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Using an After School Martial Arts Program to Increase Student Motivation

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Using an After School Martial Arts Program to Increase Student Motivation

by

Jeffrey R. DeWilde

January 2008

A thesis submitted to the

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

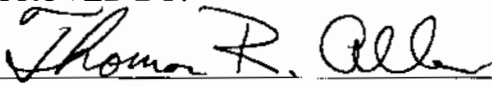
Master of Science in Education

Using an After School Martial Arts Program to Increase Student Motivation

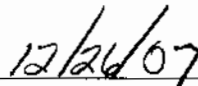
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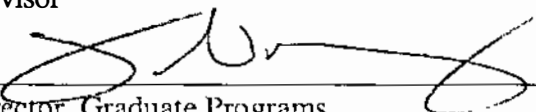
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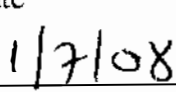
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Students of all ages are participating in after school programs across the country. Carver and Iruka (2006) found that “In 2005, 40 percent of students in kindergarten through eighth grade were in at least one weekly nonparental after-school care arrangement” (p. 2). After school programs offer a service to working parents by providing their children with a safe and structured program to attend each day once school has ended. Many programs also attempt to provide services that assist students academically by offering support on home work or tutoring.

Mahoney, Lord, and Carryl (2005) evaluated after school participation and the development of academic performance as well as motivation. They performed an ecological study of approximately five hundred students over an entire school year. The researchers used a 10 item scale based on student enjoyment, effort, and interest in school activities before and after the study to evaluate the motivation of the students. The researchers examined the grade average-in math, reading, writing, language, social studies, and science to determine the academic performance. Their study found that students participating in after school programs had higher levels of achievement and motivation compared with students who did not participate in after school programs. The importance of this study was the fact that it compared after school programs with other types of care such as family or babysitters. This study suggested that students in after school care programs have an advantage over their peers who spend their time at home or with a care giver.

Other studies have also been performed to show that after school programs can be beneficial especially to low income and disadvantaged students. Hines and Little (2006) examined an after school program that worked with 155 third through sixth grade students to improve their reading levels. The program offered additional reading instructions to students in an after school program at the students' school. This study compared low and high achieving students and found that each group showed an improvement in their reading level after taking part in the after school program. Mahoney, Parente, and Lord (2007) performed a two year study of 141 children in a low income area and found that after school program engagement was positively correlated with the students' social competence and motivation.

Examining low income and disadvantaged students is important because this population typically requires more time and resources in order to achieve at the same level as their peers. The fact that both high and low achieving students showed academic improvement due to after school program attendance suggests that after school programs have the potential to benefit every student. These programs can be a way to help students improve academically as well as improve their motivation in the classroom.

Problem Statement

Student motivation is an important issue in every school and in every classroom. Educators use a variety of methods to motivate students, but motivation is something that must be reinforced in a student's daily life. For this study, I examined the effectiveness of after school programs in regards to increasing motivation in students. Using the After School Program at Master Kim's TaeKwonDo Institute as the sample for this study, I

examined if participation in an after school program can lead to increased motivation in students.

Significance of Problem

In education there are many factors outside of the classroom that can have an impact on student motivation. Educators are constantly looking to find ways to create a connection between home and school. Schools often promote athletic and extracurricular activities that help promote learning and student success. While these programs are worthwhile, they are often only available for a portion of the school year. As it is becoming more common for both parents to work full time jobs, after school programs have increased in popularity. These programs provide supervision for students every day after school and often continue during the summer. After school programs become a large part of the students' lives who attend every day after school. Because attendance at after school programs is prevalent in schools, educators need a better understanding of how these programs can impact students in the classroom (Carver, 2005).

One example of an after school program is the After School Program at Master Kim's TaeKwonDo Institute. Students in this program take part in the Character Reward Program. This program allows the students to earn points each day for demonstrating the qualities of respect, responsibility, self control, and cooperation at the TaeKwonDo School. They also work on take home character sheets each month. These sheets include a self discipline sheet which allows the students to keep track of chores and tasks they complete without being told by an adult, a book club sheet which they are able to record each time they read for 30 minutes or more, and a home report card in which their parents grade them on how well they listen to their parents and complete their chores and home

work. Students earn stripes on their TaeKwonDo belts for completing these sheets and special awards are given to the students who earn the most stripes each month.

For this study I examined this new Character Reward Program to study the impact of participation in the program and increased motivation in students. Motivation was measured by time spent on homework, ability to complete homework and household chores without being asked, following directions from parents, and improvement shown in academic performance. I administered both a pre and post survey to the parents of the children in the after school program as well a group of parents of school aged children who took TaeKwonDo lessons only two times per week, but were not in the after school program. The surveys asked the parents to rate their children's motivation in the areas mentioned above. The students in the after school program were also given a survey which asked them to rate their own level of self-motivation and academic progress.

As a martial instructor I worked with character development in our after school program each day. Through the practice of martial arts, I was able to teach the students how to become more motivated in every area of their life. In each class the students learned new techniques and motions which they were later tested on to achieve their next rank. Once the students had practiced their material, they then had to test in front of the class and a group of judges. By testing in front of large crowds, the students gained confidence in their ability to perform in stressful environments. As students continue to learn new material and test for new ranks in the future, they will begin to see the value of their hard work and practice during class.

TaeKwonDo practice emphasizes goal setting, self improvement, and confidence, all of which are essential to increase motivation. All of these skills will help students in

school as well as later in life. In this study I examined the relationship between students who participated in this after school program and their level of motivation as compared with students who did not participate in this after school program. I will use the results of the study to improve the after school program at Master Kim's TaeKwonDo in order to create a better method for students to become more motivated individuals.

Rationale

There is a great emphasis in schools today on student achievement and meeting standards. The No Child Left Behind Act requires all students to meet certain academic standards. While holding students to high standards is important in education, raising standards alone does not motivate students to achieve. Additional work must be done to change students' attitudes in order to motivate them to reach for these high standards. Students need to be motivated to work before they can be expected to meet standards or perform on a test. This study provides information on the relationship between after school program involvement and motivation.

