

IJREE

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Editorial

Dear Reader,

in your hands you hold the second issue of the International Journal for Research on Extended Education, which was newly-established in 2013. As was announced in the last issue we will continue with the main topic of national reports, which contains research reports from several selected countries. This issue includes reports on extended education and reviews from England (Alan Dyson & Lisa Jones) as well as School Age Educare in Sweden (Anna Klerfelt & Björn Haglund). And we have also included in this topic a report from the USA (Denise Huang, Deborah La Torre Matrondola, & Seth Leon). Though it is not a national report in the stricter sense, in focusing on California this report is, on the one hand, concerned with a state that possesses one of the most advanced after-school programmes in the USA and, on the other hand, the report outlines the essential findings of US-American research through an extensive survey of the literature (leading to the establishment of instruments for measuring the quality of after-school programmes).

In the free contributions Joseph Mahoney investigates in how far the time youths spend in school (in a day, a month, or in an entire year) can contribute to reducing deviant behaviour. He examines the question from a macro perspective by drawing on a comparison between countries based on TIMSS-2010 data.

With a contribution from Denise Huang, Pete Goldschmidt, & Deborah La Torre Matrondola we take another look at California, in particular to what extent after-school programmes can prevent youth crime and delinquency in the long-term. By using complex multivariate analysis the authors examine deviant behaviour and – in contrast to Mahoney – the effectiveness of a specific programme from a micro perspective (LA's BEST).

On the basis of longitudinal data taken from the German Study on the Development of All-Day Schools Natalie Fischer, Désirée Theis, and Ivo Züchner examine to what extent all-day schools, or rather the children's attendance of their extracurricular activities contributes to compensating for social inequalities. This is, at least, expected of all-day schools, on account of the additional time spent on the support of children.

In their contribution Kirsten Kerr and Alan Dyson introduce an extended education programme with both a socio-economically extensive as well as a long-term biographical approach (Harlem Children's Zone). The children are continuously involved in this programme – from the children's earliest years up until attending high school – in family, school, and community settings.

We are very happy to be receiving a number of papers pertaining to the research area of extended education from all over the world. We would still like to encourage all of our colleagues to contribute to our journal. The research area of extended education is growing and becoming increasingly more significant, which is also shown

by the Third International Conference of the Network on Extracurricular and Out-of-School Time Educational Research (NEO ER) that took place in April, 2014 in Seoul, South Korea. We will feature specific reports on this conference in the future.

In the next issue contributions from the University-Community Links Network will comprise the main topic. UC Links is a programme that brings primary and secondary school children together with university students to better prepare underserved youths for higher education and lifelong achievement. The network operates internationally and fosters a bond between university and community and establishes sustainable after-school programmes.

Giessen, May 2014,
Sabine Maschke and Ludwig Stecher

Extended Schools in England: Emerging Rationales

Alan Dyson & Lisa Jones

Abstract: Schools in many countries are beginning to take on extended roles, working with families and communities as well as with students. However, the rationales underpinning such developments are often unclear. This paper reports on case studies of 20 schools developing new roles as part of the national extended services initiative in England. It reports in detail on two of these schools, exploring the rationales for their extended roles elicited in the course of a theory of change- based evaluation. It finds that schools saw no contradiction between their traditional and extended roles because they saw students' academic attainments as shaped by a wide range of personal, family and community factors. It argues that the schools' rationales were coherent, but by no means fully articulated and concludes that dialogue between practitioners, policy makers and researchers is necessary to develop these rationales further.

Keywords: Extended education; community schools; extended schools; disadvantage

1 Introduction

The establishment of *The International Journal for Research on Extended Education* is indicative of a growing international interest in exploring ways in which schools can extend their work beyond their traditional role. In some cases, this wider role may simply take the form of an extension of the school's core business of teaching and learning into different parts of the day and year. However, there are initiatives internationally which take schools well beyond their normal concerns, involving them in working with families and communities as well as with students, and in working on issues of wellbeing, family functioning and community development as well as on academic matters (Cummings/Dyson/Todd 2011). These initiatives take many forms and go by many names, though in England they are known as 'extended schools' (DfES 2005). Although there is considerable variation in how these schools operate, they all tend to offer additional services and activities to their own students and, to a greater or lesser 'extent to students' families and to the communities where they live. 'Additional' in this sense may mean services and activities focused on academic learning, but it might equally well mean family support services, health services, or employment-related services (Cummings/Dyson/Todd 2011).

What is extended in such initiatives is not simply the time available for the school to engage in teaching its students. It is also the remit of the school, which ceases to be simply an academically-focused institution, and instead becomes involved in issues which apparently have little immediate relevance to teaching and learning. This inevitably begs the question as to why schools should extend their roles in this way, and what they hope to achieve by becoming involved in children's health, or family welfare, or area regeneration? There are, of course, many ways to tackle these questions, and in other work we have tried to construct some possible rationales more or less from first principles (see, for instance, Cummings/Dyson/Todd 2011; Dyson 2011; Dyson 2010; Dyson/Kerr 2013; Dyson et al. 2012). However, it is also important to explore the rationales constructed by school professionals as they try to implement extended approaches in their own contexts. While such rationales may not be fully-formed or explicitly grounded in research, they reflect both what is practicable in 'real world' situations and the incentives to think creatively about the role of schools in the midst of the pressures and contradictions of practice. In this paper, therefore, we propose to report on the rationales of this kind that emerged in England in response to a recent national initiative to extend the roles of schools. In so doing, we will give an account of recent developments in this field in England, but, more importantly, we will test the underlying coherence of professionally-devised rationales and consider the implications for how the purpose of schooling and the place of schools in affluent liberal democracies might best be understood.

