

**Perceived Value of Digital Components in Library
Programmes: A Case Study of Auckland Libraries' Dare
to Explore Summer Reading Programme.**

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Abstract

Research problem: The purpose of this research paper is to discover whether library patrons value digital components of library programming, looking specifically at Dare to Explore, a summer reading programme for Auckland Libraries'. This research looks at how Dare to Explore has translated into the digital arena, and whether its participants, children aged 5-13 years old, and their parents/caregivers, found value in that.

Methodology: Qualitative research methods were used. This consisted of interviews with 6 families – 6 parent/caregivers and 10 children – who participated in Dare to Explore 2016/17.

Results: The Dare to Explore programme overall was highly valued by the children and their parents/caregivers, however the digital components were not as decidedly valued within the four themes derived from the literature review and the Sheth-Newman-Gross Theory of Consumption values. There either was not enough online content, or participants were not fully aware of what was available online to be able to truly rate its value. Some parents' were averse to too much digital content in a library programme and this was reflected in the access they allowed their child, and an influence on their child's perception of, the digital components. The website component was more readily valued than the e-book component, but value could be seen in the ability of digital to engage and motivate. Both parents and children overwhelmingly held similar views in that they desired a programme which combined fun with learning, and wanted it to be delivered through various mediums – booklet, online and in person via the library and librarians, with the online components being as interactive as possible.

Implications: This study suggests themes and a value measure to use when looking at digital components of library programming, views from participants as to what value was found, and ideas as to how to increase that value. Findings from this study will be helpful to Auckland Libraries in looking at Dare to Explore programme development in subsequent years, and can also be used by them, or any public library, to look at why and how digital aspects may be incorporated into any existing or future programming. Although this research focuses on a children's programme, the results may also provide learnings for adult and teen programming.

Keywords: digital, perceived value, library programmes, Dare to Explore, Sheth-Newman-Gross Theory of Consumption Values, public libraries, children, parents/caregivers

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“For with God nothing shall be impossible” Luke 1:37

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” Philippians 4:13

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1. Introduction

Libraries have been increasingly looking to digital opportunities to stay relevant, become more accessible and satisfy a more digital world. Auckland Libraries' key planning document for the direction of its libraries, Te Kauroa, states that the digital library will be the area of greatest growth for libraries in the next 10 years, making the library accessible wherever, whenever and providing a platform of many-to-many where library content, services and programmes will be not only used but created by customers (Auckland Libraries, 2013). The goal of this research is to determine how Dare to Explore, a summer reading programme for Auckland Libraries, has translated into the digital arena, and whether value is being found in that for participants.

Research on the digitisation of library programmes and its value to those who use it is limited. This includes Summer Reading Programmes, where although digital elements or eBook reading may have been included, there is little to no research being done on what participants would gain from this inclusion and whether they see value in it.

The purpose of this study is to discover whether library patrons value digital components of programming, and whether libraries should therefore be focussing on incorporating digital aspects into their existing programming. As libraries move more into the digital arena, with the likes of digitisation of collections and eBooks, library programmes largely continue to be based within the actual library itself. This research looks at how an existing library programme has incorporated digital elements and whether this enhances and adds benefits for participants.

This study focuses specifically on the Auckland Libraries Dare to Explore Summer Reading Programme. Dare to Explore is a summer reading programme run by Auckland Libraries for children aged 5-13 years, with goals based around encouraging reading levels and enjoyment, and establishing a relationship with the library in a fun and family focused way. With its inception in 2011 Dare to Explore has been largely run through the physical booklet, library and librarians, but it has always incorporated some digital elements through its Auckland Libraries website. This digital offering has increased with each year since.

However, uptake of the digital offering has not necessarily matched the increase in offering. In the 2013/14 Dare to Explore programme only 56 % of participants reported using the Dare to Explore website (Auckland Council, 2014). This past year's programme 2016/17 incorporated digital elements again. These included Dare to Explore web pages, where customers could sign up to enrol in the programme, a page of events happening at each library, challenges that could be completed online or in the booklet, tips for parents, an online check in¹ and a wall of fame (pictures of children who had completed the challenges, and pictures of the challenges themselves). This year there were two particularly interactive online features, Kiwi's hideout game and Kiwi's hideout quiz. Booklists are a regular feature of the children's pages of the Auckland Libraries website. E-books were also considered as part of this research as Auckland Libraries provide extensive children's e-books options as part of their online offer and these were available to be used for Dare to Explore, as a reading option.

For the Dare to Explore programme this research looks at whether participants used those digital aspects, and if they did what they liked/disliked from the online offer, and whether they felt it enhanced the programme. If they did not utilise the digital element, it has looked to answer why this may have been, and what, if anything, might be done to change that. This study also looks at digital usage and literacy and what participants would like to see from an online offer for the Dare to Explore programme. A point to note for this research is that information was sourced from both the children who participated in the programme, as well as their parents/caregivers, so the opinions of both groups could be considered, including the similarities and differences, to determine value.

The Sheth-Newman-Gross Theory of Consumption Values (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991) was the tool used to measure the value for participants in this programme, considering the five value measures of functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value and conditional value. Four themes derived from the literature review on the value of digital components in programming – using digital to improve reading skills, using digital to increase motivation and engagement, the need to incorporate digital as part of new/multiple literacies and

¹ Online check in was a way for participants to tell the library/librarians about challenges they had completed. This is usually done in person at the library, but was replicated as an online option

the success of combining digital with other tasks - were also considered in the results to determine the value for participants in Dare to Explore.

Results of this study will be helpful to Auckland Libraries in looking at Dare to Explore programme development for subsequent year/s, but may also be used to look at why and how digital aspects may be incorporated into any of their existing programming. Although this research focuses on a children's programme, the results may also provide learnings for adult and teen programming. The knowledge gained around the value in a digital offering for participants in library programming could also be transferred to any public library, in terms of whether the time and financial expenditure would be worth investing in digital elements for their own programming, and in what to prioritise in that digital offering that would gain the most value for participants.

2. Literature Review

The literature review is composed of two parts. The first will look at tools for measuring perceived value, and the one chosen for this study. The second looks at the four themes prevalent in the literature on digital components of programming.

2.1 Measuring perceived value

There has been limited study on perceived value and its impact on customer behaviour and precisely defining value has been just as difficult for researchers (LeBlanc & Nguyen, 1999). However, it is important to understand the value drivers for participants/consumers in order to be able to provide a product/service that people want, has their buy-in and that they will return to purchase/use. There are several theories on measuring value, three of which are:

The PERVAL scale

This measure, like many theories looking at perceived value, was developed by Sweeney & Soutar (2001) for “use in a retail purchase situation to determine what consumption values drive purchase attitude and behaviour” (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001, p. 203). They believed that previous studies into value had been too simplistic by looking at consumer value based either on low price or the balance between quality and price for consumers, and a wider scale was needed. The PERVAL scale was developed as a 19 item, four dimensional scale for perceived value. The four dimensions include (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001):

- Emotional value – feelings or affective states that the product generates. It looks at such questions as: does the product give enjoyment? Does it make the consumer feel good? Does it provide pleasure for the consumer? And does the consumer feel relaxed about using the product?
- Social value – the product’s ability to enhance social self-concept. It looks at such questions as: Does it help the consumer to feel acceptable? Does it improve the way the consumer is perceived? Does it make a good

impression on other people? And would the product give the consumer social approval?

- Functional - Quality Performance – the perceived quality and expected performance of the product. It looks at such questions as: Is the product well made? Does it or would it perform consistently? Is it of an acceptable standard of quality? And is it of a consistent quality?
- Functional - Price/Value for Money – this is the reduction of the product's perceived short term and longer term costs. It looks at such questions as: Is the product reasonably priced? Is the product value for money? Is the product economical? Is it a good product for the price?

“The scale demonstrates that consumers assess products, not just in functional terms of expected performance, value for money and versatility; but also in terms of the enjoyment or pleasure derived from the product (emotional value) and the social consequences of what the product communicates to others (social value)” (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001, p. 216).

The SERV-PERVAL scale

This scale was developed from the PERVAL scale, however Petrick (2002) felt that although the PERVAL was good at measuring the value of a tangible product, a more considered and robust measure was required to measure service. Petrick (2002) looked specifically at the leisure and tourism industry and suggested providers look at perceived value as an important measure of repurchase intentions and customer loyalty. The SERV-PERVAL scale then was developed, consisting of a five dimension (25 element) measure of inter-related but distinct scales:

- Quality– is it reliable, dependable, consistent, outstanding and quality?
- Emotional response – does it make the consumer feel good, bring them pleasure and joy, delight them or give them happiness?
- Monetary price – is it worth the money, reasonable and fair in price and a good buy?