After school programs can be a powerful force in helping students improve their motivation in the classroom. I believe that after school programs have the ability to teach students to become more motivated individuals which will help them to become better learners. Learning does not stop once a child leaves school each day. Educators and after school programs can work together to create a great learning environment in which students can grow and become motivated successful individuals. This study attempted to provide educators with information on the impact after school programs have on students. The following chapter will provide a review of current research on after school programs and student learning and motivation.

Definition of Terms

After School Program: An organized program for students either outside or inside the school, in which students are supervised by adults once school has ended.

Motivation: Overall student attitude toward school and learning, including work habits, improvement in behavior, and willingness to complete tasks.

TaeKwonDo: A Korean martial art meaning the way of the hand and foot. This art has a long history and has both physical and philosophical components (see Appendix A).

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Background on After School Programs

After school program attendance is an important issue in education. What a student does outside of school can have an impact on a student's academic performance and motivation inside the school. After school programs provide supervision for students once school has ended. These programs also offer academic support and character education which can increase student achievement and motivation. Gil G. Noam director of the Program in After School Education and Research (PAER) and associate professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education found that there is growing evidence that good after school programs can have a positive impact on students' lives. Noam found that students in after school programs had better grades, peer relations, emotional adjustment, and conflict resolution skills than their peers who did not attend after school programs (2002).

After school programs provide supervision for students once school has ended because it is becoming more common for both parents to work full time jobs. Nearly 80 percent of mothers of children ages six to 18 are in the work force (Strober, 2007). A study by Zedlewski (2002) found that 67 percent of single parents also had full time jobs (2002). This increase in single parent families and families in which both parents work full time has had an impact on the lives of students in this country. According to the After-School Corporation, "Demographic and social shifts have changed the structure of American families. More mothers in the workforce means that more children are home alone when they return from school" (2002, p.3).

In these unsupervised hours students are more likely to make bad decisions which could possibly get them into trouble with the law, or take part in behaviors that could injure themselves or others. Students left home alone are also at a greater risk to engage in dangerous behaviors such as using drugs and alcohol (Peters, 2002). In order to prevent problems like this from occurring, parents are placing their children in after school programs.

After school programs are organized programs for students either outside or inside the school, in which they are supervised by adults after school has ended. Students can attend a program each day after school where they are able to complete their homework, receive additional tutoring on school subjects, participate in athletic activities, or socialize with their peers until their parents have finished their work day. After school program attendance is becoming common for students all across the country. Carver and Iruka (2006) found that, "In 2005, 40 percent of students in kindergarten through eighth grade were in at least one weekly nonparental after-school care arrangement" (p. 2). With such a large number of students participating in after school programs educators need to be informed of the benefits these programs can have on students in the classroom.

Educators' time with a student in the classroom is only one part of that student's day. There are issues outside of the classroom that can affect a student's success in the classroom such as the amount of time students spend unsupervised after school. In addition to providing supervision for students after school, after school programs also place an emphasis on academics (Martens & Flowers, 2003). These programs attempt to work with schools to reinforce the skills students have learned in the classroom. Fager and Schwendiman (1999) found that students participating in after school programs

received many academic benefits from the programs including increased achievement in math, improved reading ability, better attendance, greater self confidence and motivation, and decreased drop out rates. These findings suggest that after school program attendance can have a positive effect on academic achievement.

A study of after school programs in the state of California by Fletcher (2003) demonstrated the effect after school programs can have on academic achievement. The after school programs in California were designed to build partnerships with the schools by aligning their programs with the curriculum that the students were learning in the classroom. These programs offered homework assistance and tutoring focused on language arts skills and math skills that the students were learning in their classrooms. The study found that students participating in after school programs that were aligned with school day activities showed greater improvement in academic achievement compared to other students in the state who did not participate in after school programs. This study showed the potential for after school programs to benefit students academically by reinforcing the curriculum being taught in the classroom.

When researching different after school programs across the country there is a clear trend that these programs can help increase academic achievement in students. Little and Hines (2006) performed a 12 week study of an after school program called Project Expanding Horizons. This program was focused on improving reading levels and worked with 155 students from demographically diverse districts in grades three through six. The study compared the average weekly scores in reading of the students in after school programs with a national average for students in the same grade levels who were

not in after school programs. Little and Hines found that the students in the program showed significant gains in reading fluency.

This study also found that gains in reading were the same across subgroups of gender, district, and entry reading level. The program showed potential for both low and high ability readers (2006). It is important to note that the program was beneficial to all students because education is designed to help every student. Too often, programs are only designed to help one group of students, but this research shows that after school programs can benefit every child.

A study done by Mahoney, Parente, and Lord (2007) examined the effect of after school programs on students' social competence and motivation. Social competence and motivation were based on teacher ratings of participation and engagement, as well as school grades. In their research the authors performed a two year study of 141 children in a low income area and found that after school program engagement was positively correlated with the students' social competence and motivation. The students in after school programs showed higher levels of engagement and participation in the classroom compared with students who were not in an after school program.

Examining low income and disadvantaged students is important because this population typically requires more time and resources in order to achieve at the same level as their peers. Luster, Lekskul, and Oh (2004) compared low and high income students' cognitive ability and academic performance in an elementary school classroom. This study found that high income students were more successful on school tasks and required less guidance and support than low income students. The fact that the study performed by Mahoney, Parente, and Lord demonstrated that both high and low

achieving students showed academic improvement due to after school program attendance, suggests that after school programs have the ability to benefit every student.

Ash (2007) examined the reports of the New Hampshire State Afterschool Task Force on elementary and middle school after school program attendance. This study found that the vast majority of students in after school programs showed an improvement in academic and behavioral issues after taking part in after school programs. The research examined the factors of home work completion, class participation and behavior, attendance, and academic performance in math and English. This study demonstrated that after school programs can be used to increase academic performance, but also after school programs can impact behavior and attitude as well. The ability to improve student attitudes is a major benefit of after school program attendance. Finding strategies to motivate students is essential as teachers continue to search for ways to help them succeed in the classroom. This research suggests that after school programs have potential to impact both academic achievement and motivation. There is a considerable amount of research that shows the importance of motivation in the classroom.