2 The English Context

Although there has never been a single, clearly-articulated rationale for extended education in England, schools there have long expected that they will need to offer cultural, leisure and sporting activities to their students, that they will need to support their personal and social development, and that they will need to engage with parents and communities to varying extents. From time to time, there have been more systematic attempts to extend the role of schools. Again, however, these have not been based on any single rationale and therefore have had different aims, often to relating to the social contexts in which schools were set. Some, such as the Village Colleges launched in Cambridgeshire in the 1920s have focused on making the resources of schools available to somewhat isolated rural communities (Morris 1925). Others, such as the community colleges in Leicestershire and elsewhere during the 1970s, have seen community engagement as part of a project to democratise education (Watts 1974). Others again, such as the community schools proposed by the Plowden Report on primary education (Central Advisory Council for Education (England) 1967), have been seen as ways of tackling social and educational disadvantage. All of this meant that, by the end of the Twentieth Century, the English school system was characterised by a rich array of schools with extended roles, but with little consensus as to either rationale or mode of operation (Ball 1998; Wilkin et al. 2003).

This situation changed in important ways during the period from 1997 to 2010, when there was a series of government-led initiatives to extend the role of schools.

These began with Schools Plus (DfEE 1999), through the Extended School Demonstration and Pathfinder projects (Cummings et al. 2004; Dyson/Millward/Todd 2002), and on to the Full Service Extended Schools initiative launched in 2003 (Cummings et al. 2007) and finally to the extended services initiative launched in 2005 (DfES 2005). Each of these encouraged schools to develop out of hours activities for pupils, extend their capacity for meeting pupils' social, emotional and health needs, provide support for families, make childcare provision available, offer adult learning activities, and open their facilities for community use. However, they differed from each other in terms of the detail of what was expected, the funding that was available, and whether they were targeted at particular types of schools (usually those serving disadvantaged populations) or were intended to apply to all schools. In particular, the last-mentioned 'extended services' initiative marked a departure from its predecessors in that it focused less on locating additional services on individual school sites, and more on creating integrated local networks of child and family services, to which schools would be key contributors but which they would not necessarily be expected to lead.

In each of these cases, governments followed a particular style of policy-making. They tended to set out in general terms the kinds of services and activities schools should offer, and outline a wide range of benefits which might accrue from working in this way, but to stop short of specifying in detail how schools should work or identifying particular outcomes that they were expected to achieve. At the launch of extended services, for instance, schools were promised no fewer than nine major outcomes, ranging from more 'fun' for children through to improved attainment, reduced health inequalities and reductions in the number of children living in poverty (DfES 2005, p.16). Quite how these outcomes were to be achieved, or what pattern of provision would be most effective was not made clear. It did not help matters that the governments of this period were simultaneously pursuing an intensive 'crusade for standards' (DfEE 1997) which required schools to focus on their core academic concerns, and penalized them severely if they failed to raise their students' attainments. Only towards the end of the period was an attempt made to show how the wider roles of schools might be reconciled with these narrower concerns (DCSF 2008), and even then it is arguable that this was more of a pious hope than a detailed rationale.

In this situation, it was left up to individual schools to fill in the lacunae and reconcile the contradictions in national policy, and so to formulate their own rationales for their extended roles. This led, in effect, to a series of natural experiments in which different schools, in different contexts, arrived at their own solutions and attempted to implement them as effectively as they could. Inevitably, some attempts were ill-thought-through, half-hearted, or conceptually flawed (Cummings et al. 2007; Cummings/Dyson/Todd 2007). Others, however, took the form of serious-minded attempts to find new roles for schools which might address some of the deep-seated problems of the school system, most notably in terms of a link between children's social background and their educational outcomes which has proved remarkably resistant to all attempts to break it (Perry/Francis 2010; Schools Analysis and Research Division Department for Children Schools and Families 2009).

In the remainder of this paper, we wish to report on these school-level rationales as they emerged from the national evaluation of extended services to which we contributed. In the next section, we outline the evaluation's methodology. We then report

on its overall findings in relation to school rationales and present two case studies of how these emerged in particular schools. Finally, we discuss the wider implications of these findings both for schools in England and for attempts elsewhere to develop forms of extended education.

3 Methodology

The national evaluation of extended services in and around schools ran from May 2009 to January 2011. More detailed accounts of its methodology and findings than are possible in this short paper are available in a series of reports on the evaluation as a whole and on specific themes within it (Carpenter et al. 2011; Carpenter et al. 2010; Cummings et al. 2010; Cummings et al. 2011). The evaluation methodology comprised an extensive range of activities including: telephone and postal surveys of 1,500 schools; face to face surveys of parents and pupils from 2261 households; longitudinal in-depth case study work in 20 schools; cost benefit analysis with approximately 500 schools; impact assessment using data from the surveys and the National Pupil Database; and two small-scale thematic reviews, one focusing on how far schools were targeting their work on children, families and other adults facing disadvantage, and the other focusing on the way in which local authorities had structured extended services.

This paper is based primarily on data from the 20 in-depth longitudinal case studies. The case study schools (11 secondary and nine primary), were located across England and were chosen to reflect a diversity of characteristics in terms of geographical locations (urban and rural), and ethnic and social composition (in terms of levels of disadvantage and the presence of minority ethnic groups in the school population). However, all of the case study schools were selected on the basis that they were already offering access to a range of services and had developed their provision over at least the last two or three years (and, in some cases, over a much longer period). To this extent, they were experienced and committed providers of extended services and were different from some other schools which might only have begun working in this way in response to recent government imperatives.

The aims of the case studies were to identify what kind of services schools were developing, what kinds of problems and facilitators they were encountering in this development, and what kinds of outcomes for children, families and communities were being generated by these services. In order to achieve this, we adopted a 'theory of change' approach (Anderson 2005; Connell/Kubisch 1998; Dyson/Todd 2010). Theories of change are the more or less explicit assumptions actors make about how their actions will produce the outcomes they desire in particular situations. From an evaluation point of view, articulating a theory of change makes it possible to identify and assess the outcomes that actors are actually aiming at rather than ones that might be imposed by the evaluators. It also lays bare the causal mechanisms that link action to outcome so that the latter can be attributed more securely to the former, and so that progress through those mechanisms can be monitored long before end-point outcomes become apparent. However, theories of change are also, in effect, structured rationales for action, and are thus particularly relevant to the purposes of this paper.