- Behavioural price – is it easy to buy and does it require little energy to purchase?
- Reputation – is it well respected and thought of, reputable, and does it have a good reputation and status?

The Sheth-Newman-Gross Theory of Consumption Values

Sheth, Newman & Gross (1991) “view choice as a function of multiple independent consumption values that can vary in importance in various situations” (LeBlanc & Nguyen, 1999, p. 188). Those values are:

- Functional value – the economic utility, benefits associated with possession of, and performance (price/reliability/durability) of a product/service.
- Social value – “the utility derived from a customer’s association with certain social groups” (LeBlanc & Nguyen, 1999, p. 189), symbolic and group membership.
- Emotional value – the ability of a product/service to arouse feelings or affective responses from the consumer (LeBlanc & Nguyen, 1999).
- Epistemic value – the ability of a product/service to “arouse curiosity, provide novelty and/or satisfy a desire for knowledge... [and its] ability to provide something new or different” (Schuiling & Lambin, 2012, p. 116).
- Conditional value – set of specific situations the customer faces when making a choice that may “impact upon the customer’s assessment of the utility of the product/service” (LeBlanc & Nguyen, 1999, p. 189).

The Sheth-Newman-Gross Theory of Consumption Values has been used by several researchers to evaluate higher education. LeBlanc & Nguyen’s (1999, p. 187) study was to “gain more insight into the dimensions used by business students when they consider value and to identify which cues are more important to them” and Lai, Lai, Lung & To (2012, p. 271) explored “the perceived value of higher education by Chinese students in Macao SAR, Guangzhou, Shanghai, and Taipei”. These studies and the use of this tool to evaluate value draw similarities to Libraries. LeBlanc & Nguyen (1999) discuss the pressure on schools due to funding cuts, increased costs, teaching methods and academic research. A

comparison could be drawn to libraries with pressure to deliver with less budget, reduced staff and the question of perceived relevance for library services in the 21st Century. Le Blanc & Nguyen (1999, p. 188) state, focussing therefore on value “and a better understanding of the process by which students evaluate and derive value from their educational experience appears justified in light of these realities”. The same therefore, could be said of Libraries and the importance of looking at the value our customers place on our services using this measure.

Value, and its measure, is mostly discussed in marketing and retail sectors. There hasn't been much, if any, research into the value of library programmes, let alone digital components of it, by users in the literature. Although none of these theories have been used by libraries to evaluate value from their customers that I was able to find in the literature, many of the value components relate well to an evaluation for this study. I feel the Sheth-Newman-Gross Theory of Consumption Values is best suited to evaluate the Dare to Explore digital components as it covers both products and services - Libraries provide a service but Dare to Explore is a product; it is the most encompassing of a myriad of values for customers - it covers the values mentioned in PERVAL within the functional, social and emotional values while also looking at the epistemic and conditional values that may affect customer-perceived value of the digital components of the programme; and it has been used to evaluate the value in education by other researchers previously – similarly to the literature review which I will discuss below on digital components in programming, in which research within libraries is minimal but has been completed by schools.

2.2 Digital components in library programming

The existing research looking at digital incorporation in libraries is largely to do with provision of access and/or teaching digital literacy skills, such as the Bernsmann & Croll (2013) study into providing information and communication technologies (ICT) access and skills to disadvantaged or vulnerable social groups. Rolan, Denison, & Mackenzie (2015) looked at the impact of teaching digital skills within a public library hub. Other research areas include the effect of eBooks and eReaders within libraries and reading, for example the Moyer & Thiele (2012),

Laverick (2014) and Mitchell (2016) studies who all looked at digital reading to engage new or struggling readers either in a library or reading programme setting.

In examining the literature there is a lack of research specifically into digital components of library programmes and their value to participants. There is some research, mostly from the education field, which has comparisons and lessons in the introduction of technology to programmes or teaching as well as looking at the benefits of the digital components to the participants (and/or educators) that can be used in this research. However, most of this is based from the perspective of the teacher or librarian, and the focus of the proposed research would look at the value from the participants' viewpoint. This perspective was found only in Xie (2008)'s research into digital libraries where she looked at the users' experience and evaluation.

There are two reports from Auckland Council regarding Dare to Explore which do provide good insight into the programme with some evaluation of the worth of the digital components to both parents/caregivers and the participants themselves. These reports provide a good basis from which to springboard into the value of the digital components of the programme.

From the literature four key themes emerged when researching incorporating digital and its perceived value. Librarians and/or educators:

1. use digital tools to improve participants' reading skills
2. use digital tools to increase participants' motivation and engagement
3. need to incorporate digital as part of new literacies or multiple literacies
4. can ensure success for participants by combining digital with other tasks.

Theme 1: Use of digital tools to improve participants' reading skills

One of the themes that came across in several studies - (Laverick, 2014; Mitchell, 2016; Lu & Gordon, 2007) - was the idea of using digital tools to help increase children's and/or teens' reading skills. One of the main reasons this is a priority for summer reading is the "summer learning effect... [the] widely studied loss of literacy over the summer holiday break" (Allpress & Gilbertson, 2013, p. 21). The

objectives of Laverick (2014), Mitchell (2016) and Lu & Gordon's (2007) research were quite similar. All wanted to see if the use of technology would have a positive effect on participants' reading proficiency and attitudes. Although they used different technological methods and methodologies all studies found an increase in both. This could be because the technology increased students motivation and engagement, which backed Mitchell's (2016) theoretical position that the more interested the student is in reading, the more they will read and therefore the better their reading ability will become. This theory was also echoed in the research findings from Allpress & Gilbertson (2013, p. 24) who stated that an increase in children's enjoyment of reading in turn contributed to an increase in their reading ability.

Of course increasing a child's reading skills would be a desired outcome for librarians, parents and teachers. The Dare to Explore evaluation (Allpress & Gilbertson 2013 & 2014) noted that for 80% of parents/caregivers this was the case. However, both the 2013 and 2014 evaluations made no direct link – as the studies did above – between increased reading and the online components of the programme. They did note, though not specifically stating the link with digital, that the majority of parents – 99% - felt their child's literacy level had either increased or stayed the same, 94% of children felt their reading level was helped, and 70% of parents felt the programme had increased their child's enjoyment of reading (Allpress & Gilbertson, 2013), and this was backed in the following year's research by the standardised reading assessment data collected by schools which tested for an increase in reading levels (Allpress & Gilbertson, 2014).

Theme 2: Use of digital tools to increase participants' motivation and engagement

As mentioned in the theme above, much of the research suggests that digital components to programming can positively affect participants' motivation and engagement. If a child/teen is engaged and motivated in learning and/or the programme they are more likely to gain value – in the form of increased skills and enjoyment of participation. Laverick (2014), Barone & Wright (2008), Moyer & Thiele (2012) and Lu & Gordon's (2007) research results all showed an increase in motivation and engagement of children/teens/adults as some of the most

mentioned benefits, as a direct result of the inclusion of technology. Hsu's (2012) theory that an interactive online game approach would increase learning motivation and interest was confirmed with the findings of 90% of students agreeing the website would motivate and inspire their learning.

This level of motivation and engagement is not always shared. In the Dare to Explore evaluation (Allpress & Gilbertson, 2013; Allpress & Gilbertson, 2014) just over half of the participants each year used the online resources. Some of the reasons included a lack of awareness of the resources and/or access issues. However, some parents/caregivers specifically stated conscious decisions to stay away from computers during the holidays, as well as a desire to engage and learn only with print resources and the physical library environment. This was despite the majority of participants (over 90%) who did use the online resources enjoying the online content and finding it easy to use (Allpress & Gilbertson, 2014).

Theme 3: Incorporating digital as part of new literacies/multiple literacies

As new literacies – digital and media – evolve, educators (and Librarians) must prepare youth to understand and adjust to these new and changing demands.

Children are now exposed to technology from an early age and many use it on a daily basis (Lu & Gordon, 2007). “Kids don't see laptops, MP3 players, cell phones, PDA's, DVD players, and video games as technology, it's just life” (Barone & Wright, 2008, p. 298). A new view of literacy is required, so that we are not just teaching, exploring and testing in a traditional way – with reading and writing on paper. Today's youth have “multiple literacies because they interact with multiple forms of non-traditional texts and different sources of information, access popular culture and mass media, and communicate with people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives through the use of new technologies” (Lawrence, McNeal, & Yildiz, 2009, p. 483).

Much of the literature acknowledged this need to move into the digital realm to fulfil the need to meet youth where they are and teach them the skills required in this digital age. Lawrence, McNeal & Yildiz (2009) acknowledge that although youth may have access to technology this does not mean they have the skills

required to use or manage it. Mitchell (2016) highlighted the need to ensure technology, or in the case of her research, devices, are used in a meaningful way and that “students are not just being asked to substitute one outdated literacy practice for another simply by using technology” (Mitchell, 2016, p. 87).

