

The Effect of Daily Classroom Meetings

On

4th Grade Students' Perceptions of Themselves and School

by

Stephanie Davis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Education

May 2018

Goucher College

Table of Contents

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| List of Tables | i |
| List of Charts | ii |
| Abstract | iii |
| I. Introduction | 1 |
| Overview | 1 |
| Statement of Problem | 2 |
| Hypothesis | 2 |
| Operational Definitions | 3 |
| II. Literature Review | 4 |
| Introduction | 4 |
| Class Meetings | 7 |
| III. Methods | 11 |
| Design | 11 |
| Participants | 11 |
| Instruments | 12 |
| Procedure | 12 |
| IV. Analysis of the Data | 15 |
| V. Discussion | 19 |
| Threats to Validity | 19 |
| Relationship of the Findings of This Study to Previous Research | 20 |
| Summary | 21 |
| Implications for Future Research | 22 |

| | |
|------------|----|
| Conclusion | 22 |
| References | 23 |
| Appendix A | 26 |
| Appendix B | 27 |
| Appendix C | 29 |

List of Tables

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Summary of the Data Perception of School | 16 |
| 2. Measure of Central Tendency for the Academic Measure | 18 |
| 3. Dependent or Paired t Analyses | 18 |

List of Charts

1. Display of Pre and Post Data for Each Question Concerning Perception of School 17

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine if students would be impacted academically and view school and themselves in a different way after participating in daily, character building class meetings. The measurement tool used was the Fountas & Pinnell running record system and a survey designed by the researcher that was given at both the beginning and end of the study. The researcher hypothesized that there would be no significant change in students' perceptions of themselves and school due to the implementation of daily, character building focused class meetings. At the end of the study, students' scores on the post-test survey showed improvement in their perceptions of themselves and others. Their reading academic achievement also showed improvement.

CHAPTER I

Overview

Many things are expected of students every day when they go to school. They are expected to be respectful, compassionate, responsible, and persevere. However, teachers do not always stop to consider whether these students truly understand what these virtues mean. Croom and Davis (2006) theorized that social skills must be taught explicitly to students because they do not always come to school with the schema to know how to interact appropriately with others or what to do when faced with a challenge. In order for students to truly be successful, they must understand not only what makes up good character, but also why having good character is important.

While teachable moments, such as a student standing up for another student who is getting picked on, are a positive way to help students learn about character, these moments do not always come when needed. In addition to pointing out these moments, other times and places need to be found to explain to students not only what responsibility is and how they can show it, but also why being responsible is important to their lives. As Edwards and Mullis (2003) explained, the skills that students will need in the future to be successful in the job market can be taught in regular meetings within the classroom.

Part of the beauty of classroom meetings is the flexibility. The meetings can be worked to fit any topic or need within a classroom. All students are given a chance to voice their thoughts and be heard by those around them. As a teacher gets to know his or her students, they can choose topics to address the areas of need within their classroom. Students' feelings of self-worth are built up by being given some power, a chance to speak their minds. As the students

are given back some of their power, they also begin to trust school more; it may become a place they want, not have, to go.

This study was created when the researcher noticed that many of the students with the poorest academic performance tended to often think poorly of themselves or felt that school had little to no value. In the researcher's school, the majority of students are of a low socio-economic status. There is little parent involvement, and much of this interaction is negative. The behavior problems at this school have gotten more and more extensive with students seeming to care very little about consequence or making positive choices. The academic achievement of this school is below average on PARCC test scores compared to the county and the state, and the number of office referrals and suspensions is above average. Social-emotional problems have also become more prevalent with many students going into frequent crisis or needing to speak to a counselor.

Statement of Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine if daily class meetings focused on character building topics (such as perseverance, courage, responsibility, effort, control, and respect) would affect students' academic achievement, their self-concept, and perception of school.

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis is that there will be no significant change in students' perceptions of themselves and school due to the implementation of daily, character building focused class meetings.