In practice, our use of a theory of change approach in schools involved recurrent interviews with head teachers and other school leaders to understand: how they saw the situation of the school and the children, families and communities it served; what outcomes they were trying to generate in the long term; what services and activities they were putting in place; and how they anticipated that those services and activities would impact on the school's situation in order to produce the intended outcomes. Typically, interviews began at a somewhat general level, becoming more detailed and precise as the series unfolded. After each interview, the research team returned to the school a version of the theory of change as the researchers understood it, usually in diagrammatic form with a textual commentary. The school participants would then suggest amendments and the amended theory of change would form the starting point for the next interview. It was not unusual to go through four or more iterations of this process. Over the duration of the evaluation, the research team visited each site up to four times, conducting interviews lasting between one and two hours with a range of key personnel – mostly head teachers and staff with direct responsibilities for organising and delivering extended services.

4 School Rationales: The Findings

Our discussions with schools revealed that it was no easy matter for them to articulate a clear rationale for their extended roles in the face of competing demands and opportunities, and in the absence of coherent national guidance. Inevitably, schools were more and less clear about what they hoped to achieve by extending their roles and why, and articulated their rationales in somewhat different ways. In particular, a wide range of intended outcomes was articulated across the case study schools. We were able to identify well over one hundred, ranging from the very general – ‘social and educational inclusion’ – to the very specific – ‘lower body mass index in the student population’, and from pupil-focused outcomes – ‘pupil attainment will increase’ – to outcomes for whole communities – ‘to build a proud, thriving, supportive, learning, self-sufficient, cohesive and sustainable community’.

However, it was also clear that there were some recurrent patterns beneath the idiosyncratic formulations of individual schools. By grouping similar formulations together, we were able to categorise schools' intended outcomes within a limited number of ‘domains’ (see table 1). These ranged from outcomes that were close to schools' traditional concerns, most notably with ‘learning’, to those that were somewhat distant from those concerns, in terms for instance of enhancing the capacity for ‘democracy’ amongst the population served by the school, or of contributing to the cohesion and sustainability of the local community.

Table 1: Outcome domains in case study schools

	Domain	Outcomes in the domain
1.	Learning	Attainment, achievement, transferable learning/thinking skills.
2.	Engagement	Engagement with learning and learning opportunities (including school)
3.	Social	Social skills, social functioning/contacts and cohesive contexts
4.	Well-being	Psychological and physical well-being, including self-esteem, confidence, health, reduction of risky behaviours
5.	Service access	Service availability and skills; knowledge and capacity on the part of users to access them
6.	Life chances	Employment, income, life chances, breaking intergenerational cycles of deprivation
7.	Opportunity	Enrichment, horizon-broadening, new possibilities
8.	Democracy	Voice and representation, active citizenship
9.	Supporting children	Family functioning, parenting, family support for learning
10.	Community	Community cohesion, sustainability, and regeneration; positive community cultures

Source: authors

The fact that the very different articulations of different schools could be categorised in this way may be an indication – though no more than that – that schools were moving hesitantly towards a common and coherent rationale. It may also be significant that although individual schools focused their work to different extents on students, families or communities, the same outcome domains were associated with each of these beneficiary groups. Even the ‘community’ domain typically included outcomes for students as well as for adult community members, largely on the grounds that students constituted the local community of the future.

Likewise, there were indications that the articulation of outcomes by schools was founded on underpinning theories of how these outcomes might be achieved. As we found in our studies of previous extended schools initiatives (Cummings/Dyson 2007; Cummings et al. 2011), schools might see themselves as engaged either in ‘transforming’ the lives of individuals, families and communities, or in ‘enhancing’ or ‘resourcing’ those lives. Enhancement in this sense, was about increasing access to opportunities for the intended beneficiaries, and extending choice, enrichment, enjoyment and skills. It was primarily about making people’s lives richer and more fulfilling rather than solving any problems they might have, and often, therefore, involved provision that was open to all. Transformation, on the other hand, was about making fundamental changes to the lives of beneficiaries on the grounds that those lives were seriously problematic or limited. It often involved provision that was targeted at highly disadvantaged individuals and groups, and focused on breaking down the barriers that kept people marginalised, intervening before problems became intractable, and reducing social and educational inequalities. Individual schools tended to favour one or other of these underpinning theories, with those in highly disadvantaged contexts more likely to focus on transformation, and those in advantaged contexts more likely to emphasise enhancement. However, all schools articulated elements of each approach and the differences were of emphasis rather than of fundamental conceptualisation.

Overall, then, there was a sense that, despite the lack of clear national guidance, schools were beginning to feel their way towards a wide-ranging but nonetheless finite set of outcomes, and that they were beginning to develop underpinning theories of how they expected to bring about change. However, generalisations of this kind conceal as much as they reveal, and if we are fully to understand the rationales that were being developed by schools, it is necessary to explore how those rationales emerged in particular places and how they related to particular school contexts. It is therefore to the case studies of two schools that we now turn.

5 Case Studies of School Rationales

The two (anonymised) case study schools presented here illustrate trends in the articulation of rationales across the wider sample of 20 schools. However, it is important to remember that these two schools, like the sample as a whole, was drawn from schools with well-developed extended services approaches. On the other hand, we know from the survey element of the evaluation that most schools were rapidly developing their provision (Carpenter et al. 2010), and the two schools described here can therefore be taken as broadly indicative of the direction of travel of schools nationally. More to the point, the two case studies offer illustrations of the themes we have outlined above, and raise important questions about the ways in which the roles of schools might be extended and their purposes rethought. The accounts which follow present the schools as they were at the time of our fieldwork in 2010.

Redsborough Primary

This school, catering for children in the primary (age 5–11) age range, was located in an area characterised by high levels of socio-economic disadvantage. At the time of our fieldwork, students came from a very broad range of ethnic backgrounds, and the proportion of students who were learning English as an additional language was high in comparison with national averages, as was eligibility for free school meals – an indicator of socio-economic disadvantage in England. Many children arrived directly from abroad and their previous experiences of education were extremely varied. A relatively high proportion of students left and joined the school each year due to the transient nature of the community in which the school was placed. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was also well above the national average. However, despite the context, the school had excellent results in national assessments, and recent analyses placed it amongst the best-performing schools nationally in terms of the value added to students' attainments. The school had recently been designated as 'outstanding' by the national schools inspectorate.