After school programs teach characteristics such as motivation through a system of character education (which is examined in the following section). While after school programs may or may not be related to the academic curriculum learned in the classroom, the improvement in character development and motivation learned in these programs can have a positive effect on student achievement. In a review of after school programs in the United States, The After School Alliance (2005) found that students who participate in after school programs have better grades and attain higher levels of achievement in college than students who do not take part in after school programs.

Character Education

President Theodore Roosevelt once stated that “To educate someone in mind and not morals is to educate a menace to society” (as cited in Ellenwood, 2006, p.22). This quote demonstrated the importance of character education. Character education is examined in order to study the effect it can have on improving academic achievement and motivation. Character development is also a large part of martial arts programs which is discussed in a later section.

In a report on character education by The What Works Clearinghouse which was established by the US Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (2007) stated “Character can encompass such moral and ethical values as respect, fairness, and caring—as well as responsibility, trustworthiness, and citizenship. And it can refer to the demonstration of these values in behavior, reasoning, and emotions” (p. 1). This report suggested that character education is the set of values that students learn outside of the academic curriculum. Research on character education shows that while most educators are in favor of a character development program, there is not enough time spent on character education in schools. If character education is not being taught in schools, after school programs can become a place where students are able to receive character education.

In a study of character education research Smith (2006) claimed that education has become so focused on academic achievement that there are no resources or time left for character education. Smith examined education reform movements in the past and examined the progress that has been made since those reforms were initially created. The author suggested that the character education reforms discussed in the 1983 writing “A

Nation at Risk” have been overlooked by current educational legislation. The view that schools overemphasize academic achievement at the expense of character education is reinforced by other educational researchers.

In another study of character education conducted by Revell and Arthur (2007) it was found that a majority of teachers favored teaching character education, but did not have the opportunity to do so in their schools. Data collected from 1,000 student teachers cited schedules, subjects being taught, and class time as the main obstacles preventing them from providing character education. This study reinforced the point that the current educational system does not provide teachers with enough time and resources to focus on character education. In a study of character education in schools Ellenwood (2006) stated,

Teaching character has always been assigned a low priority because it is risky. Because there are always many other pressures, schools and state legislatures often make a conscious choice to focus heavily or exclusively on the development of academic talents thereby leaving matters of each student's character growth to others (p. 21).

The “others” are family, friends, and programs outside of school such as after school programs. With the lack of character education in schools, after school programs are often the only source of character education for students.

Lickona, Schaps, and Lewis (2003) wrote the list of 11 principals of effective character education for The Character Education Partnership. The Character Education Partnership is an organization that provides information for schools and after school programs regarding ways to promote character education for students. One of the key principles of character education described by the authors was the ability of a program to foster student motivation. The authors described motivation as the ability of students “to

do the right thing when no one is looking” (p. 4). Motivation is the part of character education that focuses on teaching students to make good decisions in regards to their behavior and academics. In this context the term was defined as the force that drives students to improve themselves. Motivation is one part of character education that is important to both education and after school programs. The following section examines the impact of motivation in education and the importance of motivation in regards to academic achievement.

Motivation

Woolfolk-Hoy and Hoy (2006) describe motivation as “...an internal state that arouses, directs, and maintains behavior” (as cited in McCollum & Kajs, 2007, p.46). This study described motivation to be that which allows a student to put effort into their school work and become successful in their education. The importance of motivation can not be underestimated. Educators understand that learning can only take place if a child wants to learn. Teachers help create a desire to learn within the student before attempting to teach the academic curriculum. The researchers propose that students must be motivated to put effort into their school work in order to be successful.

In research of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) McReynolds (2006) made the point that motivation is often overlooked in educational policies such as NCLB. The goal of the act is to close the achievement gap between students of different races and social classes by promoting high standards of education for all students. McReynolds holds the belief that the act will actually increase the achievement gap “because it is designed to promote the interest of the government and not children” (p. 33). The government is concerned with funding and test scores which does not coincide with

educators' goals for student learning and achievement. McReynolds believes that acts such as the NCLB are only focused on the overall status of education in the country and not concerned enough with the day to day learning that happens in the classroom.

In a recent study of the No Child Left Behind Act Koppich (2005) noted that when the act was created in 2002, neither the American Federation of Teachers nor the National Education Association were in support of the legislation. For true educational reform to occur teachers must be part of the legislative process because it is ultimately the teacher who is responsible for motivating the students to succeed in education. This study emphasized the point that raising standards alone can not increase student achievement. Students must be motivated to achieve before they can be expected to meet the standards of the NCLB. The research that follows on motivation demonstrates that with increased motivation comes increased achievement.

When examining motivation, attitude is an important component. In a study of writing attitude and academic achievement it was found that students' attitudes toward writing influenced their writing achievement (Graham, Berninger, & Fan, 2007). The researchers studied groups of first and third grade students to examine the relationship between student attitude and achievement in the area of writing. The research conducted tested the theory that student attitude has an effect on student achievement and vice versa. A seven question survey was given to the students to determine their attitude toward writing which was then compared with the students' achievement in writing. Through statistical analysis the researchers found the results supported the theory that student attitude affects achievement.

While this study examined attitude which is one aspect of motivation, this data is important because it suggests the importance of motivation in regards to achievement. While some students who had negative attitudes toward writing performed well academically, the researchers found that a positive attitude lead to high achievement. The study illustrated the point that students must first have the right attitude before they can be expected to improve their academic performance. This study confirmed the belief that increasing student attitudes will lead to increased academic achievement. Finding ways to improve student attitudes will have a positive effect on student motivation. By increasing motivation in the students, educators can help each student to achieve success to the best of their abilities.

Grolnick, Farkas, Sohmer, Michaels, and Valsiner (2007) carried out an action research project that used an after school program to increase motivation in seventh grade students. The study took place over 15 weeks and used questionnaires and teacher observations of 90 seventh grade students to evaluate the motivation of the students. Motivation was based on the student's perceptions of competence and ability in subject areas, engagement in class, and academic achievement. The goal of the program was to increase student motivation.

The researchers found that students who took part in this program showed an increase in science grades and engagement in school in general. Student survey results and teacher evaluations before and after the program indicated an increase in students' motivation based on engagement and the students' self evaluation of their competence in the subject area. By allowing the students to work in groups and solve problems together, the students became more involved in their learning which led to an increase in

motivation. This study showed the importance of allowing the students to become actively involved in their learning. The researchers found that the students showed higher levels of motivation when they felt that they had control over their learning. This study demonstrated that when students feel more connected to their education their motivation to achieve will grow.