Operational Definitions

Within this study, perseverance is defined as the ability to continue working through challenging problems or situations without giving up when they get difficult. Within the classroom, perseverance may manifest as not giving up on a challenging task such as a test, or trying again on an activity that was not successful the first time. Courage is the ability to continue actions or thoughts that are frightening. This may include standing up to a bully or trying out for the talent show even if the student thinks they will not make it. Responsibility is taking accountability for oneself and one's actions. In the classroom this means not blaming others when a student does something wrong, and admitting mistakes. Value is how the student sees him or herself, whether they think that they are smart, caring, or important. Attitude towards school reflects the student's willingness to attend school, as well as if they think school is a fun, safe, important place to be. Character building focuses on all of these pieces in an attempt to help students and people be the best versions of themselves. Academic achievement reflects not only the grades that a student receives, but also their ability to understand and apply new concepts to unique situations.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review will examine the effects of daily class meetings on students' academic achievement through increasing their self-worth and perception of school. Many students in schools with a high rate of low-income families, Title I schools, have poor perceptions, not only of school, but also of themselves. As long as a student thinks negatively of themselves, or their school, it can be difficult for them to achieve successfully academically. Class meetings are a way in which to target and combat these perceptions within the student population.

Section one of this literature review provides an overview of and introduction to community and the need for class meetings. Section two discusses the impact a student's perception of themselves has on their academic achievement. Section three outlines some possible purposes, benefits, and types of class meetings.

Introduction

In any community, problems are bound to arise. A classroom community is no different. Within a classroom, problems can pop up quickly and change the entire focus of the class. These conflicts can be caused by a variety of catalysts, and it is not always easy to discern exactly who or what caused the unrest. Dating as far back as to Native American tribes, community meetings have been used to discuss problems and brainstorm possible solutions that benefit all parties involved. Involving students in solving problems a class may be facing provides a variety of benefits, including teaching empathy and creating an environment within the classroom that produces more encouragement than criticism (Gartrell, 2006). Students begin to develop

leadership qualities and learn the best ways to solve problems peacefully. Just as a town hall meeting may be called to find a solution within the classroom, class meetings can provide a time and place to discuss and solve problems.

With any learned skill, people are not born knowing how to peacefully solve conflicts, this is a skill that any democracy thrives on, but the ability is not innate. People must instead be taught how to positively resolve issues and to do so without alienating others (Johnson & Johnson as cited in Croom & Davis, 2006). Class meetings can be an introduction to the running of a democratic society. They provide both modeling and hands-on experience with finding solutions for what goes wrong. Conflict resolution is an important skill as people get older, but again, it must be taught. Showing students appropriate ways to end problems, and showing them how to make compromises can lead to a safer classroom environment, a better grasp on etiquette, and improved peer relationships. Class meetings also give these students an outlet to voice their concerns and share what is frustrating or hindering them.

Students in Title I schools often face a variety of roadblocks to their education. These students often are unable to separate their daily struggles at home from their experiences at school, which impedes their learning. These troubles can range from something as simple as not having slept well the night before, to something much more complicated like struggling with having seen things that are beyond their maturity levels. A common theme in these roadblocks is a lack of power. It is not uncommon for students to act up in school because they feel powerless. Students in Title I schools are no exception. Conducting class meetings and allowing students to be the problem solvers, can give some of that power back to the students (Chance & Chance, 1989). This allows students a feeling of stability and importance and reminds the students that

they do matter. While it is unlikely that a class meeting can change everything a child is facing, it may be a way to change their perceptions.

Impact of Students' Perceptions on Their Academic Achievement

A well-known study by Rosenthal and Jacobson (as cited in Cotton, 1989), referred to as the Pygmalion study, had researchers lead teachers to believe that particular students were considered above-average academically. The results of this study found that the students who teachers had *believed* were the advanced students made the most growth. While this study focused on the perceptions of the teachers, not the students, the results show just how important perception is to academic achievement. The teachers thought these students were advanced, treated them as such, and the students flourished. Knowing that the teachers thought highly of them helped the students to feel more confident in their abilities and therefore improve at a greater rate. Until students have a positive view of themselves, they will not be able to fully live up to their potential (Youngs, 1993).

There are a multitude of reasons students may have a negative perception of themselves, especially as they age. Research has shown that factors such as gender identity, behavior, and relationships with their peers have a heavy impact on how students feel about themselves, which then affects how students perform academically (Eisele, Zand, & Thomson, 2009). Schools are where students get a large amount of their socialization. How students perceive they are seen by others can easily affect how they see themselves. Negative feelings can harm their self-esteem as well as affect their motivation and focus.