The school had a well-defined set of aims which went beyond a narrow focus on attainment. These were: to provide a safe, secure, happy and simulating environment; to ensure a high quality education for all the children; and to support the children's personal and cultural development and prepare them for life. In line with this, school leaders saw an extended services approach as integral to its way of working rather than as an 'add-on'. The head teacher told us that it was made clear to all staff

that if they were expecting ‘a 9 to 3.30 job’, then Redsbrough was not the school for them. As the extended services coordinator, a long serving teacher at the school, explained:

I think it’s to do with the ethos of the school. Extended services is at the heart of our school. It’s in our school improvement plan, it’s one of our points, and the way we work as a school, we are a well-established team. We have some very challenging pupils and some really challenging parents, but everybody supports everybody.

The school had a history of offering extended services, particularly in relation to student welfare, dating back to 2001. Its breakfast club and after school club had run for over eight years, and a holiday play scheme targeted at the most disadvantaged students had been on offer since 2003. Extended services were delivered by members of the school staff and were available for 50 weeks of the year. Many of the staff involved were ‘teaching assistants’. These are support staff without teaching qualifications, who often come from the local community, and are employed to work in a support role with students. Often these staff are employed only during term time, but Redsbrough Primary had recently changed the contracts for its assistants so that they were now employed all year round.

The school offered a wide range of out-of-hours activities, from Bollywood dancing, Asian cookery and go karting for children, to yoga, Slovakian fathers’ football and boxing. The aim was that all children and parents should be engaged in some activity as soon as the child entered the school. In this way, the school believed it was able to spot problems more easily and intervene early. It had a family support team who delivered parental support groups and family learning courses as well as monitoring and supporting vulnerable families through a family support worker. The school also had strong links with the local further education (post-16) college which delivered vocational courses to adults on the school site and signposted participants to other education and employment opportunities. Local residents had access to a community cookery room and to volunteering opportunities in the school. The school also employed language support staff in recognition of the large number of Slovakian Romany children in its population.

Clearly, Redsbrough had developed an approach which went well beyond a narrow focus on students’ attainment and that was aimed at families and community members as well as at students. Underpinning this approach was a view that all of the outcome domains outlined in table 1 were important in their own right, but that they interacted with one another and could, ideally, be mutually reinforcing. For instance, the extended services coordinator explained how efforts to engage with students outside of formal teaching situations made positive changes in their relationships with school staff in *all* situations:

[We’ve seen] a difference in teacher-pupil and staff-pupil relations, because I think they [pupils] see them [staff] in a different light especially so for residential or play scheme when it is totally outside the classroom and school day. You see them in a totally different light and they see you as more approachable for a lot of them, because you are silly, because they see you on a mountain bike or see you on a motorbike. [They] see you in vulnerable situations as well which in a lot of them it increases their self-confidence and self-esteem.

School staff were likewise able to cite specific cases where their approach was impacting on children’s psychological well-being, which in turn was impacting on their learning. For instance, a play scheme worker told us:

We have got a little boy now who's so shy and timid – well he *was* – and I can remember one day he was struggling with something and I just said to him 'You need to find that big voice that you have got inside' and I said 'Put your hand up and we'll come and help you. That's what we are here for' and he has come on leaps and bounds. [The teacher] spoke to Mum at parents' evening and she cried, she is so happy that he is now finding his confidence. He is now starting to speak out and he's got a part in the Christmas concert.

Redsborough's approach to working across the outcome domains was particularly influenced by the high levels of poverty and disadvantage many of its students experienced in their home lives. There was, in the school leaders' view, no way that they could carry out their core task of teaching children if they did not also pay attention to the multiple other problems those children were facing. As the extended services coordinator explained:

Well, basically it's our ethos... obviously that they are being fed, but that they are safe, secure in a secure environment... they are clothed ... and they are warm. Because if they are not safe, fed, and clothed then... you could be doing back flips around and around the class and they won't learn anything at all.

In order to meet these demands, the school breakfast club provided meals at the start of the day, and the after school club also provided an evening meal. In addition, the school had a clothes bank to ensure there was a supply of appropriate clothing and footwear for children when needed. School leaders also told us that they regularly had to take children to medical appointments to ensure their physical health needs were being met. Likewise, the extended service coordinator explained that the out-of-hours provision made by the school was both a way of enabling parents to stay in employment and a means of keeping children safe:

we've got children who attend our play schemes and after school club because they've jumped out of windows, shoplifted, anything, when they're not actually in school. Out of school they don't just run wild but they're not looked after, so [the out-of-hours provision] lessens the amount of time that they're actually at home or roaming the streets... [I]t helps working parents but it's also half and half as there's children with real social needs that would end up in care by the end of the holidays if we didn't do something to address issues for them.

For similar reasons, the extended services coordinator told us, the school had developed a very proactive approach to ensuring children attended school:

because our view is that if they're in school, they're fed, they're safe and they're warm and we know where they are, they're not at home looking after younger siblings or they're not roaming the streets. So if you don't turn up to school by 9 o'clock, you get a phone call first of all, and then if there's no response or no one's told us why you're not in school, you'll have two members of staff knocking on your door.

Crucially, the extended roles taken on by Redsborough were not seen as in any sense contradictory to its core business of teaching children and improving their attainments. On the contrary, looking after children's physical, emotional and social needs, and supporting their parents to meet those needs more effectively, was seen as an essential foundation for being able to teach effectively. As an area extended service coordinator employed by the local authority commented:

they've seen all the other benefits, to the children and Ofsted and no other school in this area is an outstanding school, nobody else has results as good as this school – that's results without context value added but context value added is as good as all the other schools as well.

Amblesby Secondary School

Amblesby Secondary was located in one of the few areas of England which retains 'grammar' schools – that is, schools which select children on the basis of their prior attainments. As a result, Amblesby educated students in the 11 to 18 age range who had not been selected in this way and it therefore had a disproportionate number of low-attaining students. The school served a socially mixed area with many students coming from a nearby social and ex-social housing estate, alongside others coming from more affluent areas. At the time of our fieldwork, about a fifth of students had minority ethnic backgrounds. In its most recent inspection, the school had been categorised as 'good with outstanding features'.

