle’, meaning they are typically C- average students who need additional resources to succeed. In the context of Mississippi, where many students do not participate in college preparatory programs, such as AP courses, this research can be used to promote the efficacy of all students through an additional support system such as AVID, which prepares students for AP exams, college, and real-world issues.
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VII
INTRODUCTION

The Advancement Via Individual Determination Program is a program that was started in 1980 by Mary Katherine Swanson, an English teacher who worked in an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse school district in southern California. She was aware of the inequitable access that these students encountered to gain motivation and confidence to attend college and sustain the motivation long enough to graduate. As an advocate for social justice in educational practices, she created the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program. As a former tutor with seniors in the high school AVID Program, I was able to see the fruits of the students’ work motivation. In this thesis, I will introduce Self-determination Theory (SDT), and correlate intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and self-determined motivation to factors such as age, environment, and culture. From there, I will list methods that educators can support students’ autonomy and the benefits of autonomy-supportive teaching. Next, the thesis will introduce the background of the AVID Program and its national goals. The study will be centered on the only current AVID program in the state of Mississippi. While the program is currently in the school district’s 5th-12th grade, I will be measuring the students’ responses to the anonymous survey that asks questions related to AVID’s role in developing student autonomy and intrinsic motivation, specifically in the 7th-8th grade middle school. The survey is composed of five questions on a Likert-based scale. The students are hypothesized to have a positive response to the questions, as the literature entails the AVID program is a resource where students can gain
equitable access to college and career readiness, and gain motivation in their selves. Measures on why a program like AVID is beneficial to students will be further contextualized based on Mississippi AP statistics since AVID’s college and career goals are centered around providing resources to students in the ‘academic middle.’
Chapter I: Self-Determination Theory

Initiatives such as the reward system utilize a behaviorist approach to education, where students are rewarded for their desirable behaviors, and is often utilized to increase motivation for students academically. The tenure of this motivation depends on whether students are gaining their source of motivation intrinsically or extrinsically. Research shows that intrinsic motivation allows students to engage in activities that are done out of inherent curiosity and enjoyment, which leads to a better enjoyment of learning and an overall better academic performance. Self-Determination Theory defends this notion, as students who have autonomy, or responsibility of self, are more likely to be successful academically. Student motivation in the K-12 public education system is often incentivized through the reward system as an extrinsic source of motivation, but studies have shown that the promotion of intrinsic motivation is exceedingly more beneficial to students. Richard Ryan and Edward Deci articulate that extrinsic and intrinsic motivations are outlined within the framework of Self-Determination theory, which emphasizes people’s inherent sources of motivation for learning and growing (Ryan and Deci 2020). A focal point of Self-Determination Theory is that it argues for the basic psychological needs of students, the most fundamental of those being autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Self-Determination and Age

A student’s age is an aspect of gauging intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that has recently been studied. In Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivational Orientations in the Classroom: Age Differences and Academic Correlates, researchers studied the differences between 3rd-8th
graders, where intrinsic motivation was found to steadily decrease with the students’ age, but was positively correlated with students’ grades, whereas extrinsic motivation remained consistent, but negatively correlated with the students’ grades. Corpus et al. state, “...one might expect extrinsic motivation to be higher for older children…rewards and contingencies that teachers and parents provide may lose their power over time, as adolescents may increasingly value the peer group and decreasingly value authority figures” (185). This study relates that as students’ age, their values change, and may respond less to the extrinsic motivation of rewards, but to the newly established motivation of their peer group. Extrinsic motivations that the student establishes autonomy from is defined as self-determined because it is a conscious decision by the student.

In the study, *Intrinsic and Extrinsic School Motivation as a Function of Age: the Mediating Role of Autonomy Support*, Nicolas Gillet, Robert J. Vallerand, and Marc-André K. Lafrenière, research the relationship between age and Ryan and Deci’s self-determination theory. In a sample of 1,600 Canadian elementary and high school students aged 9-17 years old, the results revealed that intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation decreased from the age 9-12 and stabilized until the age of 15, until it rose again after this point. The researchers measured this level of motivation through the Intrinsic and Extrinsic Orientation Scale based on studies from Ryan and Deci. A notable aspect of this research is also how the students responded to autonomy support from their teachers through statements such as, “My teachers generally give me the opportunity to make my own decisions,” and the students were able to form their own opinions through the 5-point Likert scale. The study found that teacher autonomy support decreases sharply up to 12 years old and slowly stabilizes after that point. Both studies share a common trait that as students age, their sense of motivation decreases before it is eventually
stabilized. The student’s recognition of a lack of autonomy-supportive instruction implies that student motivation and an autonomy-supportive classroom correlate. The research in this study is conducted on students ages 12-14 years old in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program. It is hypothesized that the students will have an increased sense of motivation as participants in this program, in comparison to students who are not receiving autonomy-supportive instruction.

Self-Determination and Culture

The relationship between age and motivation can be further complicated by culture. In this study, Corpus et al. related ethnic background to the students’ responses of motivation. The researchers were curious about the impact of familial involvement as a measurement of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation for students. They ask the question as it relates to Western culture in comparison to more ethnically diverse cultures, “Is working to please one’s mother extrinsic—as has been traditionally assumed in Western research—or intrinsic—as might be the case when mother constitutes a significant part of the self?” (186). To the surprise of the authors, the context of Asian American students in comparison to European-American students resulted in few differences of motivation based on ethnicity and cultural contrasts. Self-determination theory, therefore, looks to promote more autonomous forms of motivation that promote student wellness and other psychological needs that have been found necessary across cultural contexts. While cultural context itself is not believed to hinder a student’s level of motivation, the opportunity and academic gap that results from these contexts can play a role in a student’s perception of self. In The Flat World and Education: How America’s Commitment to Equity Will Determine Our Future, this “gap” is described as differences in “access to key educational resources- expert teachers, personalized attention, high-quality curriculum opportunities, good
According to SDT, autonomy is universal but differences in people, such as culture or class, are acknowledged. Ryan and Deci state, “Autonomy support is an essential part of the arts of teaching and mentoring, as autonomy support entails an interest in the learner’s needs, barriers, and resources, whether they be cognitive, emotional or cultural” (p.10). Therefore, encouraging student autonomy can vary based on additional factors, but is readily available to be cultivated in all students. In the international study, Factors Influencing Academic Motivation of Ethnic Minority Students: A Review, researchers reviewed published articles that measured student motivation in relation to their racial, ethnic, and national background, as the researchers use these terms interchangeably. The studies were performed in countries with a European majority, such as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Belgium as well as Anglo-Saxon dominant countries that are English-speaking such as Australia and the United States (7). They found main categories that influenced academic motivation for these students: Individual factors (e.g., well-being, self-efficacy, confidence, ethnic identity and orientation, beliefs and values of education), family-related factors (e.g., familial obligations, support, values, background, and socioeconomic status), school-related factors (school environment, academic achievement, and school/teacher support), and social factors (peer influence/support, neighborhood situation, discrimination/racism). The researchers determined that these factors could play a positive and negative role in ethnic students. For instance, racial discrimination was found to be an intrinsic motivator as students used their fears as a motivational factor, whereas there were also negative perceptions of racial discrimination. Additionally, the researchers were able to determine that in seven articles that took sex into account women were found to be more intrinsically motivated
than ethnic minority men (17). They also recognized the wide variety of definitions and measurements of motivations.