Students' self-perceptions are not the only way in which perception can affect achievement. Students' perceptions of their school or classroom can also affect how they

perform. Gietz and McIntosh (2014), state “teaching expectations, reducing bullying, and increasing safety” can increase students’ academic achievement (p. 173). The better students feel about attending school, the better they will do. This is why strategies such as Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS) have become common in elementary schools. Students in a classroom or a school where they feel safe and encouraged will generally outperform students who are uncomfortable and do not feel valued by those around them.

Class Meetings

Purpose

Class meetings are a way in which to empower students, enhance a classroom climate, and solve problems that may be occurring. The overall goal of classroom meetings is to create a positive classroom environment in which all students can thrive (Vance, 2010). The purpose of a class meeting may change from classroom to classroom or even day to day. Many class meetings attempt to teach life skills, problem solve, and build student confidence, among other goals. Their fluidity is part of the beauty of class meetings; they can be adapted to meet many goals and to serve a variety of subjects, though they frequently work best when the whole population (school, class, or small group) is invested in the outcome of the meeting (Gartrell, 2006).

One major goal of classroom meeting is to teach students social skills in order to help them be more successful. Edwards and Mullis (2003) state that, “Every day the media and our personal experiences remind us that many children in our own schools do not have the skills to handle life’s problems in a competent and confident manner” (p. 20). Classroom meetings aim to provide the structure and modeling to give students these skills, which range from how to

shake hands properly to how to disagree appropriately, and even how to accept responsibility for one's actions. Since skills like these are not innate, it is important that students be shown, repeatedly, how to tackle problems effectively (Croom & Davis, 2006).

Class meetings can also be called when a teacher or student observes a problem that needs to be resolved. An example given in Gartrell's (2006) study is bathroom behavior in a second grade classroom. The participants in Morrow, Hooker, & Cate's (2015) study used class meetings as a way to combat bullying. Regardless of the problem, class meetings are a way to discuss the behavior that has been observed, and it allows students to come up with and agree on a solution, which also increases student buy-in. Students are able to greatly benefit from learning to solve problems in constructive ways.

Benefits

Research has shown that students respond more positively to being actively involved in their learning (O'Connor, 2013). The larger the role students are given in their learning, the more engaged and invested they often are. Through class meetings, students become more acclimated to sharing with one another and participating in class, and they also feel more comfortable doing so. They learn that it is okay to make mistakes, and that if they do mess up, they will be supported. As the class meetings become more inclusive, it is natural that students are likely to also be more inclusive. Students with special needs are better able to get their services in a room where they feel like they are a part of the team, rather than that they stand out (Morcom & MacCallum, 2012).

Class meetings also even the playing field, so to speak. Students feel like they have a chance to share and that the problem solving is conducted fairly, leading to a more positive

environment between the peers (Angell, 2004). Students' relationships become more positive, helping the students' perception of school to also become more positive. School becomes less of a place students have to go and more a place they want to go. Class meetings, however, do not just improve peer relationships; they also help to create better relationships between the students and their teacher. Students begin to feel that their teacher values them and what they have to say. Trust is built, which helps students come to the teacher with any problems or concerns. Students who feel cared about work harder and perform better.

Types

Part of the beauty of class meetings is how easily they can be adapted to any classroom or any problem. The way they are infused into the environment is dependent on the teacher putting the meetings in place as well as on the class they are being used with. Some teachers use class meetings daily, while others use them only when a problem arises. Class meetings are often initially led by the teacher, but over time the teacher's role is phased out, and the students become responsible for running the meetings. Meetings can be conducted with a whole class or a selected group, depending on what is hoped to be accomplished.

The format of the meetings can also change. A typical format involves students sitting in a circle and taking turns sharing their thoughts, sometimes even using an object, such as a talking stick, to show whose turn it is to share (Gartrell, 2006). Other teachers may incorporate media into their meetings, such as video clips focused on the topic being discussed (Morrow et al., 2015). Some teachers even tie in their curriculum to their classroom meetings (Triplett & Hunter, 2005).