Like Redsbrough, the school appeared to have a strong rationale underpinning its approach to developing extended services. In terms of students, the main aim was to reduce 'risky behaviours' in terms of drug and alcohol misuse, criminality and inappropriate sexual activity. In terms of the wider community, the aim was to increase engagement with enrichment and learning opportunities. The link between the two was that the community was regarded as somewhat isolated and inward-looking, with too few opportunities for positive activities for either young people or adults. Therefore both groups were trapped in something of a dead-end with counter-productive activities as their only escape. As the extended services coordinator explained:

we're two or three miles outside of [the] town centre and because the next town along is a good bus ride away, it's a very kind of parochial area... You've got the youth centre, for adults there's a social club that people go to and join on the estate, there's a chippy [a fast food outlet], a corner shop, a hairdressers, a church down there and towards the other end of the estate there's a post office and another chippy, and that's all there is.

Amblesby had a formal relationship (a 'hard federation') with its neighbouring primary school, and this meant that extended service provision could be run across both sites. A range of activities was offered for students, usually at no cost to them. Some 50 clubs were available, ranging from sports to curriculum enrichment and a homework club. The primary school was in the process of organising a breakfast club. There was also a youth centre on site that students could access during the evenings and at lunchtimes, and this offered structured, extra-curricular activities leading to awards in sports and in personal and social development. A range of parent support groups was run across both schools and parenting courses had been offered in the past. In response to the perceived parochialism of the local community, a local university had been invited to run free 18-week taster sessions for parents who had never participated in higher education. Family literacy and numeracy programmes were held for parents of targeted students struggling in these areas, along with other family learning sessions including cooking, pottery and drumming. Furthermore the school signposted parents and community members to other adult learning opportunities and had itself run award-bearing courses.

The school's relationship with the youth centre on site appeared to be particularly powerful. Together, they had developed a programme aimed at developing the social skills of 'disruptive' students. A teaching assistant who helped deliver the programme described it in the following terms:

[The programme] is for vulnerable children with low self-esteem, children who are maybe just not getting on in the classroom. We take them out of the classroom into this environment or up to the [sports centre] ... We have an instructor ... who then teaches them ball skills but it is all...based around goals and what we're aiming for, and maybe not setting our targets so high so that we can achieve our goals and things like that... just, basically, getting them to build on their confidence, work with each other.

The school was offering a second programme in conjunction with the on-site youth centre for girls who might become involved in risky behaviour. As with the social skills programme, this was run by non-teachers, and the youth worker responsible described it in the following terms:

A lot of them are at risk of teenage pregnancy and drugs and alcohol and stuff, [but] none of them have got pregnant, so that's a positive – and the fact that they all go through and get their [awards] in all sorts of things that they do. They do sexual health, they do drugs awareness, we get people in or we do that ourselves as well and a lot of it is life skills, you know. We do budgeting now and students do that on our enrichment programme as well, things that you don't necessarily get taught but that you really need to learn...It's confidence which is their big thing really, behaviour and understanding really, that understanding of what is going on in the world and not sort of living this life that's very sort of parallel lines and it's like 'Oh well actually, if I do it this way, it's going to work differently'.

Such programmes were aimed at a range of the outcome domains we set out above. In this case, the primary focus was on the social, well-being and life chances domains, though it is notable that gaining qualifications and developing students' sense of themselves as learners were characteristic of much that was on offer. The school was also attempting to address other outcome domains, for instance in relation to 'opportunity' and 'supporting children'. It had recently run a trip to London for the families of the students from the federated primary. We talked to several parents who had been on this visit and they confirmed how this had extended the opportunities and experiences available to members of this 'parochial' community. As one put it:

that was fantastic! ... We had two coach loads, and it was a really lovely day, tiring. Things like that we wouldn't normally do otherwise.

In order to support children and their families, Amblesby employed a family support worker. She reported on the case of one family she had recently worked with in the following terms:

We did have a young person in Year 7 [the first year of secondary schooling] who was flatly refusing, very sort of babyish, you know, sulking, throwing dummy out of pram. So, what we did first of all was we put him into our vertical tutor group [a mixed-age group brought together for guidance purposes]... There are two members of staff there, where these children are selected because of attendance issues, and phone calls are made if the students don't turn up... So, this young person was put in there for the additional support to monitor. I did a home visit and found that things at home were very dysfunctional and I referred [the mother] to a lady who is a family behaviour support worker [employed by the local authority]. She worked intensively with the family. Mum and Dad are not together and [the mother] is totally, I mean is a totally different woman now – it is absolutely amazing – a really empowered mum. There are rules now and chores now put into it, with rewards in the family home... We referred her to [a local service] to help her get help with her housing. We advised her for debt advice because Mum was in debt. She has addressed all of those issues with the help of [the support worker] and myself, and the young person's attendance is so much better. It's now

off the child in need register [a formal record of children at risk], and things are really, really positive for this young person now.

Here we can see both the way in which work with the student and with the family interacted and the way in which the school supplemented its own services by acting as a broker between students, families and other agencies. By creating a network of school-provided and externally-provided services, Amblesby was able to work across a range of outcome domains simultaneously, tackling the often complex problems in its population and thereby dealing with the issues which compromised its ability to enable its students to learn effectively. As an assistant head teacher in the school explained:

In the past, we didn't have this huge network of support staff in schools, it was teachers who did it in their spare time and therefore it didn't always work as well.

6 Interrogating School Rationales

What we see in these two cases is that, as the set of outcome domains presented in table 1 suggests, schools had begun to move well beyond their core concern with enhancing the educational attainments of their students. They were equally at home addressing students' personal and social difficulties, working on health issues, tackling the problems faced by parents, and trying to break down the marginalisation of communities. In order to do this, they had appointed a range of staff other than teachers, and were working collaboratively with other schools and services to create local service networks.

Neither Redsbrough nor Amblesby saw the extension of their roles in this way as compromising their ability to carry out their core business of teaching students. On the contrary, in situations where students' learning was compromised by the multiple challenges they experienced outside the classroom, working on these wider issues was seen as essential if students were to learn effectively. Both of these schools had come to the conclusion that the different contexts in which children grew, learned and developed, and the different outcome domains with which the schools engaged were deeply interactive. Put simply, how well children functioned in classrooms depended not just on the quality of teaching in those classrooms, but on how they felt about themselves, the kinds of experiences they had in their families, and the kinds of cultures and opportunities they encountered in their communities. In this sense, the set of outcome domains in table 1 is anything but a mere list. It is an indication, of the location of children within complex, interacting ecological systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) which shape their development and mould their outcomes.