With diverse learners in classrooms, a diverse set of needs is accounted for in the structure of a classroom. Contextual information such as the free/reduced lunch rate, technological access, and ethnic backgrounds of the school district’s population can relate to the motivation of a student. In this study, contextual information of the school district is present to further understand the social benefit for students’ participation in the Advancement Via Individual Determination program.

Relatedly, self-efficacy, according to Bandura (1997) is defined as “beliefs in one’s own capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainments” (p.3). Once a student has the belief in their self, their level of self-motivation will follow suit. However, if a student lacks belief in their self, they will encounter amotivation, a discouraging trope in the classroom where students will lack the drive to perform or have lost interest in a topic. Amotivation can be used a predictor of a student’s wellness (Ryan & Deci). The benefits of encouraging students to develop intrinsic motivation include higher performance and achievement in students, including those with historically socially limiting factors (Froiland, 2016). Extrinsic motivation contrasts with intrinsic motivation, in that the source of motivation is found in outside factors, such as rewards. Extrinsic motivators often appeal to students because of the instant gratification that occurs when a reward is earned, but the gratification is not sustained. These motivations can be sourced in every student, but the educator should consider various contextual factors.
Autonomy-Supported Teaching

There are research-based practices to promote student autonomy within the framework of Self Determination Theory in the secondary classroom. Reeve and Halusic outline how students benefit when teachers support their autonomy, based on evidence from increase in motivation, learning, engagement, and overall well-being. Teachers must self-reflect and evaluate questions to assess how to incorporate autonomy-supported teaching into their classrooms. According to Reeve and Halusic, the goal of autonomy-supportive teaching is to develop the inner resources of motivation that is already harbored in students (146). As the teacher structures an autonomy-supportive classroom, the students will view classroom participation as an opportunity to invest in their personal interests, developments, and goals. The educator can consciously consider the students’ interests in the lessons they are teaching and the relevance of the subject matter. While most professional educators are aware of these strategies, it is important to acknowledge the benefits the students can receive intrinsically. An increase in encouragement for students to seek intrinsic motivation creates space for a discussion on student wellness and mental health. When educators utilize autonomy-supportive teaching, the students are also more likely to experience a higher self-esteem.

Autonomy-Supported Teaching and Structure

Generally, a misunderstood perception of an autonomy-supported classroom is that the classroom loses structure or undergoes high permissiveness, yet some claim that the autonomy-supportive classroom provides more structure. The issue with the term structure is that it is often conflated with control, leading to a more authoritarian classroom climate, which leads to less opportunity to encourage student motivation. Autonomy-supportive teaching still includes instructional behaviors of setting clear expectations, guidance for students’ activity, and
constructive feedback, yet these are centered around the students’ learning. Self-determination Theory acknowledges the idea of control and structure as separate in nature. The most positive teaching styles are a result of high levels of autonomy support and structure (Ryan & Deci). Properly scaffolded lessons lessen a student’s potential to face non-optimal challenges. Student anxiety, from there, can be lowered. Student well-being and its relation to autonomy-supportive teaching is a topic that is still being researched, but research proves that a lower amount of anxiety, depression, and insecurity occurs in autonomy-supported classrooms.

**Autonomy-Supportive Instructional Strategies**

Student engagement is an observable component of the classroom. The student’s engagement can be assessed for motivation with the initiation of a behavior, such as the educator’s method of introducing a new lesson. There are different instructional strategies proven to promote student internal motivation as well as the basic psychological needs for autonomy. If motivation relates to the existence of a specific behavior until the goal of the motivation is recognized, then students need specific instructional strategies to hone their engagement. According to Reeve and Halusic, teaching strategies such as mastery goal climate, optimal challenge, constructive feedback, and relatedness allow students to engage deeply with their assignments. Feedback, like anything, can also be used against students if it is used as controlling or added pressure on students. In our current state of education, the grading system has been used as a method of punishing students. If students do not turn in “quality” work, they can be deducted based on the work turned in. Grades have a strong potential in creating a negative effect on student learning and motivation efforts, hence students cheating or submitting incomplete work. Ryan and Deci’s interpretation of SDT recognizes that when grades are used as motivator, it creates a controlling, negative environment, which diminishes the autonomous
motives to learn. This relates back to the definition of extrinsic motivation, where, if a student does meet the criteria of an assignment, the reward could be the high grade. Student wellness, once again, can decrease because of a controlling style of grading. This is not an example of sustainable learning and student engagement, as a student associates learning with a completed assignment, and not to the measure of enjoyment in the material itself. Grades are often used between students and classes comparatively, leading to a concern in performance-driven goals’ effect on student efficacy and student intrinsic motivation. Teachers who attempt to understand student perspectives and provide students with meaningful rationale and choices also promote student motivation through autonomy-supportive measures (Ryan & Deci). The SDT framework acknowledges that teachers need this support to maintain the autonomy promotion in their student
CHAPTER II: THE ADVANCEMENT VIA INDIVIDUAL DETERMINATION (AVID) PROGRAM

In 1980, Mary Catherine Swanson had 15 years of diversified teaching experience with every high school grade level and ability. As English department chair, she believed if students were keen to hard work, then she could teach them the necessary skills to be college-ready, which was the catalyst of the first 32 students being enrolled in the first AVID class at Clairemont High School (Heritage Story). The acronym AVID stems from the Latin word avidus meaning eager for knowledge (Swanson, Mehan, Hubbard 1993). The wordplay itself portrays the program’s emphasis on student determination. Swanson makes empathetic statements in her report, *The Avid Classroom: A System of Academic and Social Supports for Low-Achieving Students*, “As an English teacher, I knew the value of using writing as a tool of learning…because the purpose of much of our writing was to gain an understanding of concepts rather than to publish, students were encouraged to write and speak in a non-threatening atmosphere…” (page 6). Displaying a passion in promoting confidence in her students while holding them to a rigorous standard, Swanson steered the creation of an equitable program for students. By 2018, AVID was implemented in more than 6,400 schools in 47 states across the U.S., Canada, and Australia and impacted circa 2 million students in grades K-12 and 50 postsecondary institutions.