The main idea that stays present in the majority of class meetings is that students are at the heart of the meeting. They are the problem solvers and the leaders. They may even be the ones who call the class meeting. The main purpose of a class meeting, and also the main benefit, is that the students are learning the skills they need in order to be successful outside of the classroom.

Summary

Class meetings are a way to get students invested in their classroom. Their main purpose is to help students learn skills that will help them be successful. They also help students see themselves, others, and their school in a more positive light. This positive outlook is important to their academic achievement. As they see things more positively, they are also more likely to perform to the best of their ability in their academic areas.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to determine if daily class meetings focused on character building topics (such as perseverance, courage, responsibility, effort, control, and respect) would affect students' academic achievement, their self-concept, and perception of school.

Design

This study was conducted using a quasi-experimental design since random selection was not used. It included a pre- and post-test with no control group. The pre-test was given at the beginning of the school year, prior to any class meetings being conducted. The post-test was given several months later at the end of the study. The independent variable for this study were daily class meetings. The dependent variable was the students' self-concept and perception of school.

Participants

This study took place at a suburban Title I school along the Route 40 corridor in Harford County where 98% of students receive free and reduced meals. This school has about 400 students ranging from pre-kindergarten to 5th grade. There are 3 full day pre-kindergarten classes as well as a Judy Center to service students who are younger than school age.

Due to the nature of this study, an entire 4th grade class was used. These students were assigned to the class based on their Fountas & Pinell reading levels, with some changes made to evenly disperse students with frequent office referrals and to separate students there was known

tension between, (Fountas, 2008). At the beginning of the study, there were twenty-six students, but due to students moving, there were only twenty students at the end of the study. Only students who were in the class population from the beginning of the study until the end of the study were included. Of the students who completed the study, 10 were girls and 10 were boys ranging between 9 and 11 years old. There were four students with special education goals in this study.

There were two main groupings within the student population. One group was reading on a Second Grade Fountas & Pinell level (K through M); one group was reading on a Fourth Grade level (Q through S). There were two outliers reading at a First-Grade level (F & H) and two above grade level students reading on a Fifth-Grade level (T).

Instruments

A pre-test was given on the first day of school to assess students' attitudes about themselves and about school (see Appendix A). The post-test contained the same questions about students' attitudes, but also asked additional questions about class meetings and any changes in students' attitudes (see Appendix B for a copy of this document). Fountas & Pinell running records were also used to assess students' reading level and academic growth.

Procedure

This study involved the use of daily class meetings in order to improve students' academic achievement by improving their feelings about both themselves and about school. In order to do so, morning meetings were conducted daily. These meetings were centered around a question that changed every day. In the morning meeting, every student was expected to respond to the basic question but could expand their answer if they wanted to; every response started with

a greeting that was returned by all students. No one was allowed to respond to another student's response during the meeting, and only the person with the talking object was allowed to speak.

The daily question was posted on the board every morning so the students could think about it while they ate their breakfast. After breakfast, all students were called to the carpet and the question was restated. Then a student was chosen to start the circle. Each student would greet the class (Good morning, everyone. Good morning, friends) and the whole class would respond (Good morning, _____). The student would then respond to the basic question, expanding on the answer if they desired. They then passed the ball to the next student and the procedure was repeated. After the circle was complete, the class would either participate in a role call where they got to dance in the circle and restate their answer, or a temperature check where they would get to share on a scale of 1 to 5 how they feel about a specific topic (their day, an upcoming assignment, or something that had happened recently).

At the beginning of the study, the daily question was generated by the teacher. The questions for the first two weeks were just "get to know you" questions such as; what are you excited for in 4th grade or what is your favorite thing to do at home? For the next two months, the teacher generated a mixture of "fun" questions such as, what would you do with \$1,000 and questions with a goal such as, what do you like best about yourself, which subject is hardest for you, or what is a goal you would like to achieve this month?

At the beginning of the third month, the teacher generated a list of questions. Each morning a different student would be able to pick a question from the list. The following month, the students began to generate their own questions, guiding the morning circle to what they found important or what they wanted to talk about. These topics ranged from favorite athletes and stores to bullying, kindness, and emotions.