All the research that highlighted the idea of new/multiple literacies - (Barone & Wright, 2008) (Laverick, 2014) (Lawrence, McNeal, & Yildiz, 2009) and (Mitchell, 2016) noted an improvement in participants’ digital skills in the programmes, however (Barone & Wright, 2008) particularly noted that testing is still done in a traditional way and that will not necessarily show the learning that is gained from new technologies. They point out, until a new method of assessing multiple literacies is adopted, it will be hard to measure the additional knowledge students gain (although the school used in their research did not regress on traditional outcome assessments because of the introduction/inclusion of digital literacies).

In looking at the programme specific Dare to Explore evaluations Allpress & Gilbertson (2013, p. 20) found 75% of parents agreed that their children had learnt a new way to find information – although this included online such as finding new websites, it also included non-digital ways such as using the library/librarians, and using books. And of those 64% felt the child would have the confidence to use that way of finding information again when they returned to school.

Theme 4: Combination of digital with other tasks creates success for participants

Linked to the theme of new/multiple literacies was the idea that a programme would be best if it included all literacies – both digital and non-digital which would ensure, for example, students were capable in all areas (Barone & Wright, 2008), and that technology would not be seen as a competing distraction because it could be combined with non-digital (Mitchell, 2016).

(Lawrence, McNeal, & Yildiz, 2009) stated that by building upon students’ technology and media skills, they could further develop their skills in other areas such as reading and writing, and that the technology merely merged all the literacy practices together.

Moyer & Thiele (2012, p. 265) note that by combining multiple media (text, video, audio and other enhanced content) literacy is enhanced by creating a new reading experience.

In the Dare to Explore evaluation the results showed that there was a mix for participants in the way they completed the programme between digital and non-digital sources. Almost all did at least some of Dare to Explore at home (93%) using the booklet, 76% did it in the library and 46% did at least some of Dare to Explore online. (Allpress & Gilbertson, 2013, p. 15)

Variety was also mentioned by parents – they liked that activities could be done by a wide range of age groups, but importantly here as well that there was both on and offline activities, could be done in different locations with different skill levels and using a variety of resources (Allpress & Gilbertson 2013 & 2014).

2.3 Conclusion

The literature provides a basis from which to look at this research, however there are some gaps this study looks to bridge. The first is that there is no research that I could find that looked at the value of digital components of library programming, and nothing that used the measures of perceived value.

The literature is all fairly representative of demographics in terms of the female/male split, however the age groups studied are mostly older than the 5-13 age group target of the Dare to Explore programme and it is all predominately conducted overseas, so only the Auckland Council reports (Allpress & Gibertson 2013 & 2014) have any New Zealand significance in terms of demographics. Except for the perceived value measures research which looked from business students' point of view (Lai, Lai, Lung & To, 2012 & LeBlanc & Nguyen, 1999), a lot of the research was based from a teacher/librarian point of view or observation. My research focuses on the perspective of the participants and parents/caregivers. This is important as there are differences between the perspectives of the children and their parent/caregivers

The Allpress & Gilbertson (2013 & 2014) research was based on the Dare to Explore objectives and programme as a whole, with just a section on digital. So it was hard to link their results directly to the digital components of the programme, although many of the findings would fit with a lot of the themes mentioned above. It is important to build on the work done in these previous surveys but look specifically around the link of the digital components to the value for participants so the connections could be made clear.

The majority of the literature used either some form of, or solely, quantitative methodology, that is, surveys/questionnaires of teachers, parents/caregivers and/or participants, with the Mitchell (2016) study the only one that used solely qualitative methodology. I believe this was mainly due to the researchers wanting to obtain as much data as possible, with research in this field being quite limited as yet. Even Allpress & Gilbertson (2013) & (2014) and (Hsu, 2012) who used solely quantitative research methods in the form of surveys, used both open and closed questions to try to elicit more detailed answers and drill down into further detail. This study chose to use qualitative methods in order to fill the gap for qualitative data in this field, as well as the reasons outlined in research design below.

3. Research Design

3.1 Objectives and Research Questions

The objective of this research is to find out whether people value a digital component to a library programme and what that value is – in this case it will be specifically looking at Dare to Explore – a summer reading programme run by Auckland Libraries for children aged 5-13. The research will look both at the children participants and their parents/caregivers.

The main research question is:

- What is the perceived value, if any, participants (both children and their parents/caregivers) find in the digital components of Dare to Explore?

Sub questions are:

- What perceived value is found and by whom?
- Who doesn't find perceived value and why?
- Is the perceived value found in the digital components the same as that for the perceived value found in the rest of the programme components (for example, the physical booklet, library and librarians)?
- What is important to participants (parents/caregivers and children) in learning from libraries? And in what way would they want that delivered (in person, digitally, or other method)?

3.2 Methodology

For this research, I used a qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews with both the parents/caregivers and children. This topic lent itself, since it is limited in previous research, to a qualitative approach, as I was able to explore initial insights and the complex relationships between the idea of digital components and their value to participants in a library programme. I wanted to add to the quantitative method Allpress & Gilbertson's (2013; 2014) research took, while tailoring the questions more directly to the digital components of the programme. A qualitative approach provided important information for the more

complex and varied answers and themes of the value of the online information for participants and parents/caregivers. I wanted to do more than just collect and collate the data in its quantitative form. As Leedy & Ormrod (2015, p. 269) state qualitative research must “dig deep...collect various forms of data and examine them from various angles to construct a rich and meaningful picture of a complex, multifaceted situation”.

It was also important to consider the complexity of interviewing children. I wanted to be able to veer off a topic or dive deeper into a query led by the child’s (or parent’s) feelings or interest in response to the initial questions. Stake (as cited in Randall, 2013) states that one of the main objectives of qualitative research is ‘knowledge production’ and that “whilst some interview questions may be prepared, some may have to be conceived spontaneously for the sake of ‘knowledge production’” (Randall, 2013, p. 23), and I wanted to ensure I could do that.

3.3 Population

The population was any child (aged 5 – 13 years old) who participated in Dare to Explore 2016-17, and their parent/guardian².

On registration for Dare to Explore the participant and parent/guardian are asked on the form whether they are happy to be contacted as part of the evaluation of the programme and each Auckland Libraries branch then receives a copy of that information for feedback and communication purposes. In my role as Botany Library Community Manager, and with permission from Auckland Libraries, I was able to contact those on the Botany Library list and request whether they would like to be interviewed as part of this research. Participation was then voluntary, with only those who contacted me back being interviewed³.

² I did have one participant older than 12 years. However, she was included as she was enthusiastic to participate in the study and had completed several Dare to Explore programmes previously, as well as helped her younger brother with the 2016/17 programme.

³ The selection process and sample size does mean the sample is not fully representative of all the participants and their parents/guardians.

3.4 Sample

A total of sixteen people were interviewed for this research. Six were adults - parents of the children interviewed - 1 father and 5 mothers. Ten children were interviewed. Their ages ranged between 5 – 15 years old, with the majority being between 7 – 10 years old. The ethnic groups represented identified mostly as New Zealand European (60%), with Chinese and South African/New Zealand making up the rest equally.

I conducted 12 interviews. Each family group was interviewed at the same time and location⁴, with the parents asked one set of questions and the children asked another set of questions⁵. Where there were two children in a family they were interviewed together, and also parents sat in on the interviews with their children. This was to ensure firstly a level of ease and security for both the parent and child, in terms of being aware of the process and with me as essentially an unfamiliar person to them⁶. Also, as cited in Randall (2013, p. 23) young people in particular “feel more comfortable in the presence of peers” – and in this case the familial family unit – which I hoped would mean feeling at ease to answer my questions fully and honestly.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Firstly, approval was sought and agreed upon by Auckland Libraries to undergo this research on their Dare to Explore programme, and also to contact participants in their programme.

Approval was sought and obtained by the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee.

Participation was voluntary, as participants first give permission to be contacted as part of the enrolment into the Dare to Explore programme, and then had to choose to put themselves and their child/ren forward to be interviewed.

⁴ Settings for the interviews included visiting the home of one participant and the others were at Highland Park and Botany Libraries in an office and/or booked community room. This ensured the comfort and privacy of the participants.

⁵ Refer to Appendix for list of interview questions for parent/guardian and children

⁶ All the children, except one, were 10 years of age or younger, so it would be expected that a parent or guardian would accompany them.

This research involved interviews with children, so parental permission was required, as well as permission to interview them as parents, and I could reassure parents that I had been police vetted to work with children as part of my work with Auckland Libraries. Informed consent was gathered from all participants.