The mission of the AVID program is to close the educational opportunity gap by preparing all students for college and career readiness and success, especially among African
American, Alaskan/Native American, Latino, and low-income students who are most underrepresented in postsecondary education, and to restructure secondary school teaching methodologies to allow college preparatory curricula to be accessible to all students (Swanson, Mehan, Hubbard, 1993). College and career readiness includes skills centered on “rigorous academic preparedness, opportunity knowledge, and student agency.” In *The Flat World and Education*, Darling-Hammond defines the opportunity gap as accumulated differences in access to key educational resources—expert teachers, personalized attention, high-quality curriculum opportunities, good educational materials, and plentiful information resources—that support learning at home and school (2010). Different factors, such as environment, linguistic capability, income, and family are influences of educational opportunity gaps. To alleviate the opportunity gap, AVID students have the support to become more involved in extracurricular activities, interact with individuals from a variety of professional fields, and learn aspects of college, the admissions process, and financial commitments. AVID teachers also assist students in the college process by hosting field trips to different college campuses, where, for many students, this is their first opportunity to visit a college campus (Swanson, et al., 1993). The AVID website goes further to explain that a collective educator agency that insists on rigor, breaking down barriers, alignment of work, and advocating for students are all essential to the AVID College and Career Readiness Framework. While the framework includes educators in the structures necessary to encourage student engagement, AVID recognizes that the development of skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, reading, writing, and relationship building are rooted in students’ belief in self. A student’s belief in self is an aspect of the SDT created by Ryan and Deci.
In *The Impact of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) On Hispanic Students’ Achievement* Guerra writes, “From the onset of AVID, it was evident that the program had the potential to change lives by challenging students’ self-identity, scaffolding curriculum, and providing necessary support to accomplish goals” (Guerra, 2017, p. 16). As it relates to the self-determination theory, the AVID program is highly equipped to promote student autonomy as the program’s pedagogy emphasizes students to be responsible for their learning (Swanson, Marcus, and Elliot 2000). Resources and academic support are essential to prepare students for postsecondary success and the lessening of the academic opportunity gap, and the AVID program is equipped in preparing underserved students with these opportunities and promote a sense of self.

**AVID and Students with Social Obstacles**

Socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds have been researched to affect students’ self-efficacy. There is a multiplicity of challenges for students from families of low-income that increase the difficulty for them to prepare for and enter college (Bernhardt, 2012). Bernhardt continues, “These factors include, but are not limited to, an inability to secure financial aid, a lack of support in the application process, and insufficient academic preparation” (2012, p. 208). Programs such as AVID, therefore, seek to close this gap in preparation for students, with Swanson’s creation of the program establishing it as a model for social justice. The AVID program works as a resource to change a student’s potential to collegiate access through the education of strategies that assist economic, ethnic, and other minorities to overcome inherent obstacles (Matthews, 2015). High schools are currently in the process of targeting at-risk youth based on racial subgroups, socioeconomic background, and whether the student would be a first-generation college student (Woolridge, 2017). Additionally, according to Bernhaldt, the AVID
The school’s student population had 290 students who were eligible for free lunch and 404 students who were eligible for reduced lunch in the 2022-2023 school year. This makes a total of 694/697 between the seventh and eighth grade who come from low income-based families. For reference, the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program for Mississippi includes a table that represents the annual household income limits prior to taxes that must be met in order to obtain the status of free/reduced lunch if you are a parent or primary caregiver that is responsible for a child(ren) who are in high school or under(https://www.benefits.gov/benefit/1999).

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Students are able to socialize in the AVID classroom and recognize that they are academically oriented, thus creating a space to develop an academically oriented identity (Swanson et al. 1993). The AVID program has evidence of having the potential to challenge students’ self-identity and provide the correct support for students of marginalized backgrounds.
(Guerra 2017). The sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, coined the term, cultural capital, which can be influenced by a dominant culture’s values and norms and can provide different social, economic, and academic advantages to specific members of society. It occurs in families, but also hierarchal institutions such as educational systems and workplaces. The dominant middle and upper-class culture create the standards for values in the United States. Swanson states that children of middle and upper-middle income routinely gain access to the curriculum that is not explicitly stated in schools through social practices in their homes, whereas students of low-income parents are less likely to acquire this knowledge since their parents oftentimes have not had “direct, personal experience with the vagaries of the higher education process” (Swanson, 1993, p. 22). Acquisition of cultural capital within the school setting is an example of barriers for underserved students. Low-income students are still highly underrepresented in courses considered part of a high-quality, rigorous academic curriculum (Bernhardt, p. 206). Bernhardt asserts that the AVID Program can be a means for students to acquire cultural capital “to address the different ways the program provides consistent support to students enrolled in an academically rigorous course of study, creates opportunities for program participants and their families to engage in the college preparation process, and facilitates the developments of a broad network of support mechanisms, both inside and outside the classroom” (p. 210).

**The AVID Program, Middle School, and College Readiness**

A study in a coastal Florida School District among African American and Latino students found that the length of exposure in the AVID program had a small but positive correlation to self-efficacy in academic achievement, particularly in African American students. The self-efficacy in Latino students, however, was found to need improvement. (Pugh and Tschannen-Moran, 2016). Middle school is an ideal time to teach students skills that are necessary for
adulthood, especially self-awareness, self-monitoring, and self-advocacy skills to increase their productivity (Woolridge, 2017). Students can enter the program at any level, but it is most beneficial for students to begin in middle school or as they enter high school because of the social and academic benefits, such as an increased awareness of extracurriculars and the financial aid process (Bernhardt, 2012). Additionally, Huerta, Watt, and Butcher found in their research Examining Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) and its Impact on Middle School Rigor and Student Preparedness that compared AVID students who began the program in middle school rather than high school had completed more AP courses than the students who enrolled in the program only in high school (p. 34, 2013). Since Swanson et al. published their research in 1993, it is noted also that “the longer students are in the program, the more ties seem to intensify” (p. 20).

**AVID in Northern Mississippi School District**

Bernhardt states that AVID students are usually recommended to the program by at least one teacher and the student’s parent(s). The students are typically asked to interview with the AVID coordinator to ensure the student’s interest and commitment to the program. The AVID program at this school district in North Mississippi is school-wide at the intermediate school, which houses grades 5-6. In 7th-12th grade, the students are available to apply for participation in the AVID program as an elective course. This district’s criteria for students interested in applying to the program is in conjunction with the national AVID board standards. The student must submit an application to the site coordinator and undergo an interview process. The students must have the “potential and desire” to attend a four-year college and:

- are generally in the “academic middle”, or B/C students,
• have a 2.0 to 3.5 GPA and average to high test scores and are on grade level in reading and math
• are capable of being successful in rigorous curriculum and willing to enroll in Honors or Advanced Placement (AP) courses through grades 6-12,
• have a good attendance record and positive work habits, and/or
• possess a special circumstance where AVID can support.

The students are recommended to the AVID program by a teacher, counselor, parent, or themselves. The AVID site team (composed of an administrator, counselor, AVID site coordinator, and teachers) select students for enrollment each year. In this year’s program, there are thirty-six 7th grade students and twenty-four 8th grade students, totaling 60 students in the program.

The population of this town in Northern Mississippi can be considered when reviewing the study, as we know that contextual factors of location can influence a student’s drive. The city’s population was 26,437 in 2022, and is demographically broken into 68.5% white, 25.7% Black, .1% American Indian or Alaska Native, 2.6% Asian, 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 2.1% two or more races, 1.9% Hispanic or Latino. From 2018-2022, there were 88.9% of housing that had a broadband internet subscription and 96.7% of households had a computer. The percentage of people in poverty in this city is 28.1%. The community is greatly influenced by the major university that resides within its limits. The University’s resources pour into the school district, such as college students as tutors and religious leaders for the middle schoolers. The school district is comprised of seven schools that serve PreK-12th grades, and serves 4800+ students, which classifies it as a 7A district in the state of Mississippi. It has repeatedly been
ranked an “A” school district by the Mississippi Department of Education. According to the 2022-2023 school year, the middle school had 333 students in 7th grade, 361 students in 8th grade, and three who were ungraded totaling 697 students. The student-to-teacher ratio is 14.71 (15).