Academic achievement is greatly influenced by motivation. In a study of the impact of motivation on academic achievement conducted by Halwah (2006) it was stated that, "...student's motivation for learning is generally regarded as one of the most critical determinants, if not the premier determinant, of success and quality of any learning outcome (p. 92). With the relationship between motivation and academic achievement, after school programs attempt to offer services that improve both academic performance and motivation in students. After school martial arts programs are one example of programs designed to teach motivation. The following section reviews research on martial arts programs.

Martial Arts

There are many different options for after school programs available to students and parents. In research on after school programs, Walker and Arbreton (2004) found that programs such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America were the most popular programs for students in the past. With the increased popularity of after school programs these activities have become less popular as students are becoming involved in a wide variety of after school programs. After school martial arts programs are one option for parents. After school martial arts programs provide students with an exercise and fitness program as well as a system of character development. The research on martial arts

programs shows that these programs have had a positive effect on the students who participate in them by increasing motivation and academic achievement.

One reason that martial arts programs are growing in popularity is the emphasis on physical fitness. Physical fitness has become a major issue in education today. With the growth of computer games and the internet, children are getting less and less exercise and physical activity. This lack of exercise has led to an increase in childhood obesity and other health related issues such as diabetes. In a study of childhood obesity Reilly stated, "research evidence shows that (obesity) does matter to physical and psychological health and that there are adverse health risks for both the obese child and the adult who was obese as a child" (2007, p. 391). Martial arts programs are physical in nature and focus on physical fitness and exercise.

In addition to the obvious health benefits, physical fitness programs such as martial arts have also been shown to improve cognitive functioning. Schott (2007) conducted a study of 203 students to examine the relationship between physical fitness and cognitive ability. The study found a significant relationship between the fitness level of a student and his or her cognitive abilities based on attention and memory. Attention and memory are both important factors in a student's ability to succeed academically. The results suggest that physical fitness can lead to an increase in academic achievement.

Similar results were found in a recent study of children's physical activity level by Baker and Shepard (2007). The researchers found that students who participated in vigorous physical activity for 20 to 40 minutes each day during the school week were better able to complete schoolwork and performed better in mathematics than their peers who did not exercise each day. The students who exercised each day also demonstrated

larger improvements in planning and organizing school assignments, focusing on schoolwork, resisting impulses, self-monitoring, and using effective strategies to achieve academic goals. Impulse control, self monitoring, focus are areas of motivation that help students control their actions and behavior in order to achieve academically. This study demonstrated that programs such as martial arts that focus on physical fitness can also increase cognitive functioning which will help to improve academic achievement. The study also demonstrated that physical activity can also improve motivation by improving focus and self-monitoring skills (Baker and Shepard, 2007).

Martial arts classes have also become a popular after school activity for children because of the emphasis on character development and motivation. The values and character development learned through TaeKwonDo practice have been shown to have a positive affect on students' attitudes and motivation in the classroom. Law (2004) found that TaeKwonDo programs can have significant psychological benefits for children by helping satisfy children's psychosocial needs. The author examined the areas of self-esteem, sense of belonging, power, fun, and freedom. Overall the study found that the TaeKwonDo programs were able to fulfill the students' needs in these areas which lead to psychological advantages including increased self-esteem and motivation. The study also found that students in the TaeKwonDo program demonstrated higher levels of self-sufficiency and intelligence than students who did not participate in the program. Self-sufficiency is a large part of motivation because motivation requires students to internally control their actions and behaviors.

Another component to motivation is self regulation. Lakes and Hoyt (2004) compared the self-regulatory abilities of students who participated in a school based

TaeKwonDo program with those who did not participate in the program. Self-regulation was defined as "...the processes by which the self alters its own responses, including thoughts, emotions, and behaviors" (p. 285). This term "self regulation" was used as a form of motivation in this study by Lakes and Hoyt. When comparing the definitions of self-regulation and motivation it is clear that both terms describe the process of student thoughts and attitudes directing their behavior. Woolfolk-Hoy and Hoy (2006) describe motivation as "an internal state that arouses, directs, and maintains behavior" (as cited in McCollum & Kajs, 2007, p.46).

In this study TaeKwonDo was offered to a group of students in place of their typical physical education class for a three month period. The study found that the students who took part in the TaeKwonDo program showed higher levels of self-regulating behaviors than the control group who did not take part in the program. The students who took part in the TaeKwonDo program also showed improvements in their social skills and classroom behavior. The ability to control behavior is a key element of motivation. This study suggested that TaeKwonDo training can help improve student motivation by examining the area of self-regulation.

School teachers can only do so much to help improve the motivation of their students. A student's life outside of school plays an important role in the motivation a student has to succeed academically. Because after school program attendance is prevalent, the impact these programs have on student motivation and achievement is being seen in classrooms across the country. The research previously mentioned has shown that after school programs can have a positive impact on both motivation and achievement in the classroom.

The following chapters present the methods, results, and conclusions of this study on increasing student motivation using an after school martial arts program. With research showing that both after school and martial arts programs can improve student motivation, this study extends the current research by examining the relationship between an after school martial arts program, and motivation and achievement.

Chapter 3

Applications and Evaluations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine if students who participated in Master Kim's TaeKwonDo Institute's After School Program demonstrated higher levels of motivation compared to a group of their peers who did not participate in the after school program. Student motivation was examined using the areas of time spent on home work, ability to complete tasks without being asked, improvement shown in grades, and following directions from parents and teachers. A survey was sent to parents and students to collect data for the study. The information gathered through this study was used to examine the topic of after school programs and student motivation as well as a way to improve the After School Program at Master Kim's TaeKwonDo.

Participants

This study included the 20 members of the After School Program at Master Kim's TaeKwonDo Institute as well as 20 students who were not a part of the after school program. All of the students in this study attended school in the Penfield School District and were in grades 1st through 8th. All of the students trained at Master Kim's TaeKwonDo Institute in Penfield and ranged from several months to several years of martial arts experience.