At the end of the study, the students were given the written post-test. The questions at the beginning assessing their feelings about themselves and their feelings about school did not change from the pre-test, but questions about morning circle were added. The test was given to all students, but only the students who had been present for the whole study were counted. The results of the pre-test and post-test were compared. An end of study Fountas & Pinell running record was also given and a comparison with the beginning of the year running record was used to assess the students' academic growth.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine if daily class meetings focused on character building topics (such as perseverance, courage, responsibility, effort, control, and respect) would affect students' academic achievement, their self-concept, and perception of school.

Students who participated completed a pre and post measure of their perceptions. Pre and post instruments can be found in Appendices A and B. In Appendix C is the summary of the data from the pre and post measures. For purposes of summary, the researcher has used scores of 0, 1, and 2 as negative and, if a question was not completed, a 0 was assigned. Scores of 3, 4, and 5 were considered positive. Table 1 displays the summary of the data. Chart 1 displays the pre and post measures against each other.

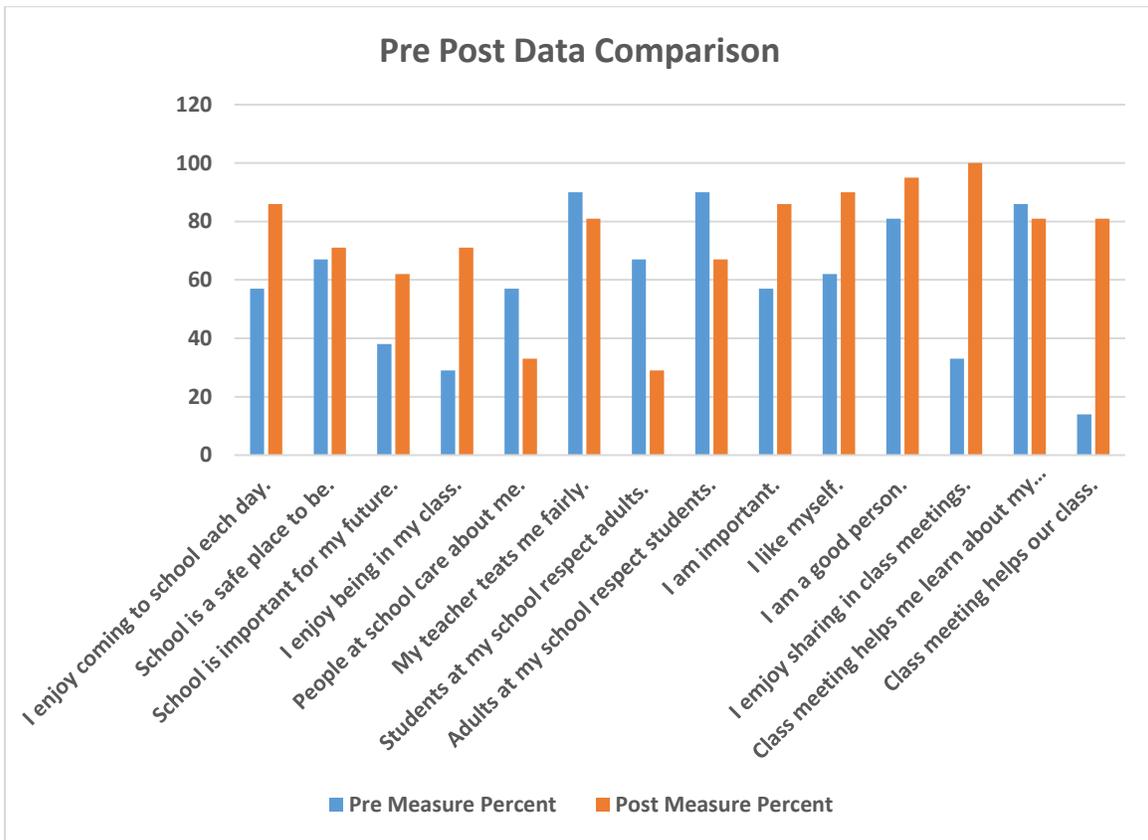
Table 1

Summary of the Data Perception of School

| Question | Pre Measure Percent | Post Measure Percent |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| I enjoy coming to school each day. | 57 | 86 |
| School is a safe place to be. | 67 | 71 |
| School is important for my future. | 38 | 62 |
| I enjoy being in my class. | 29 | 71 |
| People at school care about me. | 57 | 33 |
| My teacher teats me fairly. | 90 | 81 |
| Students at my school respect adults. | 67 | 29 |
| Adults at my school respect students. | 90 | 67 |
| I am important. | 57 | 86 |
| I like myself. | 62 | 90 |
| I am a good person. | 81 | 95 |
| I enjoy sharing in class meetings. | 33 | 100 |
| Class meeting helps me learn about my classmates. | 86 | 81 |
| Class meeting helps our class. | 14 | 81 |