The students' ethnic backgrounds consist of:

- American Indian/Alaskan Native: 1
- Asian: 29
- Black: 247
- Hispanic: 49
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0
- White: 339
- Two or more races: 32
- 290 students are eligible for free lunch and 404 who are eligible for reduced lunch. This is 694/697 students for the 2022-2023 school year.

**Description of the Middle School AVID Environment**

Throughout the middle school, there are yellow and blue posters that promote students to seek AVID as an elective. The poster is entitled “Join us in our AVID Elective 7th-12th grade, and highlights study skills, collaboration, real-world lessons, and college and career readiness as benefits of applying to the class. The poster is decorated with pictures of students who have participated in the program. The classroom itself is spacious with multiple seating arrangements, college paraphernalia, and AVID-based posters along the wall. Upon classroom visits, I have seen the students engaged in various elements, such as group work and discussions on mental
The students appear to be very comfortable with the AVID teacher as they have had conversations around culture and opportunities to ‘vent’ frustrations.

The AVID program at this school has a school-wide culture. On WICOR Wednesdays, teachers and students are encouraged to wear college shirts to promote higher education. There are occasional competitions where the AVID instructor will select the teacher with the best college attire or the student with the best college attire, where people can win gift cards from local communities. The AVID instructor reaches out to local businesses to donate their gift cards or certificates for teachers and students to have the opportunity to win. When I suggested the restaurant that I work at parttime, for instance, she was able to gain multiple gift cards from the manager to distribute to teachers. The AVID instructor also had a school-wide initiative to have a door decorating competition between teachers. The parameters of the contest were for teachers to decorate their door with their college alma mater. I participated by assisting my teacher decorate her door with the colors of the University of Mississippi.

In this Middle School, students participate in four college visits each school year and multiple ongoing community service projects. For the 2023-2024 school year, the students participated in being ‘reading buddies’ to kindergarten and first grade students at the local elementary school. The students have donated over one thousand food items to the local food pantry, over one hundred fuzzy socks to the local nursing home and have surprised their teachers with various treats on Valentine’s Day. More recently, the AVID program partnered with the Middle School’s Student Council to have their Spring Dance, where the proceeds were used to donate care snacks, named LovePacks, for families in the community who are in need.

The classroom’s schedule is diversified based on activities.

*Monday*: AVID Curriculum (Includes hands-on activities)
Tuesday: Tutorials (College Tutor Assistance)

Wednesday: AVID Curriculum (WICOR Wednesday hands-on activities)

Thursday: Tutorials (College Tutor Assistance)

Friday: Fun Friday (Binder Evaluation, Field Trips, Speakers, Motivational Activities)

In the AVID program, Wicor stands for Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading. It is a learning model that AVID uses to help students learn at higher levels and increase rigor in the classroom. The following are AVID-certified examples for WICOR Wednesday:

- Writing: Cornell Notes, Learning Logs, Quick writes, Reflections, Peer Evaluations
- Inquiry: Costa’s Level of Thinking, Socratic Seminars, Tutorials, Questions that Guide Research
- Collaboration: Socratic Seminars, Tutorials, Group Activities, Group Projects, Service Learning Projects
- Organization: Binders, Calendars, Planners, Agendas, Graphic Organizers, Focused Notes, Tutorials, Study Groups,
- Reading: Reading Strategies, Note-taking, Graphic Organizers, Vocab Building,
- Summarizing
CHAPTER III: MISSISSIPPI AND AP TESTING

With a large goal of the AVID program being college readiness, the measurement of student preparation in this aspect is assessed through student AP course enrollment. As this school district is the sole district in Mississippi with the AVID program, context on Mississippi’s current student participation in AP coursework is necessary to understand the value of college readiness. In the year 2023-2024, 436,523 students are enrolled in public education, yet just 2.75% participated in taking 16,983 AP exams. 34.5% earned a qualifying score for the 2023 graduating class. According to the Mississippi Department of Education, this was a 14.3% increase of students taking AP exams compared to 2021-2022, a 14.8% increase of tests taken, and a 5.1% increase of exams with a qualifying score of three or higher. Additionally, Hispanic and African American students achieved the greatest AP gains with the number of Hispanic students earning a qualifying score increased.

These numbers are undoubtedly positive, especially when Mississippi does have equitable policies in place to try to provide students with access to these exams. The Department of Education states that Mississippi is one of thirty states with a statewide AP credit policy, meaning that students who earn a qualifying score of three or higher on their AP exam can earn college credit. This is greatly to the overall financial benefit of the student. The Mississippi Board of Education requires all high schools to offer and enroll students in advanced courses including AP courses in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. It offers funding for districts and schools to cover the cost of low-income students’ AP exam fees. In 2013, the Southern
Education Foundation found in their research that Mississippi led the nation with the highest rate of low-income students. 71 percent of public school children were found to be low-income, compared to the national average of 51 percent. Methods of teaching students from low-income backgrounds can differ from methods of teaching students from a middle to high income household. Sustainable education, a goal acknowledged by the United Nations that promotes inclusive and quality education, is necessary for all students, especially those with limited access to resources.

In schools where there are limited opportunities, programs such as AVID are often not implemented due to school budgets, but teachers can enhance curriculum when AP courses are not available and use the AVID strategies to enhance student rigor (Huerta, Watt, and Butcher, 2013).
CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the process of acquiring data in the 7th-8th grade middle school’s AVID program and its relation to Self Determination Theory. The purpose of this study is to analyze how the current 7th-8th grade students who participate in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program relate the program to their current trends in motivation. The AVID program can offer equitable access for many students and promote autonomy in the public-school setting, which in turn, promotes more self confidence in students. Hypothetically, with students gaining more confidence and motivation, a more equitable opportunity for college-readiness emerges. With this program being implemented in a Northern Mississippi middle school, its efficacy in promoting student agency can spread awareness to more public school districts in the state to lessen the disparity in the education opportunity gap. The research findings are examined through the lens of Self Determination Theory to identify how and if a student felt a promotion of internal motivations through the AVID program.

I began my practicum in the fall of 2023 at this middle school in Northern Mississippi. From there, I conversed with the AVID instructor about the structure of the AVID class and observed 2 blocks of the AVID classroom that semester. I have been able to student teach in the 8th grade English classroom where many students who participate in AVID are enrolled in the English cla
Once approved by my thesis advisor, I completed the online CITI program on Human Research. Next, I applied for approval from the principal of the middle school to begin research. From there, I uploaded the principal’s approval, my parental consent forms, and verbal script to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. Once the IRB approved my research, I was in contact with the AVID instructor, but due to field trip conflicts and Spring Break, the survey was given three weeks after approval. The survey was created using the Qualtrics platform on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 is never, 2 is rarely, 3 is sometimes, 4 is very often, and 5 is always. The *Self Determination AVID Student Survey* was sent to current students enrolled in the AVID elective course via email as an attached link. The students had a week to return parental opt-out forms. As I have been observing and teaching in this middle school throughout the 2023-2024 school year, I have noticed the time constraint of the period school schedule, where each class period is roughly 47 minutes. Therefore, to ensure student completion of the survey in an adequate amount of time to not take away from the AVID instructor’s class time I asked five questions based on Likert scale measurements.