Procedures

There are approximately 400 students training at Master Kim's TaeKwonDo Institute in Penfield with about 300 of those students being children in grades 1st through 8th. There were 20 students in the after school program who attended the institute every

day after school, while the other students only attended classes two times per week. All of the students in both programs attended classes in which they learned techniques and motions which they were tested on to achieve a new rank in the system. While learning the techniques is great for exercise and self-defense, character development was also a large part of the program. Students were expected to bow and use the words “sir” and “ma’am” when addressing a higher rank which teaches them to show respect. Self-control was demonstrated when students were working with a partner so that no one is injured. Perseverance was learned in order for students to continue their training year round.

Character development was one of the main reasons parents chose Master Kim’s for their children. The after school program was developed to provide parents with a structured program teaching martial arts and character development each day after school had ended. The students in the program were transported directly from their school to Master Kim’s TaeKwonDo Institute each day where they participated in a martial arts class, had a snack, and were given time to work on homework until their parents were able to pick them up.

Students in this program also took part in the Character Reward Program. This program allowed the students to earn points each day for demonstrating the qualities of respect, responsibility, self control, and cooperation at the TaeKwonDo School. They also worked on take home character sheets for the month (see Appendix B). These sheets included a self discipline sheet which allowed the students to keep track of chores and tasks they completed without being told by an adult, a book club sheet which they used to record each time they read for 30 minutes or more, and a home report card in which their

parents graded them on how well they listened to directions and completed their chores and homework. Students earned stripes on their belts for completing these sheets and special awards were given to the students who earned the most stripes for the month.

I worked with the students in the program and taught them a martial arts class each day. The class involved various drills and exercises using the motions the students were learning. During each class I checked with the students to make sure they were working on their take home sheets as well as reviewed the Character Reward chart with them. Every Monday I talked to the students about a different topic regarding character development such as avoiding peer pressure, showing respect to teachers, putting good effort into every assignment, etc. I used this study to determine how effective this program was in regards to increasing motivation. I also used the results to find areas in where I could improve upon the program to make it a more successful program at increasing student motivation.

Instruments of the Study

This study used a parent survey (see Appendix C) that asked parents to evaluate their child's motivation based on the characteristics of motivation as defined in this study. Motivation was measured by time spent on homework, ability to complete homework and household chores without being asked, following directions from parents, and improvement shown in academic performance. The survey was distributed to all parents of after school students surveyed as well as a group of 20 parents whose children did not take part in the after school program.

A second survey (see Appendix D) was given to the students in the after school program that asked them to evaluate their own sense of motivation. Both the parent and

student surveys were given at the beginning November 2007 as a pre-test and again one month later as a post-test. The data gathered from these surveys was examined to find general trends and compare the results from the after school students with those of the students who were not in the after school program. The results can be found in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Results

Throughout this study data was gathered using surveys designed to measure the motivation level of students. A survey was given to the parents of the 20 children who were in the after school program at Master Kim's TaeKwonDo Institute (Group A) as well as the parents of 20 children who only attended classes two times per week (Group B). The survey asked parents to respond to statements regarding their child's motivation level based on a scale of Strongly Disagree, Disagree, No Opinion, Agree, or Strongly Agree.

The survey was designed to examine motivation on three levels: motivation at home, school, and overall motivation. In each section the percent of responses to each statement are summarized. The results of the pre-survey are compared with the results of the post-survey in each section. Statements of Agree and Strongly Agree were combined in order to determine the motivation of each group. Statements of Agree and Strongly Agree can suggest higher levels of motivation in this study. The motivation level of each group was determined by the percent of responses of Agree and Strongly Agree.

The statements on motivation at home were based on completing household chores, finishing home work, and listening to directions from parents. Statement 1 "My child completes all of their home work each night", statement 2 "My child completes their household chores without waiting to be told", and statement 5 "My child listens well and follows directions at home" were based on student motivation at home. Table 1, found on the next page, shows the results of these statements.

Table 1: Motivation at Home (Statements 1, 2, and 5)

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
After School Parents (Group A)	Pre-Survey	2% (1)	33% (20)	10% (6)	33% (20)	22% (13)
	Post- Survey	4% (2)	25% (14)	7% (4)	37% (21)	28% (16)
Two Times per Week Parents (Group B)	Pre- Survey	2% (1)	15% (9)	7% (4)	51% (30)	25% (15)
	Post- Survey	0% (0)	18% (11)	5% (3)	50% (30)	27% (16)

The information in Table 1 demonstrates that Group B had higher motivation levels than Group A based on the responses of Agree and Strongly Agree. Group B finished the study with 77% of responses compared with 65% from Group A. While Group B showed higher motivation levels, Group A showed more improvement from pre-survey to post-survey. Group A increased the percentage of responses of Agree and Strongly Agree from 55% to 65%, which is a 10% increase from the pre-survey. Group B showed an increase of one percent in responses of Agree and Strongly Agree. In responses of Disagree and Strongly Disagree Group A decreased from 35% to 29% while Group B increased from 17% to 18%. This data suggests that Group A showed a greater increase in motivation at home than Group B.

A second area of motivation in the survey was motivation in school. Statement 3 “My child is able to identify school subjects they feel they could improve”, statement 4 “My child has shown an improvement in school grades since last school year”, and statement 6 “My child puts his/her best effort into their school work” measured the motivation of students in the classroom. Table 2, found on the next page, summarizes the responses to these statements.

Table 2: Motivation at School (Statements 3, 4, and 6)

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
After School Parents (Group A)	Pre-Survey	0% (0)	8% (5)	12% (7)	63% (38)	17% (10)
	Post- Survey	0% (0)	9% (5)	2% (1)	54% (31)	35% (20)
Two Times per Week Parents (Group B)	Pre- Survey	0% (0)	7% (4)	8% (5)	42% (25)	43% (26)
	Post- Survey	0% (0)	3% (2)	14% (8)	34% (20)	49% (29)

This data from Table 2 demonstrates that Group A had higher motivation levels in school than Group B. Group A finished the study with 89% of statements being Agree and Strongly Agree compared with 83% from Group B. Table 2 also demonstrates that Group A increased in motivation at school while Group B showed a marginal decrease in motivation at school. In responses of Agree and Strongly Agree Group A increased from 80% to 89%. Group B decreased from 85% to 83% in responses of Agree and Strongly Agree. Group A made more improvement in motivation at school compared to Group B, and finished with a higher percentage of responses of Agree and Strongly Agree.