Before each interview I handed out the information sheet outlining the research purpose and how their information would be documented and stored, and explaining that they could pull out of the research process at any time before a certain date. I also discussed any questions they may have and outlined what the basic interview structure would be, and that I would be recording the interview. Approval was gathered before starting.

Although I did face to face interviews with the families, I have ensured the results are anonymous within the research by omitting names altogether.

3.6 Approach to data analysis

The interview questions were devised through a consideration of the themes of the literature review, methods of measuring perceived value and consultation with my research supervisor.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed so that the data could be organised and analysed (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). I transcribed verbatim, which including listening to the audio through once, then listening and pausing to transcribe, then re-listening several times to ensure accurate transcription. Once transcribed I used the records of the interviews to look at the results/answers based on the grouping of questions: demographics, overall Dare to Explore programme information, web questions, e-book questions, programme preference, and digital literacy and use. The first section of questions around demographics were collated and grouped by spreadsheet as the answers received were limited and quantitative in nature.

The more open ended questions and answers were analysed using recommendations from Leedy & Ormrod 's (2015) qualitative analysis strategies whereby responses were grouped by categories and subcategories. For example,

answers for those that did not use the web pages were collated together, and those that did use the web pages were collated together to see if there were any clear themes, similarities or differences in the responses. The transcriptions were also then re-read and analysed by categorizing them according to the Seth-Newman-Gross (1991) value measures, for example, responses that showed functional value were highlighted green, social value highlighted yellow etc.

Further coding was used to see if these themes and categories have any other links to the other data such as those that did not use digital in their everyday life were less likely to use the digital offering within the Dare to Explore programme or if there is a correlation between the reasons for joining the programme and the value found in the digital components of the programme.

I looked at the data for parents/caregivers and children first separately, and then went on to see if there was any difference and/or similarities between the coding of answers across the two groups.

4. Results

In this section I will look at the responses from the children and their parents by collating their responses and reporting the results. This will be based on the themes of the questions asked in the interviews:

Dare to Explore programme – looking at the programme as a whole and why participants & their parents chose to enrol and what they liked about it.

Web pages – did the participants and their parents use the Dare to Explore web pages, why/why not, and value they placed on them.

E-books – did the participants and their parents use e-books, why/why not and the value they placed on them.

Digital literacy – looking at the familiarity of the participants and their parents with digital devices and any web resources they use and would recommend to others and why.

Looking to the future – looking at the programme what percentage would they like to see digital, and what would parents expect to see on a summer reading programme website.

4.1 Dare to Explore programme

All of the responses showed that the programme was completed by a mix of at home, at the library, online and on holiday. Five out of the six families interviewed used a mix of at home and at the library for completing the programme. Three out of those six also included online, and one of the families completed the programme at home and on holiday.

The parents stated a mix of reasons for wanting their child to enrol in Dare to Explore. The main reasons stated by at least half of the parents were that they wanted their child/ren to have fun, they wanted them to continue reading over the holidays (both for fun and to maintain or increase their reading level) and to learn new things. Interestingly, this mirrored the results from the Allpress & Gilbertson

(2013 & 2014) reports and the agreed outcomes desired from Auckland Libraries for the programme. Other frequently mentioned reasons included having enjoyed the programme in previous years and appreciating the family interactions the programme encourages.

The children had some very similar responses – with the highest responses being because they like reading/books and for fun, however the other highest response showed quite a different reason for joining – because their parent had wanted them to⁷. Another frequent response was because of a particular challenge or event, or because of all the fun challenges or events they could participate in.

The parents' favourite part of the programme as a whole was extremely varied with no clear agreement on a reason. All stated different reasons from seeing their progress, to going to the library, to the Maori component of the programme, and creating a love of reading.

The children were the opposite, the clear favourite for them, mentioned by half of them, was the challenges (or a particular challenge they enjoyed from the booklet). Other highlights included colouring the stars to mark their reading progress and the finale party.

4.2 Web pages

When asked if they used the web pages for Dare to Explore, the majority – four out of the six families – had used the web pages. For those that had most said although they had used them they had only used them minimally and/or could not remember much about them. The families had found out about the webpages mostly from the book, or from the Library or Librarians. The parents had wanted the children to use the web pages because of the challenges on the web, as another learning tool and because children enjoy the computer. The favourite part of the web pages by both the children and the parents were the specific challenges such as the quiz. Parents thought the pages could be improved by having more content and making the content attractive and interactive. The

⁷ Each of these reasons was mentioned by at least three of the ten children interviewed.

children also wanted to see more activities/challenges and games. The parents felt mixed regarding how much the web content had added to the programme for their children. Using a Likert scale of 1 being nothing and 5 being a lot, two parents rated a 4 because it provided another medium, was fun and the other because it could benefit other children. The other two parents rated it a 2 & 3 because there was not enough content online, or they did not use enough of the online content to rate any higher. All the parents and children, except one parent who did not feel there was enough content to warrant it, would have recommended the web pages to friends/family, although only one parent had.

Two of the six families did not use the web pages. For the parents this was because they wanted to get them off devices or did not know about them. For the children this was because their parent had not let them, they did not know about them or there was nothing on them that they wanted to do. In terms of what could be done to encourage them to use the web pages the parents were mixed in their responses, around putting on booklists, putting games and/or interactive and attractive elements on it and for one the only way to encourage web page use would be to make it a compulsory aspect of the programme. For the children there were only two ways to encourage them to use the website, to put things on it that they would want to use or get their parents to allow it. In the Likert scale two of the families only rated the web pages as a 1 or 2 in adding to the programme as they saw no real need for the digital component or they saw the other parts of the programme as more important. One parent rated a 4 because they saw their children using computers for school and study. All families and all but one of the children would have used the web pages if they had been recommended by a friend or family member/s.

4.3 E-books

E-books were far less used in terms of digital aspects. Only one of the six families used e-books. This family had used e-books before and the parent rated them highly – a 5 on the Likert scale - as a tool to get children reading and reduce stigma around reading levels. The children who had read them did so just like any other book as part of the programme.

For those families that did not use e-books the main reason by both parents and children was because they preferred traditional print based books. Parents rated them only as a 1 or 2 on the Likert scale in terms of how much more they would have added to the programme for their children.

4.4 Digital Literacy

Both the parents and children had experience with digital devices such as computers, tablets, smart phones and other digital gaming consoles. The majority of the children and parents used these on a daily basis, with some of the children being limited in their time allowance on them. In terms of other websites or digital tools they would recommend the top mentioned websites were educational websites (recommended or found out about through school) such as Reading Eggs and Mathletics or similar maths or reading websites, this was followed by gaming but educational also websites such as Minecraft and coding websites and then entertainment websites such as YouTube or other video websites. The main reason parents chose to recommend websites was because of the educational or learning ability of a site. Half the children discussed websites also because of their learning function, but also six of the ten children because they found them fun.

4.5 Looking to the future

When looking at the Dare to Explore programme this year and into the future parents were asked what percentage of the programme they would like to see in a digital form. This varied from 10-50%, with the majority – four of the six parents – stating fifty percent. This was clearly stated as a maximum by the parents, who thought that they saw the importance of having a digital component, especially for attracting children, but saw the booklet and the Library as being equally as important. The children agreed. The overwhelming majority – eight of the ten children – wanted a mix of digital, booklet and library activities, as they wanted to be able to have the choice and do a little bit of everything. Only one child stated they would like it all on the computer, and one all in a booklet.

5. Discussion: Digital components of programmes

5.1 Theme One: Use of digital tools to improve participants' reading

In the literature review the research presented a case for digital tools having a positive effect on reading proficiency and attitudes (Laverick, 2014; Mitchell, 2016; Lu & Gordon, 2007). Although this study did not test the participants' reading and reading level, it appears the clear attitude of the children and parents was that the digital components – web pages and e-books - had no effect on this for them. As one parent discussing the digital components stated *“I don't think you need that element...there will be kids that will definitely like that aspect of it, but I think the other side, the other part of the programme is more valuable from a reading point of view and a literacy point of view”*

There was no clear link from the attitudes of the parents and children that there would be any benefit from digital to improve their reading. Only one of the six families used e-books, and both the children and parent had positive views about them. They discussed the benefit for being able to more easily find books online - *“some of the books that were quite hard to get...we got it via the public domain [online]”,* and interestingly that there was less stigma on e-books compared to print books for reading to increase aptitude *“if we, for example, go and try and take out the little readers in the library, he won't do them because they're classified as baby books...if I take them home, doesn't matter what I do, we won't read them. If we are online and we do whatever it's different...and they're not baby books. So that's how, therefore I've realised we don't have the same opposition”.* In discussing what they liked about them one of the children mentioned *“You can take them everywhere in your devices...stops you carrying heavy books, losing the book...and you can do, like, quite a lot of things with the settings...like making the text bigger and that kind of thing”.* One of the other parents who did not use e-books still saw the benefit in them for reading purposes though stating *“at least if they're reading then that's always a good thing I think”.*

However, of the rest of the parents who didn't use e-books, none could see the benefit in them – rating them only a 1 or 2 on the Likert scale for what they could

bring to their child to enhance the programme: *“I’d say a 1. Just because they had a great experience with this programme and they didn’t have any e-books”*

This was curious because one of the main reasons parents wanted their children to join the programme was to get them to continue reading over the holidays, both for fun and also to avoid the ‘summer slump’ and either maintain or increase their child’s reading ability. Although they could see that their children would be interested in digital components - *“they really don’t need any encouragement [to use digital devices]”*, and also that it would be an attractive component for other children *“I didn’t think they were necessary...I can see for other people maybe it would be”*, none made the link that the web pages – either through booklists or challenges, or even just the reading required on the website for different games/activities – or e-books, may have been a way to achieve this goal. I was not able to ascertain why e-books were not seen as comparable to print based books, other than a parent that was concerned with her children’s eyesight from reading them (see first quote below), and a blanket emotive value statement of ‘we just like books’ from almost all of the other families – both from children and parents.