Chart 1

Display of Pre and Post Data for Each Question Concerning Perception of School



In general, the hypothesis of no impact of the intervention would be rejected.

Students also had an academic measure on a pre- and post-test that measured their guided reading level. The pre- and post-test data were analyzed using the paired or dependent t test. The measures of central tendency are displayed in Table 2 and Table 3 displays the dependent or paired t -test analysis.

Table 2

Measures of Central Tendency for the Academic Measure

| | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|------------------------|--------|----|----------------|
| Pair 1 Beginning Level | 3.1820 | 20 | 1.00548 |
| End Level | 3.77 | 20 | 1.099 |

Table 3

Dependent or Paired t Analyses

| | Mean Difference | Number | Standard Deviation | t value | Significance |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------|--------------------|---------|--------------|
| End Level – Beginning Level | .586 | 20 | .373 | 7.03 | .000* |

*p<.05 statistically significant

Thus, the End Level is statistically different than the Beginning Level.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine if daily class meetings focused on character building topics (such as perseverance, courage, responsibility, effort, control, and respect) would affect students' academic achievement, their self-concept, and perception of school.

The hypothesis of no impact on student perceptions of school was rejected.

The hypothesis of no impact on academic measure was rejected. Students were given running record reading tests using the Fountas & Pinnell system as a pre- and post-assessment. Each student was assessed to determine their instructional guided reading level at both the beginning and end of the study. The Fountas & Pinnell system uses an alphabetical rating system which was converted into grade levels by the researcher.

Threats to Validity

Internal threats to validity are concerned with how variables within the study, as well as outside factors, can affect the outcome. Since this study was a quasi-experimental design, one threat to validity was the lack of random sampling. The participants included in this study were all students that were placed in the researcher's 4th grade class for the entirety of the study. The population was not truly random, and instead was determined by the school's administration with the main factor being the students' Fountas and Pinnell level at the end of 3rd grade. The students in this class were mostly below grade level to begin with, which may have caused them to have a more negative starting opinion due to the struggle school may have previously caused them.

Another threat to internal validity would be the decrease in the study's population from start to finish. When it began, the study had a total of 25 students. This number decreased every time a student moved from the class or the school. Due to this, by the end of the study, there were only 21 participants.

Threats to external validity focus on whether or not the results of the study can be applied to a larger, or general population. The main threat to external validity in this study was the bias of the selection process. Since students were grouped due to their reading levels, this was not an accurate random sampling of the general population.

Another external threat to the validity of this study would be the effect of outside factors on the students' feelings about themselves and school. These outside factors include, but are not limited to; maturation, counseling services, and social-emotional learning lessons implemented in the school.

Connections to Existing Literature and Other Research

With programs such as Restorative Practices becoming more and more popular in schools, students are being given more of a role in their own education process. The idea of a classroom meeting every morning is no longer unheard of in most schools. The findings of this study were majorly consistent with the findings of previous research. Morcom & MacCallum (2012) and Angell (2004) both found that class meetings were a way to help students feel valued, be part of a team, and like they were being heard. The results of this study also showed that students were feeling more heard and valued due to the daily meetings.

Students feelings about themselves influence their academic achievement (Eisele, Zand, & Thomson, 2009). This study also showed that when the students felt that they were important,

they took more pride in their work, and worked hard to improve. Their academic achievement improved, as their value of themselves did as well. Both this study and previous studies showed that the more students cared about themselves, the more they cared about doing well in school and felt that it was a worthwhile place to go each day.

The study also concurred with the threats to validity that other studies had reported. The nature of this study and how students' perceptions were assessed was majorly subjective. Just as much of the previous data and research was anecdotal, the study relied on the students to stay consistent in evaluating how they felt about the various areas surveyed.