The questions were as follows:

I. To what extent do your activities in AVID prepare you to think in a community-oriented way?

II. To what extent does participation in AVID strengthen your intrinsic motivation?

III. To what extent do you have a choice selection in your assignments in your AVID elective course?
IV. To what extent do your activities in AVID prepare you for college and careers?

V. To what extent would you say AVID has increased your self-determination?

These survey questions will be used to evaluate the overall research question: To what extent does AVID promote intrinsic motivation, autonomy, and student confidence to the seventh-eighth graders who have chosen to participate in the Avid elective? I chose the question, ‘To what extent do your activities in AVID prepare you to think in a community-oriented way?’ as a goal for the AVID program is for students to build a sense of community. Schools with successful AVID models strive for this high sense of fostered community between school support staff and local businesses and stakeholders (Bernhaldt, 2012, Guerra 2017). Additionally, the role of community within the school itself is important, such as interaction between guidance counselors, career specialists, and other relevant school staff. I asked the question, ‘To what extent does AVID strengthen your intrinsic motivation?’ as a connection to self-determination theory. According to Bernhaldt, “...students are taught to self-advocate, encouraged to take responsibility for their education, and exposed to various strategies for effectively collaborating and interacting with teachers, administrators, counselors, and other school personnel” (213). The AVID program has implementations for how the educator’s role plays a major factor in student success. The educator should transform into a more facilitator role that promotes students’ self-efficacy (Guerra 2017). I asked the question, ‘To what extent do you have a choice selection in your assignments in your AVID elective course?’ as student choice in their assignments is outlined as a method of promoting student motivation. Additionally, students must be intrinsically motivated for the potential extra homework and advanced coursework.
(NWEA, University of Portland, 2015). Therefore, questions for students that pertain to intrinsic motivation and self-determination through the AVID program are hypothesized to be positive.

Question 4, ‘To what extent do your activities in AVID prepare you for college and careers?’ relates to a dominant goal of the AVID program, as it is to prepare students for college and to equip them with the tools necessary to continue their higher education. Every question aligns with an aspect that the AVID program sets as its goals.
CHAPTER V: RESULTS & LIMITATIONS

Introduction to Results of the Student Survey

The survey was given to students between two days to account for student absences. On the first day, there was an error in the security settings on the survey, so the first period did not take it until the second day. However, the rest of the class periods were able to take the survey with zero issues. In total, 56 students were able to complete the survey. The positive measure of student motivation will be determined based on the sum of the Very Often and Always columns, whereas a negative impact will be scored based on the sum of the Never, Rarely, and Sometimes columns.

The data table for Question 1 is shown below. Of the 56 students, 48 selected that the activities in AVID prepared them to think in a community-oriented way very often or always. This 86% shows the positive impact the AVID program has on the current 7th-8th graders and their culmination of relationship building in their local community. Eight students, or 14%, responded that the extent to which the activities in AVID prepares them to think in a community-oriented way was just sometimes or rarely. Based on the literature, the results are consistent that the AVID program is effective in creating a sense of community and collaboration for students.
Question 1: To what extent do your activities in AVID prepare you to think in a community-oriented way?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Counts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data table for Question 2 is shown below. Of the 56 students, 48 selected that their participation in AVID has strengthened their intrinsic motivation, totaling 86% of students benefiting intrinsically from the program. Significantly, the 8 students who chose sometimes can potentially reflect a misunderstanding of the source of intrinsic motivation. For future research, it would be beneficial to provide students with a standard definition of intrinsic motivation, whether on the verbal script or in the survey question itself. Another discrepancy in this question is that it could have been more beneficial to conduct a survey on measuring student motivation and then displaying a question such as this one specifically to the AVID program. Another way to understand the relatively high account of ‘sometimes’ in comparison to the ‘rarely’ or ‘never’ column can be that these students are feeling both extrinsically and intrinsically motivated through the AVID program. If we were to consider AVID’s activities such as Wednesday School Spirit/College Day or the field trips as a social outing for students, then there are extrinsic factors
to gain in the program. Moreover, it is worth considering how much do the students value their extrinsic motivation, as the AVID program’s field trips and social events could be a standard of extrinsic motivation. A better way to format this question for future research could be to ask students if AVID is more extrinsically benefitting rather than intrinsically benefitting.

**Question 2: To what extent does participation in AVID strengthen your intrinsic motivation?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Counts</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data table for Question 3 is shown below. Of the 56 students, 23 selected that they have a choice selection in their AVID assignments, whereas 33 students selected that they sometimes have choice in their assignments. Choice was not a specific aspect of the AVID program, but it is an aspect of Ryan and Deci’s self-determination theory. To account for this negative response, future research can ask students whether they experience more choice in their general education courses. From this response, a new potential research question can be made on whether the general education instructors are offering an autonomy-supportive environment. Even with the students’ answers determining that they do not have a large amount of choice in the AVID classroom, it is positive to note that their feelings of self-determination and intrinsic motivation were not negatively affected.
Question 3: To what extent do you have a choice selection in your assignments in your AVID elective course?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Selection</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
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<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>52%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data table for Question 4 is shown below. Of the 56 students, 51 students selected that their activities in AVID enables them with college and career readiness. A small 9% selected that the AVID program does not prepare them in this aspect. The near half-way split between ‘very often’ and ‘always’ is of interest, as out of the five questions, this one had the most even split between these two options, specifically. These split results could be due to the wording of the question that asks for college and career. There is a possibility that some students specifically feel more prepared for a ‘career’ in comparison to how they feel for college. I also could have provided more of an explanation on my definition of ‘college’. While writing the question, I generalize 2-year and 4-year colleges. There could be an assumption that the students were mainly thinking of a 4-year (university) as they are located near a medium-sized SEC University. However, there is also a 2-year community college that is local to the community. The AVID Middle Schoolers have opportunities to tour and visit universities, but there is the potential that there is more of an emphasis on college opportunities.
Question 4: To what extent do your activities in AVID prepare you for college and careers?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Counts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data table for Question 5 is shown below. Of the 56 students, 46 selected that participating in the AVID Program increases their self-determination. This response is 1 student greater than the response of Question 2: To what extent does AVID increase your intrinsic motivation, where 46 students responded positively. The resulting similarity in student responses between Question #5 and Question #2 is a positive comparison because self-determined extrinsic motivation entails a high level of individual autonomy, which relates to the similarity of results in intrinsic motivation. The consistency in these results reflects that the students have gained a sense of motivation through the AVID Program.

Question 5: To what extent would you say AVID has increased your self-determination?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Counts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very Often</strong></td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Always</strong></td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSION

This large, diverse school district in Northern Mississippi has the resources of a large University and the benefit of the implementation of the AVID program at various grade levels in their district. The AVID program’s history is founded on the premise of social justice to aid underserved, marginalized students to increase their chances of postsecondary success and lessen the opportunity gap. The program instills in students a sense of self purpose. Currently, this district in Northern Mississippi is the only district in the state with this program. The students collaborate with community members, gain resources to better understanding higher education, college, and careers, as well as tutoring from students from the University within the community.