“No actually I prefer the traditional book...because the eyesight, that’s why”

“I’m not against e-books but I don’t like them cause I’m old fashioned [laughing] I’m old. And so my generation aren’t that keen on e-books”

“I think as a family we prefer books – we all love them”

“We found the information we needed in actual books”

However, one of these parents when discussing a website they would recommend to others mentioned an online reading programme – Reading Eggs – which contains online reading lessons, phonics games and e-books as *“something that they do through school, it is definitely good for them...to encourage their reading”*. I was unable to ascertain why this form of e-book website would be encouraged over the e-books from the library but is a phenomenon I will discuss further within the conditional value measure.

5.2 Theme Two: Use of digital tools to increase participants' motivation and engagement

Many studies shown in the literature review discussed the positive increase in motivation and engagement shown when digital devices were incorporated in reading and learning (Laverick, 2014; Barone & Wright, 2008; Moyer & Thiele, 2012, Lu & Gordon, 2007; Hsu, 2012). This study concurs with these findings –

“I love playing on devices”

“It added a different medium to explore and made the programme more fun and interesting” (parent discussing the web pages)

Although this view was not always from the families engaging with the digital components themselves but rather their views about digital being child friendly.

“I’d say a 4, but it’s not just because of my children. It’s because I know some children prefer to go online, and whatever gets kids reading and motivated to read is a good thing” (parent, on giving score on the Likert scale regarding the web pages adding to the programme).

“Maybe it being online, more interactive, children would tend to do it” (parent, on whether to include digital components).

“I do believe that that would get a lot more children doing it, than picking up a pen and a paper, I just personally think that that would be the way, just seeing what children are doing, and watching some of the older kids...I know parents don’t like it but that the way it is” (parent, on suggesting a 50% digital preference for the programme).

Many parents even discussed the motivation to engage digitally by using it as a reward - *“if they behave they get a little bit of digital time each day...it’s only if we’ve had some bad behaviour that it gets wiped...it might be some time on the PlayStation, it might be some time on the phone watching videos, sometimes it’s time on the PC, doing Reading Eggs or Mathletics”*

As discussed in Theme One, one parent specifically discussed the digital opportunity to reduce stigma around reading levels by using online engagement -

“yes it’s the stigma... I’m doing a baby thing, versus an older thing, even though the ability is not there”.

However, Allpress & Gilbert’s (2013, 2014) research regarding a deliberate decision by some parents to keep their children away from digital devices over the summer holidays was backed up by the findings of this study – *“it was kind of a deliberate, um, thing for us because I was wanting activities that got them off devices and off computers because they’ll go on that till the cows come home really...it was great to have this that was off a device so I was encouraging them to do those activities”.* Parent’s attitude toward digital, and its influence therefore on the child’s ability to engage digitally and/or how it affects their view of the digital components is discussed more in the conditional values section below.

5.3 Theme Three: Need to incorporate digital as part of new literacies or multiple literacies

Lu & Gordon (2007) & Barone & Wright (2008) had discussed how nowadays children are exposed to the digital world from an early age, using it daily so it becomes second nature. This was confirmed in the results from this study. All the participants (children) were aged from 5 – 15 years old and every one of them had used and was comfortable using multiple digital devices, ranging from laptops, tablets, smart phones and gaming consoles.

The parents seemed well aware of this - *“well they use, you know, everybody sort of uses, phones and tablets and things now for a lot of stuff anyway”*, and all of them allowed their children to use digital devices daily, only limiting it for pure recreational use⁸. Most parents supported the principle by Lawrence, McNeal & Yildiz (2009) that although children may be ‘digital natives’ they still need help obtaining the skills required to use and manage the digital arena:

“I really believe that that’s the way of the future and I HAVE to prepare my children for it. I, you know, I’m not the world’s best at it but that doesn’t give me the right to

⁸ Pure recreational use meaning digital devices used for fun and gaming rather than educational purposes such as homework, and/or computer programmes/websites promoted by school

hold them back...It's not going to decrease, it's going to increase. And I would be short changing them if I didn't

"I'd rather, they've got to get used to using all this technology because it's a way of life. It's not going to disappear...and I'd rather they learnt how to use it properly, with supervision and how to be able to do it"

5.4 Theme Four: Ensuring success for participants by combining digital with other tasks

One of the most universally agreed on principles was the idea that a combination of literacies – digital and non-digital – would create the best programme. Both parents and children overwhelmingly agreed on a mix of online, booklet and library/librarians as the kind of programme that would be most attractive to them:

"I think a lot of children will do and if it's an interactive something, where they can, I mean, kids are all doing it, they're all using devices but that the option's there, if they don't want to they can do the maze in the book, OR they can do it online"

"The more variation, the more different ways there is, the better, because it all gets to the same end"

"Cause it's convenient to do it online but it's still nice to do some activities in the booklet"

Participants (children) on why they would like a mix of the activities:

"Participant: I like everything. Interviewer: You like to be able to do everything? Participant: Yes"

"Half and half. Activities at the library and computer"

While some parents were not entirely positive about the digital elements, as they saw the benefit of other aspects of the programme as more or equally important, they still suggested a proportion of the programme be digital:

“Somewhere between 10 and 20 percent, no more than that. Yeah cause I almost said 25 but that’s still too much. I think one of the most valuable things in the programme is the interaction with the library itself as well”

“I wouldn’t have it say dominating, the digital, cause I still think, I think it’s good that they would have a library based, and sort of hands on, sort of interactive sort of element to it. I think that would be important, and some sort of studying whether it’s through booklets, and or sort of the web based or e-books. So, I don’t know, maybe 50/50 or something along those lines”

“So it wasn’t all computer based or all sort of...if you just do it all in the library time, then they just do it there for the session and then they go home and forget it but if they have a little bit, you know, go away and do this in your own time and then that point where it involves research, going online or taking a book off the shelf and reading it, you know or just discussion, or something like bringing in family members, sort of more interaction based”

Even parents who had actively chosen to stay away from digital components of the programme said making it a compulsory element would encourage them to complete it *“if you’d made it a component so that it had to be done, then yeah I guess we’d obviously use the web”*.

6. Discussion: Measure - The Seth-Newman-Gross Theory of Consumption Values

6.1 Functional value

The functional value looks at the economic utility, benefits of possessing the product/service and the performance of an object, and in “many studies these cues have been identified as determinants of quality” (LeBlanc & Nguyen, 1999, p. 189). Overall the participants and parents in this study thought the programme was good quality, and had positive things to say about it, with one parent in particular discussing the value for money - *“It was brilliant. It exceeded our expectations, especially considering you guys do it for free”*. All of them had done the programme at least once before and talked positively about the challenges, the booklet, the library/librarians, and in some cases the digital components - *“They did it the year before and they really enjoyed it and they were keen to gather up more stickers and those stamps”*.