Summary

The results of this study supported the researcher's hypothesis. Daily classroom meetings were beneficial in rebuilding both students' perceptions of themselves and their perceptions of school. Students were able to be active participants in solving problems and began each day with being heard by their classmates and teachers. This built the idea within each student that their voice was important and deserved to be heard. By the end of the study, there was a 29 percent increase in students who thought that they were important, and a 28 percent who liked themselves. At the end of this study, 90 percent of students, or 19 out of 21 students, responded positively to the statement "I like myself."

The results from this study showed that daily classroom meetings centered around character building can be an effective way to enhance the way students feel about themselves. These meetings also correlated positively with students' feelings about school, as well as their reading academic achievement. These classroom meetings were a positive experience for the students overall, with 100 percent of students sharing that they liked sharing in classroom

meetings, up from 33 percent at the beginning of the study, and 81 percent of the class ending the study feeling that classroom meetings were helpful to the class as a whole.

Implications for Future Research

Going forward, this study would be useful as a starting point for more detailed and specific studies. Future studies could focus on a specific behavior or trait to improve. For instance, a researcher could document the number of bullying incidents prior to the study, focus meetings around bullying related topics, and then assess whether or not the number of bullying instances decreased. This study could be done on a larger scale, possibly an entire school or school district, in order to make it more able to be generalized to a larger population. A control class could also be used to compare the improvement of attitudes and academic achievement between a class receiving daily meetings and one that is not.

In conclusion, this study benefitted the population that completed it. Anecdotally, the researcher found that the classroom climate improved as the year progressed and as the classroom meetings became more focused and tailored to the behaviors seen in the population. The study supported the findings of previous research that daily classroom meetings were beneficial to the students that were a part of them, and promoted these students involvement in their education.

Conclusion

This study was performed to see if daily classroom meetings would have an effect on students' self-image, perceptions of school, and academic achievement. The study showed that the classroom meetings did have a positive effect on the students and their perceptions and

achievement. The pre- and post-surveys showed differences in how the students felt about themselves and school, but also how they felt about classroom meetings.

References

- Angell, A. V. (2004). Making peace in elementary classrooms: A case for class meetings. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 32(1), 98-104.
- Chance, E. W., & Chance, P. L. (1989). Class meetings: Fulfilling students' pathway to power. *Journal of Reality Therapy*, 9(1), 43-48.
- Cotton, K. (1989, November). Expectations and Student Outcomes. *School Improvement Research Series*. Retrieved November 12, 2016, from <http://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/expectations-and-student-outcomes.pdf>
- Croom, L., & Davis, B. H. (2006). It's not polite to interrupt, and other rules of classroom etiquette. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 42(3), 109-113.
- Edwards, D., & Mullis, F. (2003). Classroom meetings: Encouraging a climate of cooperation. *Professional School Counseling*, 7(1), 20-28. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/education/docview/213357491/citation/1B151643B60E4B83PQ/29>
- Eisele, H., Zand, D. H., & Thomson, N. R. (2009). The role of sex, self-perception, and school bonding in predicting academic achievement among middle class African American early adolescents. *Adolescence*, 44(176), 773-796.
- Fountas, Irene C. Pinnell, Gay Su. (Eds.) (2007-2008) *Fountas and Pinnell benchmark*

assessment system 1. Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann

Gartrell, D. (2006). The beauty of class meetings. *YC Young Children*, 61(6), 54-55. Retrieved

From <http://search.proquest.com/education/docview/197698775/abstract/2F97F2476EF3463DPQ/6>

Gietz, C., & McIntosh, K. (2014). Relations Between Student Perceptions of Their School

Environment and Academic Achievement. *Canadian Journal Of School Psychology*, 29(3), 161-176. doi:10.1177/0829573514540415

Morrow, M. T., Hooker, S. D., & Cate, R. L. (2015). Consultation in bullying prevention: An

elementary school case study. *School Community Journal*, 25(2), 85-111. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.goucher.idm.oclc.org/education/docview/1759347206/abstract/EE7B9B32AF544CCFPQ/17>

Morcom, V. E., & MacCallum, J. A. (2012). Getting personal about values: Scaffolding student

participation towards an inclusive classroom community. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 16(12), 1323-1334.