This research study contextualized Ryan and Deci’s Self Determination Theory to determine the AVID Program’s efficacy in promoting student motivation at the middle school level. Ryan and Deci’s Self Determination Theory analyzes intrinsic, extrinsic, and self-determined motivations. Intrinsic motivation is when a student enjoys learning and completes tasks out of genuine interest. This is the most sustainable source of motivation, as it leads to more self-fulfillment. Extrinsic motivation is more short lived than intrinsic motivation as it is sourced from the desire to earn a reward. Self-determined extrinsic motivation is a more autonomous form of extrinsic motivation. In the public-school setting, especially in middle school, students are developing their sense of self and purpose. According to Self Determination Theory, a heightened sense of motivation increases student confidence in their learning. This theory relates to the
Advancement Via Individual Determination Program (AVID), as core values for the program are to instill self-responsibility into students to provide them the confidence to increase their likelihood of participating in college and succeeding in the “real world.” The theory further contextualizes how age, culture, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status are intertwined in acquiring motivation.

After multiple layers of approval. The 56 7th-8th graders were given a five-question survey where every question was answered positively. The sole outlier of the survey was the question, ‘To what extent do you have a choice selection in your assignments in your AVID elective course?’ where 33 students responded negatively. Yet, even with this discretion, the students selected positive responses that they were prepared for college and careers, gained a community-oriented mindset, and had an increase in intrinsic motivation and self-determination.

For future research, more specifics on choice in the general education course rather than the AVID course can be used since a goal for AVID is not specifically to promote student choice. Clarity for students can also be sought out when discussing college and career preparation. Additionally, a scale that initially measures students’ mindset on intrinsic motivations vs their extrinsic motivations will provide the opportunity to further clarify incongruencies in this study. A mixed-methods approach that entails student interviews or open-ended questions can also be used to qualitatively understand their perspective of the program. Overall, the results reflect that students have positive feelings of motivation as outlined through Self Determination Theory through the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program at this Northern Mississippi Middle School.
Advanced placement (AP) participation and achievement increase among Mississippi Students for 2022-23. The Mississippi Department of Education. (n.d).


Guerra, C. M. (2017). The Impact of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) on Hispanic Students’ Achievement (Doctoral dissertation, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona)


https://www.benefits.gov/benefit/1999

*Search for public schools - School Detail for Mississippi Middle School.* National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Home Page, a part of the U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.).

https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/school_detail.asp?Search=1&InstName=oxford%2Bmiddle%2Bschool&SchoolType=4&SpecificSchlTypes=all&IncGrade=-1&LoGrade=-1&HiGrade=-1&ID=280345000664


Appendix A- Institutional Review Board Application

The University of Mississippi
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
Division of Research Integrity Security and Compliance - Institutional Review Board
100 Barr Hall - University, MS 38677
irb@olemiss.edu

APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION

Purpose: Many studies qualify for an abbreviated review, according to the federal regulations and university policy.
- Part I of this form screens for a brief review.
- Part II of this form completes the abbreviated IRB application.
- Part III of this form gives instructions for obtaining the required assurances.
- The IRB makes the final determination on whether you must fill out a full application.

Always download the most recent version of this form: http://www.research.olemiss.edu/irb/protocol/forms.
Prepare and send application form as a Word document. Upload the completed form and attachments (and pdf of email assurance if PI is a student) at https://research.olemiss.edu/irb/submit.

Note: Some class project studies may qualify for a classroom waiver of IRB Application. Instructors: see form here.

PART I — Screening

1. Do any of the following apply to your study?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Methods</th>
<th>☐ Yes</th>
<th>☒ No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Treatment study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>X-rays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Collection of blood, urine, other bodily fluids, or tissues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of blood, urine, other bodily fluids, or tissues with identifiers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of drugs, biological products, or medical devices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of drugs, biological products, or medical devices</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of data collected in the European Economic Area (EEA)*</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART I — Screening

subject's reputation; (2) information that involves criminal or civil liability; (3) information that can affect a subject's employability; and (4) information involving a person's financial standing. Examples: Surveys that ask about porn use, illegal drug or alcohol use, religion, use of alcohol while driving, AIDS, cancer, etc. contain sensitive information.

*European Economic Area - Collection of data in the European Economic Area (the 28 states of the European Union and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland). Special considerations apply if data are not 100% anonymous. See CDRP Guidance for more information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted Subjects:</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prisoners</td>
<td>□ Yes ☒ No</td>
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<tr>
<th>Elements of Deception:</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The study uses surreptitious videotaping</td>
<td>□ Yes ☒ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The study gives subjects deceptive feedback, whether positive or negative</td>
<td>□ Yes ☒ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The study uses a research confederate (i.e., an actor playing the part of subject)</td>
<td>□ Yes ☒ No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you checked Yes to any of the above, STOP HERE and fill out the FULL IRB APPLICATION FORM.

2. Questionnaire or Survey? (include questionnaire or survey as an attachment) □ Yes ☒ No
   If Yes, answer 2a and 2b.
   If No, proceed to 3.
1. The ONLY involvement of human subjects will be in the following categories (check all that apply)

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY: MUCH CHANGED WITH NEW REGULATIONS, JANUARY 2019

☑ 1) Educational Research: Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices. Research is not likely to adversely impact students’ opportunity to learn required educational content or the assessment of educators who provide instruction. This includes most research on regular and special education strategies, and research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

☑ 2) Surveys, Interviews, Educational Tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), Observation of Public Behavior (including video or auditory recording). AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING MUST BE CHECKED

☒ (i) Information recorded by the investigator cannot readily identify the subject (either directly or indirectly)

☒ (ii) Disclosure of subjects’ responses outside the research could NOT reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects’ financial standing, educational advancement, employability, or reputation

☐ (iii) Information recorded by the investigator includes identifiers and the investigator specifies strong security measures to protect the data (e.g., encryption for electronic data; multiple locks for paper data). Minors are NOT permitted under this sub-category

☐ Public observation involving minors with no investigator interaction. Minors are ONLY permitted under these conditions.

☐ 3) Benign Behavioral Interventions (BBI): Research involving interventions in conjunction with collection of information from an adult subject through verbal or written responses (including data entry) or audiovisual recording, if the subject prospectively agrees to the intervention and information collection.

- BBI is limited to communication or interpersonal contact; cognitive, intellectual, educational, or behavioral tasks; manipulation of the physical, sensory, social or emotional environment

- Intervention Requirements:
- brief duration (maximum intervention = 3 hours within one day; data collection may extend more hours & over days)
- painless/harmless (transient performance task-related stress, anxiety, or boredom are acceptable)
- not physically invasive (no activity tracker, blood pressure, pulse, etc.)
- unlikely to have a significant adverse lasting impact on subjects
- unlikely that subjects will find interventions offensive or embarrassing
- no deception / omission of information, such as study purpose, unless subject prospectively agrees

**At least one of the following must be checked**

☒ (i) Recorded information cannot readily identify the subject (either directly or indirectly)

☐ (ii) Any disclosure of subjects’ responses outside the research could NOT reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects’ financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation

☐ (iii) Information is recorded with identifiers and the investigator specifies strong security measures to protect the data (e.g., encryption for electronic data; multiple locks for paper data)

☐ 4) **Secondary Research**: Secondary Research for which consent is not required: use of identifiable information or identifiable biospecimens that have been or will be collected for some other ‘primary’ or ‘initial’ activity, if ONE of the following is checked:

☐ (i) collection and analysis involving investigator’s use of identifiable health information when use is regulated by HIPAA (this will be reviewed and approved as expedited);

☐ (ii) information or biospecimen is publicly available;

☐ (iii) information recorded by the investigator cannot readily, directly or indirectly identify the subject, and the investigator does not contact the subject or re-identify the subject;

☐ (iv) research information collected by or on behalf of the federal government using government-generated or -collected information obtained for non-research activities;

☐ 5) **Research and Demonstration Projects on Federal Programs**: The study is conducted pursuant to specific federal statutory authority and examines certain
federal programs that deliver a public benefit [call IRB for details if you think your study may fit].