Moreover, there are hints – to put it no more strongly – that the two schools were beginning to rethink their roles in other ways. Although it is clear that much of their work was about tackling the presenting problems experienced by their students, it would seem that they were also thinking more widely than this. Their development of provision to extend the opportunities and experiences, capacities and confidence levels of both children and adults in their areas implies that they saw the school as a bridge between the lives children and adults were currently leading and a richer set

of opportunities. To this extent, the schools were not confining their work to a narrow focus on raising attainment, nor even to a problem-solving approach to disadvantage. Rather they were thinking in terms of what we earlier called ‘enhancement’.

Of course, these rationales raise many questions. Although, for instance, the schools developed impressive systems for supporting disadvantaged children and families, it is not clear that they had yet thought about how the root causes of disadvantage might be tackled and whether the school could play any part in this. Similarly, although there were hints of a concern with ‘enhancement’, it is not clear that the schools had any fully worked-out notion of the kind of lives they were hoping to enable people to lead. They wished to act as bridges, perhaps, but where those bridges might lead was somewhat uncertain. Finally, it is even less clear that these schools had thought through what the relationship between professionals and the people who were intended to be the beneficiaries of professional activities might be, and how they might avoid professionals’ imposing their own views on those beneficiaries.

Despite these caveats, the developments undertaken by schools such as Redsborough and Amblesby in England, and by their equivalents in other countries, raises important issues about the roles that schools might play in the development of a thriving and equitable society. Driven by what many would see as an overwhelmingly dominant ‘neoliberal agenda’ (Gunter et al. 2010), many countries have engaged in their own version of a ‘crusade for standards’, requiring their schools to focus narrowly on driving up students’ levels of attainment. Yet the experience of schools such as Redsborough and Amblesby is that such a narrow approach is both inadequate and unnecessarily restrictive. It is inadequate because children’s attainments cannot, in many cases, be raised unless the negative conditions in their out-of-school lives which prevent them from learning are addressed. It is unnecessarily restrictive because schools can do much to contribute to the creation of thriving and equitable societies in addition to what they contribute by driving up educational attainments. They can help to tackle the problems faced by disadvantaged families and communities. They can also act to widen the opportunities and enhance the lives of all the children, families and communities they serve.

In these cases, therefore, we can see emerging, however imperfectly, a rationale for a new role for schools – one which sees them not just as academic institutions, but as hubs for the support of children, families and communities, and as ‘bridges’ to greater opportunities and better lives. If these emergent rationales are to be developed further, we suggest, two things are necessary. First, there needs to be some way of capturing what schools such as these are beginning to learn, and second, there needs to be some way of enabling them to think even more deeply about their work. Some form of dialogue is now needed between the policy makers who establish the frameworks for extended approaches, the school practitioners who have to make those approaches work, and the researchers who can turn experience into evidence and bring it to bear in turn on practice.

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Identification of Key Indicators for Quality in Afterschool Programs

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Abstract: Researchers are increasingly interested in the issue of school accountability. Despite this, program standards for afterschool programs are not as fully developed as in other fields. This study bridges that gap and presents the results from a study to identify benchmarks and indicators for high quality afterschool programs. This research employed a multi-method approach including a synthesis of literature on afterschool programs, observations and survey data collection at 15 high quality afterschool program sites. Results of the study suggest that most of the issues emphasized in the afterschool literature can be considered core components of a quality afterschool program. This finding was consistent across the three broad categories of program organization, program environment, and instructional features. This study also revealed that some issues emphasized in the afterschool literature should be considered extra components that can increase quality, but are not necessary. As a result, this study argues for a checklist strategy in assessing programs to meet quality-based standards.

The enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB 2002) has led to increased demand for school accountability in the United States. In particular, NCLB calls for school-based efforts to close the achievement gap and to ensure that all students, including those who are disadvantaged, gain academic proficiency. Under NCLB, schools must provide parents and the community with annual reports about their academic progress. Schools that lack progress may use afterschool programs as a supplemental service to help students learn more effectively. Although afterschool programs were initially created as safe havens for students, NCLB reinforces the important role that afterschool programs can have in increasing students' academic proficiency and school engagement.

In response, government emphasis on afterschool programs has increased. The U.S. Department of Education (2011) now allocates over one billion per year through its 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program. Furthermore, multiple states have passed legislation to provide new or increased funding (Afterschool Alliance, 2011). Within California alone, the budget for afterschool programs increased fourfold with the enactment of Proposition 49 in 2006 (California After-School Network, 2007).

Although legislation directed at increasing funding for afterschool programs is clearly an important priority, the ability to fund quality programs is an effort that requires immediate attention. As recent reviews have shown, not all programs are organized or implemented in ways that positively impact student outcomes (Durlak, Weissberg/Pachan, 2010; Lauer et al., 2006; Scott-Little/Hamann/Jurs, 2002). In or-

der to improve quality, there is a call for funding agencies and other policymakers to enact accountability systems (Wright, 2005). As was suggested in the Governor's Guide to Extra Learning Opportunities (Wright, 2005): (a) standardized expectations for afterschool programs should be set to ensure that they are run efficiently and effectively; and, (b) programs should be consistently evaluated to improve upon their structures and implementation.

The effort is complex. In order to follow Wright's (2005) suggestions, the research community needs to test indicators of quality and provide meaningful recommendations for how programs can be improved. Furthermore, researchers have to take into account that (a) not all programs serve children with similar characteristics (i.e., race, socioeconomic status, and age), (b) different programs have different goals and approaches, and (c) many differ in their desired program outcome (e.g., academic achievement, enrichment, or drug use prevention). It is for these reasons that researchers need to take into account the variability of existing afterschool programs while exploring key components of quality in afterschool programming.