The remaining statements in the survey were regarding the overall motivation of the students in each group. Statement 7 “My child will continue to work hard on something even if it is difficult for him/her”, statement 8 “My child is motivated to do his/her best inside and outside of the classroom”, statement 9 “My child is more motivated than his/her friends and classmates”, and statement 10 “My child works to the best of his/her ability” all dealt with overall motivation. Table 3, found on the next page, shows the responses for these statements.

Table 3: Overall Motivation (Statements 7, 8, 9, and 10)

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
After School Parents (Group A)	Pre-Survey	3% (2)	24% (19)	16% (13)	41% (33)	16% (13)
	Post- Survey	3% (2)	13% (10)	22% (17)	46% (35)	16% (12)
Two Times per Week Parents (Group B)	Pre- Survey	1% (1)	15% (12)	5% (4)	36% (28)	42% (33)
	Post- Survey	0% (0)	8% (6)	4% (3)	41% (33)	48% (38)

The data in Table 3 demonstrates that Group B had higher overall motivation levels than Group A. Group B finished the study with 89% of responses being Agree and Strongly Agree compared with 62% from Group A. The table above also shows that Group B showed a greater increase in motivation levels compared to group A. In responses of Agree and Strongly Agree Group B increased from 78% to 89% while Group A increased from 57% to 62%. Group B showed an increase of 11%, while Group A showed an increase of 5% in responses of Agree and Strongly Agree. In overall motivation, Group B made more improvement and showed higher levels of motivation.

The results of Tables 1, 2, and 3 suggest that Group A showed greater improvement in the areas of motivation at school and home, while Group B showed greater improvement in overall motivation. Group A demonstrated a greater increase in positive responses from the pre-survey, while Group B demonstrated higher levels of motivation than group A. Table 4, found on the next page, lists the percentages of the total number of responses in the entire pre and post survey in order to examine the motivation levels of each group from a wider perspective.

Table 4: Pre- Survey /Post- Survey Comparison

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
After School Parents (Group A)	Pre-Survey	2% (3)	23% (45)	13% (26)	45% (90)	18% (36)
	Post- Survey	2% (4)	15% (29)	12% (22)	46% (87)	25% (48)
Two Times per Week Parents (Group B)	Pre- Survey	1% (2)	13% (25)	7% (13)	42% (83)	38% (74)
	Post- Survey	0% (0)	10% (19)	7% (14)	42% (83)	42% (83)

Table 4 shows that both Group A and group B demonstrated higher motivation levels in the post-survey as compared to the pre-survey. Group A showed an increase in responses of Agree and Strongly Agree from 63% to 71%. The responses of Disagree and Strongly Disagree dropped from 25% to 17%. Group B showed an increase from 80% to 84% in responses of Agree and Strongly Agree. The responses of Disagree and Strongly Disagree dropped from 14% to 10%.

Both groups demonstrated increased motivation levels in the post-survey, but Group B displayed higher motivation levels than Group A. From Group B 84% of responses were Agree and Strongly Agree compared with 71% for Group A. While Group B showed higher motivation levels in both the pre and post survey, Group A demonstrated greater improvement from pre-survey to post-survey. Group A showed an increase in responses of Agree and Strongly Agree of 8% compared with an increase of 4% from Group B.

The following table compares the average of the pre and post survey for both groups. The average was found by assigning the responses values and then averaging those values based on the total number of responses. Strongly Disagree was assigned a

value of 1, Disagree a value of 2, No Opinion a value of 3, Agree a value of 4, and Strongly Agree a value of 5. The average response provides an overview of the results in this study. Table 5 can be found below.

Table 5: Pre-Survey/Post-Survey Average Score Comparison

Group	Average Score Pre-Survey	Average Score Post-Survey
After School Parents (Group A)	3.555	3.768
Two Times per Week Parents (Group B)	4.025	4.156

The table above demonstrates that the average response for each group did not change significantly from the pre-survey to the post survey. The average for both groups increased from the pre-survey to the post-survey. In both the pre-survey and post-survey the average response of Group B was Agree, while the average response of Group A was slightly below the level of Agree.

An additional survey of the after school students was used to gather data for this study. Students in the after school program were asked to respond to five statements regarding their own motivation levels on a scale of “Yes”, “Sometimes”, or “No”. The survey was designed to examine motivation in the areas of listening to parents and teachers, completing homework, and effort put into school work. In the student survey, statement 1 “I put effort into my school work”, statement 2 “I listen to my parents and teachers”, statement 3 “I do all of my homework each night”, statement 4 “I do my best in every subject in school”, and statement 5, “I continue to put effort into my school work even if it is difficult”, were used to determine the motivation levels of the students.

Statements with a response of “Yes” can suggest higher levels of motivation in this study. The motivation level of the students was determined by the percent of responses of “Yes”. The results of this survey were compared with the results of Group A of the after school parent surveys. Table 6, found below, summarizes the pre and post survey results of the after school student survey.

Table 6: After School Student Survey

	Yes	Sometimes	No
Pre-Survey	69% (69)	28% (28)	3% (3)
Post-Survey	67% (64)	28% (27)	4% (4)

This table shows that the after school students had 67% of “yes” responses in the post-survey, which is only a marginal decrease from the pre-survey. This data suggest that the students in the after school program have high levels of motivation based on their responses of “Yes”. This data is consistent with the post-survey results of the parent survey (Table 4) in which Group A had 71% of responses being Agree and Strongly Agree. Based on the results of both surveys students exhibited high levels of motivation at the conclusion of the study.

A discussion of the conclusions reached and recommendations for further research can be found in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this thesis was to determine the effectiveness of an after school martial arts program in regards to increasing student motivation. I believe that motivation is an essential quality for success in every area of life. This study examined students' motivation in the areas of following directions, completing chores and tasks at home, and in the classroom. Motivation is something that needs to be learned and practiced by students so that they will be able to achieve success in school and in life. By analyzing the results of the parent and student surveys, I have drawn some conclusions about the effectiveness of an after school martial arts program in increasing student motivation.