In looking at the functional value participants and their parents placed solely on the digital components of the programme – the web pages and e-books - they either didn't use them at all or they used them sparingly. This was due to several reasons. Firstly, as previously discussed they didn't like the idea of using the computer for a library programme and were actively avoiding digital devices, preferring 'traditional' books and/or visits to the physical library. Secondly, they did not know what was available online, or the full functionality of the digital offer. The way this was discovered through the research was several times parents and children mentioned features they would like to see on the web pages that were already actually a part of the Dare to Explore (and Auckland Libraries) web offer. Features such as an online check in and book lists:

“It would be nice if they had some kind of way to check in [online]”

“I suppose you could check in online or something...then yeah we would do that”

[Talking about what they would like to see on the website] “kind of recommended or a suggested, sort of reading lists, for the age group and that they then might sort of want to look at”

“You might put some books, like say new books released, a list, and you put on this website and we can make [sic] a request from here. They would go there frequently”

This raised the idea then about the quality of information getting to parents/children of what is available online. Perhaps the promotion of these features needs to be more seriously looked at in order to increase the value seen for the digital components. When asked where those that had used the web pages or e-books had found out about them, most mentioned either through a direction from the Dare to Explore booklet to a specific part of the web pages, from prior knowledge⁹ or from a librarian that had chosen to include it as an activity within the library:

[Talking about how children weren't encouraged through the booklet, librarians or in any way to go online] *“Where they sort of encouraged to go on the website, for each sort of stage for this...did it say ‘go and check out this’?. So maybe something like that might get some people to actually go and have a look”.*

[On how she found out about the digital components] *“It was in the book”.*

“Actually I think all the online activities we did were through the library. My kids really liked that quiz that [librarian's name] put up at the Library. They LOVED that quiz”

[On how she and her children knew about the online element] *“Yes through the booklet, and online, I think from past experience, we always know there's stuff online. I was looking and saying ‘is that all?’”*

Thirdly, there was not enough content on, or enough quality to, the online offer. Many of those participants and parents who did use the web pages in particular mentioned not using the web pages very much because they did not feel there was sufficient content on there. They mentioned several times using and liking the interactive elements such as the quiz but felt there was not enough on there to use it any more, or, and this was largely the response from children, not enough of the things they would want to do on offer:

⁹ This then means any new features that may have been added might be missed

[Child on not using e-books] *“Well, for one, I haven’t found quite a good book on the computer...and I don’t really like the reader and journals that the teacher gets us to do on the ummm e-books”*

[About the website after they said they did not use the website] *“Interviewer: Is that because there is nothing on there that you would use? Participants: yeah”*

[On giving the website a low Likert scale score in how much the website added to the overall programme] *“It was just another activity that he, he did, um. In the past it’s probably been higher...I probably would have said a 4 or 5 but this last one...I just feel that for children that don’t have a very good vocab and reading ability, this was quite hard”*

In then discussing what they would like to see on a summer reading programme website for children the most common responses from parents and children included making it attractive using pictures/characters/big fonts/videos; making it interactive and using games; making it age appropriate and filled with things that interest children of that age group; and ensuring it was a mix of fun and learning:

“There could be a more interactive sort of aspect to the website. Maybe sort of videos or you know interviews or music or whatever there just to sort of light it up, instead of just being sort of, you know, a lot of text”

“Something to bring them in and engage a bit more”

“As parents we can say you can go to that website but if there is nothing attractive they won’t go there”

“I think something light hearted, something that’s fun, because it is in the holidays, it’s not got to be heavily educational. But at the same time for the more [sic] deeper thinker, or the one that wants to learn, that opportunity is there...to challenge them. To want to investigate a little bit more, if that’s there style. But otherwise, obviously, just for fun, just to keep the reading abilities going”

So although their functional value measure of the overall programme was high, their functional value for the digital components was relatively low due to the factors mentioned above. Looking at promotion and understanding of the digital offer to parents and participants as well as incorporating their ideas of what they

would like to see to increase the quality of the digital offer would see this value increase.

6.2 Social value

Social value considers a products/services association with certain social groups to participants/customers. For this study I took this to mean the social value of interacting with the librarians, family interaction and the influence social groups have on influencing the participants.

One of the social factors families seem to value highly was the interaction with the library and librarians - *“I think one of the most valuable things in the programme is the interaction with the library itself as well”*

Both children and parents mentioned enjoying the social aspect of visiting the library, interacting with the librarians and other children/families at activities and the check in process with a librarian.

“[I] like going to the library and doing all the fun activities”

“So I really like going to the library and doing activities, and watching the kids have fun at the library”

“I like the person to person contact, and I like the kids going to a person”

This was never discussed as something that could be replicated digitally – although as mentioned they did discuss an online check in. When I suggested a way for children to talk online either with other children in the programme or Librarians there was some concern around the security of this - *“maybe somehow if there was a way they could just chat with their known friends”* and *“as long as where she’s going is secure...”*. Online security and online bullying did come up in several of the interviews with parents, although they did feel that the library website was a place where they could feel secure letting their children explore online. This trust and value placed on the security of what libraries offer online would need to be considered if libraries were to contemplate trying to include more of the social value online.

Another social value put on the programme as a whole was the ability to create time together as a family - *“it just means I get to interact and I get an excuse to spend more time with my children...we’ve always made it a family thing”*. This, again, was felt not to be replicable in the digital realm by most of the families - *“it made it more of a social gathering thing [if we didn’t use digital components]”*.

Lastly, I looked at the ability of the children and parents to be swayed by recommendations by family, friends or librarians. Almost all of the people I interviewed – 6 out of the 6 parents, and 9 out of the 10 children – said they would have tried either the web pages or e-books¹⁰ if they had been recommended by friends or family:

“I mean if [friends name] had said to me ‘oh my gosh the kids really liked that particular activity’ then I probably would have checked it out. Yeah. Then maybe I would have”

“Interviewer: Do you think you would have been allowed to use it if your friend had said “it’s really cool”? Participants: Yeah”

“Yeah. If someone had rung me up and said ‘hey this was awesome, do try this’ then I would try it. I would give it a go. I’ll try most things. I’ll give most things a go if someone recommends them to me”

On the other hand only one parent had said that they had actually recommended the things they enjoyed – either on the website or e-books to others - *“I advertise it, obviously in the home school community as well...I do every year, I actually advertise it on the whole of Auckland links and then in our area links”*.

This would be something to look into for libraries in increasing the social value. Recommendations from friends or family are clearly a great way to encourage others to try products/services that they may not otherwise have done. This could be especially the case for children, who seemed to learn about the websites they use, from school, as well as peers, as one parent specifically mentioned – *“they tend to kind of get to know a lot of these though speaking with, you know, friends*

¹⁰ The participants were more open to the recommendation for the website than the e-book. Their feelings toward e-books were much more polarized than that of the websites. Of being recommended to try e-books by friends or family the statistics were less advantageous but still more than half agreed they would have.

at school. So like they'll say "what you doing" and they'll say "oh I'm on this site", you know whatever their sort of fad is". Obviously, they would still need to find value in the product in order to use it (and recommend it), however recommendations may be a way to at least get participants to try it out.

6.3 Emotional value

Emotional value looks at the ability of a product/service to arouse feelings in the customer. The areas of the programme that garnered the most reaction in emotional value were reading, going to the library and computers/devices.

The strongest emotional value reaction garnered was when discussing reading. This came in several forms. Firstly, the emotional reaction to print books, as mentioned earlier, many participants were not interested in e-books because they felt so strongly about print books:

"We love book books"

"I prefer normal books"

"I think as a family we prefer books – we all love them"

However, putting aside e-books versus digital for most it was the idea of loving to read and/or creating a love of reading:

"I just like reading"

"For them to really develop the love for reading and you're developing a love for books and characters and at the same time you're questioning what you're reading"

Another emotional value that featured with many of the families was the connection to visiting the physical library:

"We really enjoy reading and being at the library"

"Yeah I quite like instilling in them that the library is a fun place to go, and I like that they are comfortable at the library from a young age"

“My kids just like going to the library and picking their own books, and they like the process of having a library card and checking the books out”

“I liked that the person sat down with them, and made them feel good about what they were doing and kind of reinforced kind of how much fun learning is, and how cool the library is, and I think it increases their sense of belonging at the library, and it’s good for their self-esteem that you can’t get from a computer”

One thing I saw coming through strongly and almost exclusively from the children was a love for computers/devices/digital:

“I love playing on the devices”

This was particularly evident for most of the children when they talked about what websites or digital tools they would recommend to others. They talked quite passionately about what they enjoyed doing digitally:

“My favourite thing is coding. And I want to make my own games”

“I wish I could play Minecraft”

I think emotional value is harder to influence for libraries. Increasing the emotional value for digital components would be difficult, however if libraries are able to create a product that delivers on the needs and wants of participants for an online offer, while retaining the things they feel strongly about in the overall programme (see Theme 4 and the concept of a mix of mediums for delivering the programme), this is likely to increase the emotional value by satisfying all those requirements.