O'Connor, K. J. (2013). Class participation: Promoting in-class student

engagement. *Education*, 133(3), 340-344. Retrieved from

<https://goucher.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=trh&AN=88141902&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

Triplett, C. F., & Hunter, A. (2005). Talking circle: Creating community in our elementary

classrooms. *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, 18(2-), 4-8.

Vance, E. (2010). *Class meetings: Teachers and young children co-constructing problem solving* . (2010-99150-375).

Youngs, B. B. (1993). Self-esteem in the school: More than a "feel-good" movement. *NASSP Bulletin*, 76(549), 59-66.

Appendix A

Name: _____ Date: _____

Circle the number that best describes your feelings about each statement.

| | 1 Do not agree | 2 Agree a little bit | 3 Agree | 4 Mostly agree | 5 Strongly agree |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| I enjoy coming to school each day. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| School is a safe place to be. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| School is important for my future. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I enjoy being in my class. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| People at school care about me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| My teacher treats me fairly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Students at my school respect adults. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Adults at my school respect students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am important. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I like myself. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am a good person. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix B

Name: _____ Date: _____

Circle the number that best describes your feelings about each statement.

| | 1 Do not agree | 2 Agree a little bit | 3 Agree | 4 Mostly agree | 5 Strongly agree |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| I enjoy coming to school each day. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| School is a safe place to be. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| School is important for my future. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I enjoy being in my class. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| People at school care about me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| My teacher treats me fairly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Students at my school respect adults. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Adults at my school respect students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am important. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I like myself. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am a good person. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I enjoy sharing in class meetings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Class meeting helps me learn about my classmates. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Class meeting helps our class. | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|

Do you feel that class meetings have helped our class? Why or why not?

Have your feelings about school changed this year? How have they changed?

Appendix C

| Question | Percent that responded positively* BOY | Percent that responded positively* EOY |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| I enjoy coming to school each day. | 12/21 57% | 18/21 86% |
| School is a safe place to be. | 14/21 67% | 15/21 71% |
| School is important for my future. | 8/21 38% | 13/21 62% |
| I enjoy being in my class. | 6/21 29% | 15/21 71% |
| People at school care about me. | 12/21 57% | 7/21 33% |
| My teacher treats me fairly. | 19/21 90% | 17/21 81% |
| Students at my school respect adults. | 14/21 67% | 6/21 29% |
| Adults at my school respect students. | 19/21 90% | 14/21 67% |
| I am important. | 12/21 57% | 18/21 86% |
| I like myself. | 13/21 62% | 19/21 90 |
| I am a good person. | 17/21 81% | 20/21 95% |
| I enjoy sharing in class meetings. | 7/21 33% | 21/21 100% |
| Class meeting helps me learn about my classmates. | 18/21 86% | 17/21 81% |
| Class meeting helps our class. | 3/21 14% | 17/21 81% |

*For this study, a score of 0, 1, or 2 was considered negative. Not completing a question counted as a 0. A score of 3, 4, or 5 were considered positive.

Running Record Data

| Student | Beginning Level | End Level | Level Change | Grade Level Change |
|---------|-----------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------|
| NB | Q | S | +2 | 0.67 |
| CB | Q | S | +2 | 0.67 |
| KB | K | L | +1 | 0.33 |
| MC | L | M | +1 | 0.33 |
| NC | R | S | +1 | 0.33 |
| JC | R | V | +4 | 1.33 |
| JC2 | L | M | +1 | 0.33 |
| JF | R | T | +2 | 0.67 |
| DF | K | M | +2 | 0.67 |
| MG | R | S | +1 | 0.33 |
| MG2 | Q | S | +2 | 0.67 |
| AH | Q | R | +1 | 0.33 |
| NH | K | O | +4 | 1.33 |
| JH | Q | R | +1 | 0.33 |
| JJ | K | M | +2 | 0.67 |
| SR | L | O | +3 | 1 |
| DS | Q | T | +3 | 1 |
| MS | N | N | +0 | 0 |
| MS2 | L | N | +2 | 0.67 |
| AW | K | K | +0 | 0 |