When observing the data comparing the two groups of students, there are several conclusions that can be made. The research showed that both groups increased their motivation level after taking part in the study. The research also showed that the students in the two times per week program were more motivated than the students in the after school program. This study also found that the students in the after school program showed greater improvements in motivation than their peers in the two times per week program. These findings allow conclusions to be made in this study as well as suggestions to be made for future research that could be done to expand on this topic.

The fact that both groups improved their motivation levels in this study is not surprising considering the fact that all of the students in this study were martial arts students. TaeKwonDo and martial arts in general place a great emphasis on character development in addition to the physical techniques. The program at Master Kim's

TaeKwonDo is designed to improve motivation in every student and teach them how to demonstrate good character at home and at school. It is reasonable to believe that all of the students in this study demonstrated higher than average levels of motivation because of their participation in martial arts.

For a future study I would recommend examining the motivation levels of students in an after school martial arts program compared with students in another type of after school program. By comparing two or more different types of after school programs it might provide a better insight into how effective the after school program at Master Kim's TaeKwonDo is compared to other after school programs, in the area of increasing motivation. While all of the students in the study may have had high levels of motivation because of their participation in TaeKwonDo, there is still the question of why the after school students demonstrated lower levels of motivation than the students who attended class two times per week.

One important issue is the fact that students in the after school often felt that TaeKwonDo was something they had to do as apposed to something they wanted to do. Because these students came to TaeKwonDo every day after school, they felt that it was an extension of their school day. In addition to a martial arts class each day, the students in this program also had homework time and were often at the program for several hours each day in addition to a full day of school. The students in the two times per week program came to TaeKwonDo for 45 minutes each class and were then able to go home after their class. Often times during the week I heard the after school students complaining about taking TaeKwonDo class and trying to make excuses to avoid taking class. I believe that the after school students were less motivated to put effort into their

training because they felt that they were being forced to participate, instead of choosing to participate.

In addition to the control a student has in a program, the amount of time a student spends in a program can also affect their motivation. Some of the students in the after school program at Master Kim's have been attending for six years. Most of the students also attend holiday and summer camps in which they can be at the TaeKwonDo School for up to 10 hours a day. Coming to TaeKwonDo five days a week for several hours and attending camps throughout the year can lead to some students losing motivation and interest in the program.

I recommend a study examining the relationship between student attitude and motivation to further support this idea. A student's attitude can be influenced by their perceived control and interest in the after school program. Students may begin to lose interest in a program if they have been involved in it for an extended period of time. I would hypothesize that students who have more control and choice over the activities they participate in would show more motivation than students with less control.

The students in the two times per week and the after school program both participated in TaeKwonDo classes each week. I feel that the two times per week students showed higher levels of motivation because of the involvement of their parents. The after school students took class at 4:30pm each day and most of their parents came to pick them up at 6:00pm which means they were not present for their children's classes. The parents of the two times per week students were not required to stay, but most did.

During each class the instructors taught the physical techniques as well as discussed different topics such as respect, self-control, cooperation, and responsibility.

When the parents were present while the class was being taught they were able to listen to the lessons their children were learning and watch how their child was behaving and listening in class. Parents often gave their child advice and compliments based on what they saw in the class. This led to more parental involvement because the parents were there watching their child in class.

For a future study I would recommend research on parental involvement and student motivation. A study examining the relationship between time spent with parents and motivation could provide more insight into the results of this thesis. With the number of after school programs around the country growing, a study is needed to research the psychological effects that time away from parents can have on students.

This study also demonstrated that the after school students overall made greater improvements in their motivation level than the two times per week students. The after school students showed the greatest improvements in the areas of motivation at home and at school. The motivation level of the after school students was actually greater than the two times per week students in the area of motivation in school. The fact that the after school program students showed improved motivation is consistent with current research.

After reviewing literature it is clear that after school programs have the ability to increase student motivation, and the After School Program at Master Kim's TaeKwonDo supports this research. Martial arts have the ability to teach character development in a way that few other after school activities can. Although the after school students did have lower motivation levels than the two times per week students, they did show a greater increase in motivation. This fact demonstrates that after school programs can be effective in regards to increasing student motivation.

I chose to examine motivation because I feel that it is a quality that is needed to succeed in every area of life. Each subject in school teaches students different skills that they will need later in life. In the same way, TaeKwonDo classes teach skills that can be used for exercise and self-defense. While learning skills is important, students need to be motivated to learn and practice the skills they are being taught. Motivation is what allows students to learn and improve in whatever they do. Teaching motivation is teaching students how to achieve their goals and how to be successful in every area of their life.

After reviewing current research and completing this study I have gained a better understanding of how an after school martial arts program can increase motivation. The findings in this study support the current research on after school programs. As a result of this thesis I will continue to study ways to increase the motivation of the students I work with. The results of this study show that with a well designed program, after school martial arts programs can be an effective program in regards to increasing student motivation.

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Appendix A

History and Philosophy of TaeKwonDo

One of the fastest growing martial arts in the world is TaeKwonDo. On the surface TaeKwonDo may appear to be just a fighting style or Olympic sport to an outsider. Although for the millions of martial artists in the world who practice it, TaeKwonDo truly is an art form. The techniques of this art are designed to use the entire body and help increase flexibility, strength, and endurance while toning the body. TaeKwonDo also has a great history and philosophy that most sports or fighting styles do not have. It has grown to be a full medal Olympic sport while still teaching courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self control, and indomitable spirit. The goal of TaeKwonDo is not to create great fighters, but to create great martial artists. A great martial artist is a person who trains their mind, body, and spirit through TaeKwonDo. TaeKwonDo is designed to help improve the lives of the students who practice it by improving physical fitness as well as emphasizing character development.

TaeKwonDo is the most popular and fastest growing martial art in the world. According to the World TaeKwonDo Federation's website (<http://www.wtf.org>), it is estimated that there are 40 million people practicing TaeKwonDo in over 185 countries. People are drawn to TaeKwonDo for a variety of reasons. Parents want to see their children gain confidence and discipline, many adult students enjoy the physical fitness and stress relief aspects, others want to learn how to defend themselves, and still others see TaeKwonDo as a recreational activity that they enjoy participating in with their family and friends. No matter what initially attracts a person to TaeKwonDo, every student benefits in a variety of ways from TaeKwonDo.