6.4 Epistemic value

The ability of a product to create something new or different, or help a customer acquire knowledge is seen as epistemic value. In this study, epistemic value was linked strongly to the previously discussed themes 1, 3 and 4. Participants wanted to have fun and increase their reading ability:

“Something fun to do over the holidays and also I know that it helps keeping them reading and a bit more literate over the holiday period”

“To read more books and have more fun. And can enlarge their knowledge about the words, everything they need to know, not only in their English, Maths book”

To learn new digital literacies and to have the novelty of using different mediums:

[Talking about digital components] *“It’s just another learning tool isn’t it?”*

[Giving a 4 on the Likert for what web sites added to programme] *“Cause for them, their school, study, they use more and more computer, they use more websites”*

One of the strongest motivators for both the children and parents was the epistemic value of gaining knowledge and learning. In discussing either why they joined Dare to Explore or what they liked best about the programme, many discussed the learning aspect:

“I like when we would have to make stuff”

“I wanted them to be active in the holidays initially. I wanted them also to be learning”

“Yeah cause I push mine a bit further than what the book says...I make them think what they’re doing and that’s quite important for me”

“Probably people is my favourite thing to study...I find out about people and I just like, just find, like, more information about them, like when they were born and stuff”

Many of the parents in particular discussed a desire to see this stay as a focal part of the programme, whether that be online, on paper or both:

[What she’d want to see improved about the programme] *“More programmes for them to make them more creative. I think creation in the future is a very important ability...encourage them to create more stuff, for themselves, express their own ideas”*

[What expect to see on website] *“If you could get the programme to encourage them to write more...because at the moment they’re reading, they read a lot, a lot. But seldom have the chance to write...if reading was accept [sic] other people’s*

opinion, and if they write more then they express themselves more...their own ideas”

In discussing websites they would recommend to others, the majority as previously mentioned were often educational websites, mostly suggested by schools. Websites like Reading Eggs, Mathletics, as well as coding and Minecraft were mentioned by several families.

“The things they can make are amazing. They will think through and make amazing, complex, housing structures...it’s quite amazing to think that your 7 year old is capable of doing stuff like that”

[Talking about Minecraft] *“It uses their spatial awareness and things as well and they look up blocks in 3D...they’re using lots of different strategies”*

“So we use, we do do a lot of educational stuff, we do a lot of educational programmes, um, we do Mathletics, we do Reading Eggs...”

“Yeah it’s like a whole community it’s quite fun. You can do a variety of languages and there are quite a lot of home schoolers that do it...And we have a like [sic], a little weekly leader board and so there’s a bit of competition sometimes”

“Mostly I play school games, like MathsWhizz and Storyboard, and on my home table and computer I play lots of games, mostly on the tablet. I like reading games and maths games”

The main reason why these sites were ones the participants would recommend appeared to be that they were a mixture of fun and learning. They were age appropriate and went up by levels so parents felt like they were enhancing the learning experience for their children and the children felt like they were achieving something.

It is perhaps not so surprising that participants in a library programme showed a high epistemic value. However, although they valued the desire for knowledge a programme like this creates, they did not always translate that value to the digital components. If libraries wanted to increase the digital epistemic value, more work would need to be done to increase the digital offer to include more of the kind of value they found in the educational websites they recommended, and were happy

either as parents to be letting their children do, or as children enjoyed doing. This idea of educational learning online not translating to the digital components of Dare to Explore is discussed further within conditional value.

6.5 Conditional value

The conditional value looks at a specific set of conditions or situations a customer faces when making a decision about a product/service. With Dare to Explore there were a few conditional values I found through the interviews. Firstly, as discussed above, many of the parents and children were happy to spend time and in fact, encouraged using educational websites that were suggested by schools, such as Reading Eggs and Mathletics:

“So that’s something they do through school, it is definitely good for them. Reading Eggs is great to encourage their reading”

[Discussing a coding website and whether she would recommend it] *“I would encourage, yeah and I’m going to be encouraging him to be doing more of that at home”.*

However this did not translate to a positive and encouraging approach to the Dare to Explore web pages or e-books. I feel that the conditional value of a website being encouraged or provided by a school for educational purposes therefore has more weight than that of libraries. Libraries would need to work on partnering with schools for recommendations, and/or offering similar traits to those websites in their own libraries digital offer to increase this conditional value. Attitude to digital tools/websites based on their educational ‘merit’ and perhaps association with certain groups would be worthy of further study.

Another conditional value that was very strong throughout several of the interviews was the attitude of the parent that they wanted their child off digital devices.

“I was wanting activities that got them off devices and off computers because they’ll go on that till the cows come home really, so I wanted things that we could do...it was great to have this that was off a device so I was encouraging them to do those activities”

“I’m personally not a big e-book person myself so...I just don’t see the need when we’ve got lots of great print books”

[Discussing the digital components] *“I didn’t think they were necessary...I can see for other people maybe it would be”*

“If we start using the computer then the communication between them and me is less I guess”

“I’m not against e-books but I don’t like them cause I’m old fashioned [laughing] I’m old. And so my generation aren’t that keen on e-books”

What I found then was the parents’ attitude then affected the child’s perception and/or experience of the programme – particularly not being able to experience the digital components:

“My mum wanted me to do it”

“Because my mummy didn’t want to”

“Interviewer: Would you have wanted to use the web pages? [If parent had allowed] Participants: Yeah”

“Because my Mum wanted me to do it, I never got the decision”

This is perhaps not surprising considering the age of the children interviewed – 5-15 years old. However, it would be interesting to see if the parents who then heard that their children were keen to try the digital aspects would be more open to trying them this year.

The parents’ perception did seem to influence, not only the experience of the child on the programme but also the child’s opinion on aspects of the programme. This meant that in most cases the opinions on the digital components of the programme were similar between the parent and child. Many children did not seem excited or interested in the digital components of the programme because their parent was actively ensuring they did not partake in it, or were encouraging them to try other parts of the programme, so the child had had no real experience of using them, or they had heard the parents view on it and concurred with it – as

was the case for e-books where many children had not experienced e-books but still echoed the parents perspective that print books were better.

The last conditional value seen was mentioned by two families, that of the Maori component to the programme this time. Bringing in a Maori theme and having the Maori world view woven throughout the programme affected the conditional value these two families found in the programme. Although this was not directly related to the digital component it was a part that informed all components of the programme and these families found that particular aspect hard – especially compared to previous years:

“I didn’t enjoy it that much...it wasn’t because I was being racist or because of anything else but I just, one of us wouldn’t have understood the concepts that was being explained...for me as a Christian I found some of the things really were border line”

“I found it was very very [sic] heavy...because we’re on the spectrum and we just don’t get it, umm, it just didn’t cater for the special needs aspect, whereas in the past, um, that aspect has more or less been flexible”

“I didn’t understand the Maori”

7. Conclusions

7.1 Concluding remarks

Overall, children and their parents valued the Dare to Explore programme highly within the four themes and the Sheth-Newman-Gross Theory of Consumption values. In regards to the perceived value of the digital components of Dare to Explore, it is not so clear. There either was not enough content online or participants were not fully aware of what was available online to be able to truly rate its value. There was a strong epistemic value, in that children and parents want to be able to learn and gain knowledge, and most were not averse to learning online. Although some parents would like fewer digital elements within the Dare to Explore programme, all agreed some digital components could be good for engaging children and increasing digital literacy. No family felt a full digital programme would be of value though. A mix of mediums – online, booklet and in library - for delivery was by far the most valued way to run the Dare to Explore programme by both parents and children, and this is backed by the literature.

In regards to a comparison between the views of the parents and children, rather than a more dichotomous perspective between the two, their views were quite similar. I think the similarity in responses was due partially to the influence of the parents, as mentioned in the conditional values. Both parents and children wanted the programme to be fun and provide learning opportunities, they wanted options to the way they could participate in the programme¹¹ and both seemed to feel very strongly about e-books¹². The only real difference came in the openness the children felt toward the digital aspects¹³. They were open to the programme being delivered in a myriad of ways, including digital, much more so than their parent's. To them it was just another medium. They seemed to be motivated and engaged by digital components in other areas, so long as the quality and content was there. They did not hold the same strong emotional response as their parents (to stay off digital devices), or that a digital component would be a 'bad' thing, it was more

¹¹ Online, in booklet and in person with the library and librarians

¹² E-books not being as good as print books – even though many had not tried e-books.

¹³ When not being influenced by a parents views

about the choice for them. I feel if the parent was more open to allowing the children to try the digital components and the quality of the digital offer was higher, this would have shown in a higher value being placed on the digital components for Dare to Explore by the children, especially because they all agreed strongly on the aspects of the website they liked and wanted to see more of that.

I would suggest to increase the value participants see in the digital components of Dare to Explore, you need to look at what the participants said they value. They want to be able to have fun and learn, and they want to have activities that bring them together as a family. They want a summer reading programme website to be attractive and age appropriate/secure, with lots of interactive activities, while giving participants room to follow on further if interested online or offline. One of the main things would be to ensure what is available online is promoted better. That may include working with schools to tap into the conditional value that school suggested websites gain more traction with participants, and/or the social value of recommendations from families/friends or through the librarians themselves within the very valued library visits, to increase awareness and use.