With this growing interest in program quality, an increasing number of tools have been made available for the assessment of afterschool programs. In 2009, Yohalem/Wilson-Ahlstrom conducted a study to review current assessment tools and compare their purposes, structures, contents, and technical properties. Their *Guide to Assessment Tools* provides valuable information for researchers and evaluators. At the same time, there is a need for less-complex tools to be developed for use by afterschool programs that lack access to internal or external evaluators with backgrounds in afterschool program evaluation. They need an easy-to-use tool that focuses on benchmarking, so that programs can begin the process of continuous self-improvement.

Thus, the primary purpose of this paper is to inform the research community about ways in which afterschool programs can benefit students by implementing simple but effective strategies and components that promote program success and improvement. In this paper we (a) describe the review of literature that was conducted in order to develop a theoretical model, benchmarks and indicators, (b) results of the validation study, and (c) the establishment of the Quality Benchmark Rating System (QBRS) as a preliminary tool to assess afterschool quality.

1 Review of Literature

Benchmarking is a technique for assessing quality and managing change. Widespread use of this technique in business settings began in the 1980s with the company-wide adoption of benchmarking by Xerox in order to improve their products and processes (Shetty, 1993). In more recent years, the use of this technique has spread to higher education institutions looking to improve their management and instruction (Chaffee/Sherr, 1992; Clark, 1993).

Researchers in business and education settings often separate benchmarking into internal and external forms (Barber, 2004). Internal benchmarking is conducted within an organization to determine why certain units outperform others. In contrast, external benchmarking focuses on comparing an organization to others that demon-

strate best practices while providing similar services (Barber, 2004; Mancuso, 2001; Patton, 2001). One of the major advantages of the latter approach is that organizations are exposed to new ideas and proven practices (Barber, 2004).

When developing a benchmarking system it is important for researchers to use analytical criteria. According to Michael Scriven (2007), these criteria should focus on primary indicators of merit (also known as comlists), should be based on evidence from across organizations, and should be combinable into a valid rating. Within this section of the paper, we provide detailed descriptions of how the primary indicators of quality were selected, as well as how the quality benchmarks were validated.

Identification of the Literature

A synthesis of literature was conducted for this study. This approach is similar to a meta-analysis, defined as a “type of systematic review that uses statistical methods to combine and summarize the results of several primary studies” (Cook/Mulrow,/Haynes, 1997, p. 376). This is the preferred model for analysis in reviewing a large body of literature. In this study, the strategy of synthesizing literature was chosen because few studies with qualifying quantitative data or empirical evidence emerged from the literature search. In acknowledging the limitations of this process, caution should be taken when drawing formal inferences to the larger population.

Two search strategies were used in order to identify relevant studies and reports. First, searches were conducted of multiple library databases using CSA Illumina (ERIC, Education: A Sage Full-text Collection, NITS, and PsycINFO) using variants of the term “afterschool program” as keywords or descriptors. Second, searches were made for afterschool program studies and reports on the web sites of the Afterschool Alliance, After School Corporation Harvard Family Research Project, RAND Corporation, and Public/Private Ventures.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were then established in order to determine which studies and reports should be further reviewed. Studies eligible for inclusion (a) were published or written between 1985 and 2007, (b) were written in English, (c) referred to programs for K-12 students, and (d) either concluded with or commented on quality indicators of afterschool programs. Furthermore, in order to cover a broad range of relevant literature, studies could be either empirical investigations that aimed to identify characteristics of effective afterschool programs or reviews of literature that summarized quality indicators based on existing literature and/or the author’s own experience and knowledge. All studies focused on college students were excluded from review.

From all the previously mentioned sources, the research team identified 54 studies that met the criteria for inclusion. These studies included review articles, summaries, policy reports, and evaluation reports. They were often written by researchers and experts who had extensive experience in the field of afterschool programming.

Theoretical Model and Coding of the Literature

The 54 studies in the final sample were each independently reviewed by three research team members. Except for the principle researcher whom reviewed and approved of the ratings, the team members all worked in the educational field for over five years. Each study was coded for the presence of quality indicators and benchmarks focused on the three broad categories of program organization, program environment, and instructional features. Since the quality indicators and benchmarks emerged from the coding process, the research team used a system of deliberate discussion and consensus rather than Kappa coefficients to obtain reliability.

Despite observed differences among the 54 articles, 14 benchmarks with substantial overlapping consistencies emerged. Each of the benchmarks received support from at least one-quarter of the sources. The following describes each benchmark, their prevalence in the literature, and the indicators extracted.

Program Organization

Research on quality afterschool programs consistently identifies strong program organization as a crucial element for effective programs (Alexander, 1986; Beckett/Hawken/Jackowitz, 2001; C. S. Mott Foundation Committee on After-School Research and Practice, 2005; Fashola, 1998; Huang, 2001; McElvain/Caplan, 2001; Philadelphia Youth Network, 2003; Schwendiman/Fager, 1999). In 2005, the C. S. Mott Foundation Committee on After-School Research and Practice suggested a “theory of change” framework for afterschool programs that explicitly links program organization and participant outcomes to program effectiveness and quality. Seven specific elements of program organization are consistently referenced in the literature. They include program management and program administration ($n = 40$); staff support, experience, and training ($n = 49$); family and community involvement, and community partnerships ($n = 39$); and evaluation ($n = 19$).

Program management and program administration. Effective program management is necessary for quality-based afterschool programs. Huang (2001) specified that effective program organization should include a strong team of program staff who demonstrate leadership skills, positive organizational climate and inclusive decision-making. More specifically, it is important to have leadership articulate a shared mission statement and program vision that motivates staff, provides a positive organizational climate that validates staff commitment to these goals, as well as open the communication channels between afterschool, day school, parent, and community (American Youth Policy Forum, 2006; Wright/Deich/Szekely, 2006). Strong program management also provides adequate compensation for staff, thus decreasing the likelihood of high turnover rates (Beckett et al., 2001; C. S. Mott Foundation, 2005; de Kanter, 2001). Moreover, a strong leadership team and committed staff must also plan for program sustainability and growth through effective administration (ERIC Development Team, 1998), including a systematic organization of student records, program attendance, resource needs, program budget, a future financial plan and marketing (St. Clair, 2004).