TaeKwonDo is more than a sport or a game; it is a way of life. The values learned in TaeKwonDo help a student in their daily life as well. Whang, Whang, and Saltz (1999) stated, “ultimately, the goal of training is to strengthen the fiber of one’s character (p. 22). The values and lessons learned in class can serve as guidelines which can be applied to life outside of the TaeKwonDo school.

TaeKwonDo has grown and advanced because of the values it teaches to each student who studies it. TaeKwonDo’s history can be traced back as far as 50 B.C. In the past early forms of TaeKwonDo were used as fighting techniques by soldiers in the early kingdoms of Korea. Along with the training of fighting techniques soldiers also learned a code of conduct which they were encouraged to live by, called the Hwarang code in the Silla Dynasty in the 600s. This code was based on five principal values of loyalty, fidelity, honor, courage, and the practice of justice. (Lee & Ricke, 1999). All of these values are still relevant to TaeKwonDo students today. TaeKwonDo has always focused on building character and teaching values to every student involved in the art.

TaeKwonDo also allows students to strengthen and unify their mind, body, and spirit. The mind must be able to remember and make sense of the all the techniques learned, the body must be conditioned to perform each technique properly, and the spirit must be strong in order to push a student to work harder and never give up. When students practice the motions in TaeKwonDo they are making their bodies stronger, improving their concentration and focus, learning motions that could be used to defend themselves, and also learning the value of working hard to achieve a goal. In this way students unify their mind, body and spirit and truly learn the art of TaeKwonDo.

TaeKwonDo is translated as the art of kicking and punching. TaeKwonDo is truly an art form because of the great values students learn from practicing it. A good martial artist is also a good person. A TaeKwonDo student who learns to show respect and take pride in what they are doing in the TaeKwonDo classroom must also show respect and take pride in every area of their life whether it is work or school. TaeKwonDo is described as a way of life because it has created a system of values that improve the lives of the students who practice it. While individuals are drawn to the art for a variety of reasons, it is the philosophy that makes TaeKwonDo the most popular and fastest growing martial art in the world. TaeKwonDo has the unique ability to impact the lives of everyone involved in the art in a way that no other sport or activity can.

Appendix B

SELF- DISCIPLINE SHEET
Develop Good Habits that Last a Lifetime!

Self-Discipline Sheet for the month of **November**

Return this Sheet to TaeKwonDo between November 26th – November 30th and receive a **WHITE CHARACTER STRIPE** on your Belt!

Write down something you did around the house or at school that you **DID NOT** have to be told to do by an adult. Complete this sheet and bring it to class when you have 20 lines completed and you will receive a **WHITE CHARACTER STRIPE** on your Belt!

Student Name: _____

Belt: _____

Course: Trial / BBP / Leadership

You are on a quest to be at your best!

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 13. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ |

Parent or Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix B

BOOK CLUB SHEET

Develop Good Habits that Last a Lifetime!

Book Club Sheet for the month of **November**

Return this Sheet to TaeKwonDo between November26th – November30th and receive a **WHITE CHARACTER STRIPE** on your Belt!

To participate, read at home or have someone read to you for 30 minutes. Have your parents date one mark for each day that you read. Bring this sheet to class when you have 10 lines completed and you will receive a **WHITE CHARACTER STRIPE** on your Belt!

Student Name: _____

Belt: _____

Course: Trial / BBP / Leadership

You are on a quest to be at your best!

1. _____ Book: _____

2. _____ Book: _____

3. _____ Book: _____

4. _____ Book: _____

5. _____ Book: _____

6. _____ Book: _____

7. _____ Book: _____

8. _____ Book: _____

9. _____ Book: _____

10. _____ Book: _____

Parent or Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix B

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT HOME REPORT CARD
Develop Good Habits that Last a Lifetime!

Character Development Report Card for the month of **November**

Return this Report Card to TaeKwonDo between November 26th – November 30th
and receive a **WHITE CHARACTER STRIPE** on your Belt!

Student Name: _____

Belt: _____

Course: Trial / BBP / Leadership

GRADING SYSTEM: E –Excellent S –Satisfactory N –Needs Improvement P -Poor

NOTE: Blank spaces are left for you to fill in special jobs.

You are on a quest to be at your best!

FAMILY			
Obeys Parents Cheerfully	E	S	N P
Treat Family with Love & Respect	E	S	N P
	E	S	N P
PERSONAL CARE			
Keeps Room Clean / Put Clothes & Belongings away	E	S	N P
Takes a Bath or Shower Everyday / Brush Teeth	E	S	N P
	E	S	N P
SCHOOL			
Shows Respect to Teachers	E	S	N P
Completes/returns Homework on Time	E	S	N P
	E	S	N P

Appendix C

After School Parent Survey

Directions: Please read each statement and circle the response that indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement. The responses are Strongly Disagree, Disagree, No Opinion, Agree, and Strongly Agree.

SD will stand for Strongly Disagree, **D** will stand for Disagree, **NO** will stand for no opinion, **A** will stand for agree, **SA** will stand for strongly agree.

1. My child completes all of their home work each night.

SD D NO A SA

2. My child completes their household chores without waiting to be told.

SD D NO A SA

3. My child is able to identify school subjects they feel they could improve.

SD D NO A SA

4. My child has shown an improvement in school grades since last school year.

SD D NO A SA

5. My child listens well and follows directions at home.

SD D NO A SA

6. My child puts his/her best effort into their school work.

SD D NO A SA

7. My child will continue to work hard on something even if it is difficult for him/her.

SD D NO A SA

8. My child is motivated to do his/her best inside and outside of the classroom.

SD D NO A SA

9. My child is more motivated than his/her friends and classmates.

SD D NO A SA

10. My child works to the best of his/her ability.

SD D NO A SA

Appendix D

After School Student Survey

Directions:

Please read each statement and circle the response that is true for you.

1. I put effort into my work in school.

YES SOMETIMES NO

2. I listen to my parents and teachers.

YES SOMETIMES NO

3. I do all of my homework every night.

YES SOMETIMES NO

4. I try my best in every subject in school.

YES SOMETIMES NO

5. I continue to put effort into my school work even if it is difficult.

YES SOMETIMES NO