The main thing to consider when looking at the value was to ensure the digital did not take away, but instead gave them online options and added to the things that were of value to participants in the programme as a whole.

7.2 Limitations and opportunities for further research

Due to the limit in time and size of this research a qualitative methodology was chosen in order to gain broader and more complex information from participants on a subject which has had minimal examination. Any findings from this qualitative research may then provide opportunities for further research, including using quantitative methodologies, in order to delve further into the exploration of, and possible theory development of this subject matter. This could include different forms of qualitative methods also, such as focus groups. As McCartan, Schubotz & Murphy (2012) state, focus groups are a great way to provide a safe, open environment for young people to and may provide more and/or richer data on this subject than the interviews did. I would also recommend this as a possible

way of ensuring data from the children is not as swayed by the parent's opinion, as my interviews with the children were conducted with the parent present and this may have had a bearing on their answers.

Due to the time between the programme ending and this research, recalling information for participants was not as straightforward as it could have been if the research was conducted closer to the end of the programme.

This research is a case study of one programme - Dare to Explore – inside one organisation – Auckland Libraries for one library customer group – children aged 5-13 and their parents/guardians. Therefore conclusions or correlations to the value of digital components of programming can only be drawn within this context. Also, self-selected participation in responding to the request for an interview, and the small sample size, does mean that the data may not be representative of the Dare to Explore participants as a whole. It would also be good to see more ethnic variation, as well as a greater geographic representation, as all my research was completed in the East Auckland area, and different responses could have been gathered with larger and/or more diverse groups. This was also because those who I interviewed came from within my circle of influence – through connections within Auckland Libraries as Botany Library manager. It would be good to extend beyond this in future research.

The purpose of this research was to begin to look at the perceived value of digital components in library programming, as it is such a little researched area. I hope that this study has provided an opportunity for further and more detailed research into this area, as the move into the digital arena becomes more prioritised for libraries, and for the emphasis on the users' views on the subject to become the focus.

Word count: 14,164

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9. Appendices

Appendix A: Information sheet for participants



Perceived Value of Digital Components in Library Programmes: A Case Study of Auckland Libraries Dare to Explore Summer Reading Programme

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for your interest in this project. Please read this information before deciding whether or not to take part. If you decide to participate, thank you. If you decide not to take part, thank you for considering my request.

Who am I?

My name is Jolene Misilei and I am a Masters student in Information Studies at Victoria University of Wellington. This research project is work towards my Info580 Research Paper.

What is the aim of the project?

This project is about the perceived value, if any, that participants (children and their parents/caregivers) find in the digital elements of the Dare to Explore programme.

This research has been approved by the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee.

How can you help?

If you agree to take part I will interview you and your child/children at an agreed Auckland Libraries location which is convenient for you. I will ask you and your child/children questions about Dare to Explore. The interview will take 30mins-1 hour (each). I will record the interview and write it up later. You can stop the interview at any time, without giving a reason. You can withdraw yourself and your child/children from the study by contacting me at any point before 22 June 2017. If you withdraw, the information you provided will be destroyed or returned to you.

What will happen to the information you give?

This research is confidential. This means that the researchers named below will be aware of you and your child/children's identity but the research data will be aggregated and your and your child's identity will not be disclosed in any reports, presentations, or public documentation. However, you should be aware that in small projects your identity might be obvious to others in your community.

Only my supervisor and I will read the notes or transcript of the interview. The interview transcripts, summaries and any recordings will be kept securely and destroyed 2 years after the research ends.

What will the project produce?

The information from my research will be used in my Masters Research paper. There might also be a possibility that this could be included in a publication and/or presented as a conference paper.

If you accept this invitation, what are your rights as a research participant?

You do not have to accept this invitation if you don't want to. If you do decide to participate, you have the right to:

- choose not to answer any question;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- withdraw from the study before 22 June 2017;
- ask any questions about the study at any time;
- receive a copy of your interview recording (if it is recorded);
- read over and comment on a written summary of your interview;
- agree on another name for me to use rather than your real name;
- be able to read any reports of this research by emailing the researcher to request a copy.

If you have any questions or problems, who can you contact?

If you have any questions, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Student:

Name: Jolene Misilei
University email address:
westjole@myvuw.ac.nz

Supervisor:

Name: Dr Chern Li Liew
Role: Senior Lecturer School of Information
Management
School: Victoria University of Wellington
Phone: 04 4635213
chernli.liew@vuw.ac.nz

Human Ethics Committee information

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Victoria University HEC Convener: Associate Professor Susan Corbett. Email susan.corbett@vuw.ac.nz or telephone +64-4-463 5480.

Appendix B: Consent form for participants



Perceived Value of Digital Components in Library Programmes: A Case Study of Auckland Libraries Dare to Explore Summer Reading Programme

CONSENT TO INTERVIEW

This consent form will be held for 2 years.

Researcher: *Jolene Misilei, Information Studies, Victoria University of Wellington.*

- I have read the Information Sheet and the project has been explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask further questions at any time.
- I agree for myself and my child/children to take part in an audio recorded interview.

I understand that:

- I may withdraw from this study at any point before *22 June 2017*, without giving any reason, and any information that I have provided will be returned to me or destroyed.
- The information I have provided will be destroyed 2 years after the research is finished.
- Any information I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and the supervisor. I understand that the results will be used for a Masters report and a summary of the results may be used in academic reports and/or presented at conferences.
- My name and that of my child/children will not be used in reports, nor will any information that would identify me.
- I would like a copy of the transcript of our interviews
- I would like to receive a copy of the final report and have added my email address below.

Signature of participant: _____

Name of participant: _____

Name of Participants child/children

Date: _____

Contact details: _____

Appendix C: Interview questions for parents/caregivers and children

Questions

Parents/Caregivers

1. Could you please tell me the following information about the child/ren who participated in Dare to Explore:
Gender
Ethnicity
Age
2. What is your relationship to the child/ren:
3. Where did you do Dare to Explore (home/library/online/whilst on holiday):
4. Why did you want your child/ren to participate in Dare to Explore?
5. What was your favourite part of the programme?
6. What did you think could be improved?

7. Did you use the Dare to Explore web pages on the Auckland Libraries website?

If yes	If no
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did you use the web pages? 2. How did you find out about the dare to explore web pages? 3. What did you like best about the web pages? 4. What could be improved about the web pages? 5. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being nothing, 5 being a great deal) how do you feel that the web pages added to the programme for your children and how? 6. Would you recommend them to friends/family? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did you and/or your children not use the web pages? 2. What could be done to encourage you and your child to use the web? 3. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being nothing, 5 being a great deal) how much more do you think the web pages would have added to the programme for your children and why? 4. Would you use the web pages if they had been recommended by a friend/family member?

8. Did you use any e-books during Dare to Explore?

If yes	If no
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did you use e-books as part of the Dare to Explore programme? 2. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why didn't you use e-books? 2. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being nothing, 5 being a great

<p>nothing, 5 being a great deal) how do you feel that the e-books added to the programme for your children and how?</p>	<p>deal) how much more do you think the e-books would have added to the programme for your children and why?</p>
--	--

9. What would you expect to see on a summer reading programme website for children?

10. What percentage of the programme would you make digital compared to the other components of the programme e.g. the booklet and face to face interaction with librarians and why?

11. What electronic devices/programmes do you and your children use, and how often do you use them? (Computer, smart phone, e-books, online gaming etc./work, leisure)

12. Is there a digital tool and/or website that you/your children have used that you would recommend to other parents/children use – why?

Questions

Children

1. How old are you?
2. Why did you want to do Dare to Explore?
3. What was your favourite part of Dare to Explore?
4. Was there anything you didn't like about Dare to Explore?
5. Did you use the Dare to Explore web pages?

If yes	If no
1. How did you find out about the dare to explore web pages?	1 Why didn't you use the web pages?
2. What did you like best about the web pages?	2 What could we do on the web pages to make you want to use them?
3. Was there anything you didn't like about the web pages?	3. Would you use the web pages if your friends/family used them?
4. What would you like to see or be able to do on the web pages?	
5. Would you tell your friends/family to use the web pages?	

6. Did you use any e-books during Dare to Explore?

If yes	If no
1. Have you used e-books before or was this the first time? 2. What do you like about e-books?	6. Why didn't you use e-books?

13. What would be the best summer reading programme for you:

- a) All of it on the computer
 - b) All of it in a booklet
 - c) All of it in the library and with librarians
 - d) A mix of computer, booklet and library/librarians.
- Why?

14. What electronic devices/programmes do you use, and how often do you use them? (Computer, smart phone, e-books, online gaming etc./work, leisure)

15. Do you have a favourite website and why is it your favourite?