☐ 6) **Food Tasting/Evaluation:** Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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**PART II — Abbreviated Application**

2. **Project Title:** The Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID)’s efficacy in Promoting Student Agency in the Secondary Public School

3. **Principal Investigator:** ☐ Dr. ☒ Ms. ☐ Mr.  
   Department: School of Education  
   Work Phone:  
   E-Mail Address: njthomp1@go.olemiss.edu

   **If Principal Investigator is a student:**
   Graduate student:  
   Undergraduate student:  
   ☐ Dissertation ☐ Master’s thesis  
   ☐ Other graduate project  
   ☐ Senior thesis: ☒ SMBHC  
   ☐ Croft Institute  ☒ Other undergraduate project

   Research Advisor:  
   Department: TEACHER EDUCATION  
   Work Phone: 662-915-1417  
   E-Mail Address: JREYLER@OLEMIISS.EDU  
   Home or Cell Phone: Click to enter

4. **Funding Source:**
   Is this project funded? ☐ Yes ☒ No
   If Yes, is the funding:
   ☐ Internal : Source: Click to enter  
   ☐ External : Pending/Agency: Click to enter  
   ☐ Awarded/Agency: Click to enter  
   PI(s) on external funding: Click to enter
5. List ALL personnel involved with this research who will have contact with human subjects or with their identifiable data. All personnel listed here must complete CITI training OR the Alternative to CITI/Abbreviated CITI (ACITI) training before this application will be processed*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONNEL NAME</th>
<th>PERSONNEL EMAIL (REQUIRED) *</th>
<th>FACULTY OR STAFF</th>
<th>GRADUATE STUDENT</th>
<th>UNDERGRAD STUDENT</th>
<th>ROLE ON PROJECT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nya Thompson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Njthomp1@go.olemiss.edu">Njthomp1@go.olemiss.edu</a></td>
<td>Click to select</td>
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<td>Primary Investigator (PI)</td>
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If space is needed to list additional project personnel or non-UM personnel, submit Appendix A.

*See **Exempt Human Research Policy** for training exceptions
### Research Methodology/Procedures

<table>
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<th>6. Check all procedures below that apply to your study:</th>
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<tr>
<td>☐ Pre-existing data or biological samples</td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>Source of data:</strong> <a href="#">Click to enter text</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Do data/samples have identifiers? ☐ Yes* ☒ No</td>
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<tr>
<td>* PHI be reviewed and approved as expedited and a HIPAA waiver authorization request (Appendix F) will be needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Minors are NOT permitted under this sub-category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Describe how data will be secured</em> (e.g., encryption for electronic data; multiple locks for paper data).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encryption for electronic data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will physical copies of identifiable data be kept? ☐ Yes* ☒ No</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>If yes, please list the data storage location (office/room number):</strong> <a href="#">Click to enter text</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>*For identifiable data that will be physically stored (locked drawer, file cabinet etc.) posted restricted access signage is required. See our Restricted Access signage template <a href="#">here</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Oral history - Use and attach the required release form if you plan to disseminate quoted comments or taped content from histories, interviews, and/or groups. (This covers you and UM legally – Not for IRB purposes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ Interview - Attach interview questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Focus group - Attach topic and questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒ Questionnaire or survey* - Attach questionnaire or survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If online, list platform (e.g., Qualtrics): *If using Qualtrics for anonymous surveys, see guidance <a href="#">here</a>. Qualtrics</td>
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</table>
☐ The study has misleading or deceptive* study descriptions; procedure explanations; and/or survey instructions/rationales.

*In the abstract, provide complete details and a rationale for employing misleading/deception information. Include Appendix D in your attachments.

7. Consent Procedures:

☒ Oral - Attach script* ☐ Information Sheet/Cover Letter - Attach* No subject signatures required,

☐ Not applicable, Explain Click to enter text.

*For both oral consent and the information sheet see our ‘Sample Information Sheet’ example here: under Templates. This template is for exempt protocols only and ensures that all elements of consent are addressed.

Project Summary

8. Briefly summarize your project using non-technical, jargon-free language that can be understood by non-scientists.

See http://www.research.olemiss.edu/irb-forms for abstract examples.

Give a brief statement of the research question supporting the reasons for, and importance of, the research: The primary purpose of this study is to measure the AVID Program (Advancement Via Individual Determination) in a northern Mississippi School District current efficacy at encouraging student agency in the secondary classroom. The study seeks to connect the results to self-determination theory, student autonomy, and methods of promoting student agency at the secondary level. The 5 question survey will be used as the tool to gauge student motivation levels.
Describe the ages and characteristics of your proposed subjects. The students are 12-13 years old. They are in the seventh to eighth grades and are described as students from marginalized backgrounds. They are students involved in the AVID program.

For studies using only adult subjects, state how you will ensure they are 18+: ☒ Not applicable  ☐ First question on survey/interview

☐ Other: Click to enter text.

| RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES: | ☒ E-mail – specify groups: students engaged in AVID currently |
| a. How will you recruit subjects? Check all that apply: | ☐ Radio/TV/newspaper ads |
| ☐ Sona System | ☐ UM bulletin boards, where: |
| ☒ Class announcements | [List all recruitment sites.] |
| ☒ Letters to parents/guardians |  |

[Recruitment materials must state “This study has been reviewed and determined to be Exempt by UM’s Institutional Review Board (IRB).]

| BRIEFLY describe the research design AND carefully explain how your study will meet each of the requirements of the category criteria you checked on Page 2: | ☒ | |
| The students who are currently engaged in the AVID program at Oxford Middle School (7th-8th graders) will answer a 5-question survey based on the 5-point Likert scale. They will only participate with a parent or guardian’s permission. Their identity will remain anonymous as they are a protected group. Their responses will be qualitatively measured to answer the research question: How effective is the AVID Program at promoting student agency.|

Give a detailed description of the procedure(s) subjects will undergo (from their perspective):

I opened the laptop and clicked on the link provided by the AVID instructor. The facilitator told us to answer honestly and provided information on the proposed study. I answered each question where the answer choices ranged from never (1), rarely (2), sometimes (3), very often (4), always (5). The study was on a website called Qualtrics. The facilitator debriefed and said we were clear to perform other tasks once the survey was complete.
9. Appendix Checklist:

A. Additional Personnel not listed on first page of application?
   ☒ No  ☐ Yes – complete Appendix A

B. Will the research be conducted in schools or child care facilities?
   ☐ No  ☒ Yes – complete Appendix B

C. Does your research involve deception or omission of elements of consent?
   ☒ No  ☐ Yes – complete Appendix D

D. Will your research be conducted outside of the United States?
   ☒ No  ☐ Yes – complete Appendix E

E. Will your research involve protected health information (PHI)?
   ☒ No  ☐ Yes – complete Appendix F if applicable
10. Attachments Checklist:

Do you have:

a) Advisor assurance – required for student research protocols
   ☒ Yes   ☐ Not Applicable

b) Survey or questionnaires?
   ☒ Yes   ☐ Not Applicable

c) Interview questions?
   ☐ Yes   ☒ Not Applicable

d) Focus group questions?
   ☐ Yes   ☒ Not Applicable

e) Recruitment email, announcement, or script?
   ☒ Yes   ☐ Not Applicable: No subject contact

f) Information sheet or oral script?
   ☒ Yes   ☐ Not Applicable: No subject contact

g) Debrief statement and re-consent
   ☒ Yes   ☐ Not Applicable

h) Permissions for locations outside the University? *
   ☒ Yes   ☐ Not Applicable

*if giving a survey, whether on or off campus, please ensure the person giving permission (e.g., the teacher of a class) has an explicit opportunity to see the survey before they give their permission for its distribution.

11. If using class points as incentives, are there alternative assignments available for earning points that involve comparable time and effort?
   ☐ Yes   ☒ Not Applicable

12. If using an anonymous survey through Qualtrics and giving incentives in a separate survey, have you read and conducted the testing of the surveys according to the procedures here?
   ☒ Yes   ☐ Not Applicable
PART III: ASSURANCES

Conflict Of Interest And Fiscal Responsibility

Do you or any person responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of this study have an economic interest in, or act as an officer or a director of any outside entity whose financial interests may reasonably appear to be affected by this research?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, please describe any potential conflict of interest.

Click to enter text.

Do you or any person responsible for this study have existing financial holdings or relationships with the sponsor of this study?

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Not applicable

If Yes, please describe any potential conflict of interest.

Click to enter text.

Principal Investigator Assurance

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR’S ASSURANCE

I certify that the information provided in the application is complete and correct. As Principal Investigator, I have the ultimate responsibility for the protection of the rights and welfare of the human participants, conduct of the research, and the ethical performance of the project. I will comply with all UM policies and procedures, as well as with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the protection of participants in human research, including, but not limited to the following:

▪ Informed consent will be obtained from the participants, if applicable and appropriate;
▪ Any proposed modifications to the research protocol that may affect its designation as an exempt (brief) protocol application will be reported to the IRB for approval prior to being implemented.
▪ Adverse events and/or unanticipated problems will be reported to the IRB as required.

I certify that I, and all key personnel, have completed the required initial and/or refresher CITI or CITI Alternative courses in the ethical principles and regulatory requirements for the protection of human research participants.

Nya Janet’ Thompson

2/5/2024

Typed signature/name of Principal Investigator

Date
RESEARCH ADVISOR’S* ASSURANCE (REQUIRED FOR STUDENT PROJECTS)

*The research advisor must be a UM faculty member with current CITI training. The faculty member is considered the responsible party for the ethical performance and regulatory compliance of the research project.

Email your Advisor with the following:

1. Email subject line: “IRB Advisor Approval Request from (your name)”
2. Your IRB submission materials as attachments
3. Copy and paste the statements below into the body of the email
4. Save the reply email from your Advisor as a pdf and submit via the online portal along with your IRB submission materials. Protocol review cannot begin without an advisor assurance for student PIs.

Please review my attached protocol submission. Your reply email to me will constitute your acknowledgement of the assurances below.

Thank you,

[type your name here]

As the Research Advisor, I certify that the student investigator is knowledgeable about the regulations and policies governing research with human participants and has sufficient training and experience to conduct this particular research in accordance with the approved protocol.

I agree to meet with the investigator on a regular basis to monitor research progress.

Should problems arise during the course of research, I agree to be available, personally, to supervise the investigator in solving them.
I will ensure that the investigator will promptly report incidents (including adverse events and unanticipated problems) to the IRB.

If I will be unavailable, for example, on sabbatical leave or vacation, I will arrange for an alternate faculty member to assume responsibility during my absence, and I will advise the IRB by email of such arrangements.

I have completed the required CITI course(s) in the ethical principles and regulatory requirements for the protection of human research participants.

*Please upload your materials to the online portal using the following file naming system:

Lastname advisor assurance  ex. Smith advisor assurance.pdf

Lastname IRB exempt application  ex Smith IRB exempt application.doc

Lastname recruitment script

Lastname information sheet

Lastname appendix A-F

Lastname survey/interview/group materials

* Please upload the application and information sheet as word documents.

The online submission portal can be found at:  https://research.olemiss.edu/irb/submit
Advisor’s Assurance:

Hi Nya:

I approve of this project and its related IRB protocol, and I give my required assurances.

Sincerely,
Dr. Eyler

Joshua Rowe Eyler, Ph.D. (he/him; why pronouns matter)
Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning
Director of the ThinkForward QEP
Clinical Assistant Professor of Teacher Education
Author: How Humans Learn: The Science and Stories behind Effective College Teaching
University of Mississippi
Hill Hall, Room 103
University, MS 38677
Phone: 662-915-1417 (Direct Line)
Twitter: @joshua_r_eyler

From: Nya Thompson <njhomp1@oolemss.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 11:07 AM
Hello, I am an undergraduate student teacher in the eighth grade English hall here at Oxford Middle School. I am also a current senior at the University of Mississippi. I am conducting a study on student motivation relating to the AVID program and I would like to ask you some questions about that.

I would like for you to honestly answer the brief survey to assist with this study. This survey should take about 5-7 minutes of your time.

There are no known risks to participating in this survey, but if at any time during the survey you feel uncomfortable answering a question, please let me know, and you don’t have to answer it. Or, if you want to answer a question but do not want it recorded, please let me know and I will turn off the machine.

There are no benefits to you as an individual for participating in this study; however, your interview responses may help us to learn more about student views of the AVID Program, however the survey will be anonymous.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. If at any time you want to withdraw from this study, please tell me and we will stop the survey.

The results of the survey will be safely electronically secured via Google Drive.

If you have questions about this research, please contact me at njthomp1@go.olemiss.edu. You can also contact my faculty advisor jeyler@olemiss.edu.
Now I would like to ask you if you agree to participate in this study, and to access the survey questions to measure your motivations in relation to the AVID program. Do you agree to participate in the survey?
Appendix C: Parental Consent Opt-Out Form:

To whom it may concern,

My name is Nya Thompson and I am a current senior at the University of Mississippi studying English Education with a certification to teach social studies. I am currently a student teacher in an 8th grade English class at Oxford Middle School! In order to graduate from the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College and the Mississippi Excellence in Teaching Program, I am working on completing my undergraduate thesis requirement. I am interested in student motivations and how it can best be promoted in a classroom. My proposed project is entitled: The Advancement via individual Determination (AVID)’s efficacy in Promoting Student Agency in the Secondary Public School.

The AVID program is a great asset in promoting motivation in the school system, and I am interested in their opinions of the elective. There is no risk or incentive at taking the survey, and the survey is completely anonymous. If you are not interested in your child participating in the short survey for my undergraduate study, please sign below and return to Ms. Well’s classroom.

Thanks!

Nya Thompson