Staff support. A strong management team that is committed to achieve program goals should provide their staff with adequate support to perform their duties. At the basic level, staff must be provided with sufficient materials to conduct program activities (St. Clair, 2004). Positive working environment, such as clear expectations for staff performance, a job orientation prior to beginning work, time and space to express concerns, continuous feedback on their performance, a shared decision-making process, opportunities for staff to collaborate and express their individual talents are all strategies that will promote sense of belonging, self-efficacy, and provide opportunities for staff to make an impact on program quality (Beckett et al., 2001).

Staff experience and training. In order to enhance staff efficacy, the staff must have the appropriate experience and training in working with afterschool students (Alexander, 1986; Fashola, 1998; de Kanter, 2001; ERIC Development Team, 1998; Harvard Family Research Project, 2005; Huang, 2001; Schwartz, 1996). For example, each staff member should be competent in core academic areas for the respective age groups that they work with. Beyond academic competency, staff should also be culturally competent, knowledgeable of diverse cultures and the social influences that can impact the lives of the students in the program (Huang, 2001; Schwartz, 1996). When the demographics of program staff reflect the diversity of the community in which the program is located, these staff can better serve as mentors and role models to the student participants (Huang, 2001; Vandell/Shumow, 1999). To ensure high quality instruction, staff should be consistently provided with opportunities for professional development (Wright, 2005). To demonstrate academic effects, it is also important for students in the program to have sufficient access to qualified staff – to ensure each student is given sufficient attention, according to her or his individual needs. Thus, having adequate staff to student ratios is an important indicator of quality for afterschool programs (Yohalem, Pittman/Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2004).

Family and community involvement. Research on afterschool programs consistently associates family and community involvement with program quality (Owens/Vallercamp, 2003; Tolman et. al., 2002). Programs can promote family and community involvement by setting defined plans to involve parents, family members, and community volunteers. For example, they can organize orientation sessions for incoming students and their families. At these sessions, families can be introduced to different involvement opportunities. Meanwhile, staff can regularly communicate with parents and families to provide a clear channel of communication that keeps parents informed of their children's progress in the program (American Youth Policy Forum, 2006; Wright et al., 2006). With open communication, families may also feel more comfortable engaging with staff about how the program can better support the needs of the student participants. When family involvement is acknowledged and encouraged, families and staff can work together to ensure high quality programming (Chung, 2000; Tolman/Pittman/Yohalem, Thomases/Trammel, 2002).

Community partnerships. Beyond students' families, the local community is another valuable resource for afterschool programs. Research shows that high quality programs are consistently engaged with local community members, leaders, and organizations that can form important partnerships in program planning and funding

(Birmingham/Pechman/Russell/Mielke, 2005; Harvard Family Research Project, 2005; Owens/Vallercamp, 2003; Wright, 2005). Through these partnerships, students can further develop knowledge of community resources, services, and histories. In turn, students may be encouraged to participate in community service projects that can reflect a sense of empowerment and pride in their respective communities. Programmatic efforts to form community partnerships can include inviting community members as guest speakers and recruiting local volunteers.

Evaluation. As an instrument to inform continuous self-improvement, periodic evaluations are critical for the sustainability of afterschool programs (Huang, 2001). Furthermore, having evidence of program outcomes is essential for continued and/or increased funding and support (Scott-Little/Hamann/Jurs, 2002; Wright et al., 2006). Therefore, evaluations should be administered regularly to ensure continuous improvement and assess program effectiveness (C. S. Mott Foundation, 2005).

Thus, high quality afterschool programs should have a detailed plan for evaluation of program activities, staff performance, and student development (Seppanen et al., 1993). Student's academic improvement and social skills development can be especially important in documenting program outcomes. Overall satisfaction evaluations can also be assessed among staff, students and families to ensure expectations and needs of all program participants are being met (Fashola, 1998). Evaluation findings should be consistently reviewed and made readily available to examine program progress.

Program Environment

The program environment focuses on how the structure of the afterschool program creates an atmosphere conducive to positive academic achievement and self-esteem for youth; they are "attractive affective contexts" for youth development (Kahne et al., 2001, p. 421). The four main elements of the program environment, which are consistently referenced by the research include: safe environment ($n = 30$), student health and well-being ($n = 27$), well-equipped/suitable physical space ($n = 21$), and positive relationships ($n = 30$).

Safe environment and well-equipped/suitable physical space. First and foremost the most important feature of the program environment is safety and security within the indoor and outdoor space. It is well documented that program space should be safe, clean, and secure for cultivating confidence and self-esteem for students (Chung, 2000; National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2002; New Jersey School-Age Care Coalition, 2002; North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs, n.d.; Philadelphia Youth Network, 2003; St. Clair, 2004; Wright et al., 2006); no potential harm should be placed upon the health and physical/emotional well-being of students (Safe and Sound, 1999). Adequate and comfortable space is needed for staff members to conduct a range of activities that promote both the mental and physical wellness of students. The indoor and outdoor space should also be used appropriately; catering to the activity being carried out (e.g., sports, creative arts, and eating), so that the goals of the activities are sufficiently met. In addition, there should be ample storage space for equipment, materials, and personal possessions. Equipment

should be able to be stored for easy student access and availability. The main aim is to make sure that students are in a safe, supervised environment that provides ample resources for mental and physical growth. The establishment of a physically and emotionally safe environment thus helps the development of positive relationships within the program environment.

Student health and well-being. Another facet of the program environment is the need to promote student wellness through health and nutrition education (de Kanter 2001; National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2002; North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs, n.d.; Philadelphia Youth Network, 2003; Wright, 2005). Nutritional time in afterschool programs offer students time to share meals and socialize with their peers while developing healthy snack habits that enhance student's well-being (Chung, 2000). Furthermore, quality-based afterschool programs provide environments that enhance the well-being of students by educating them and providing them with nutritious snacks adequate to portion size; and instructing the staff to minimize the health risks of students (e.g., having students wash their hands, having frequent restroom breaks). Exposure to health and wellness practices in the program environment allows students to be active and more fully engaged in nutrition and fitness related activities in their own lives (Wright, 2005).

Positive relationships. The emotional climate of the program environment is characterized by warm, supportive relationships between the staff members and students, among the students themselves, and between staff members. These three types of relationships within the program setting signify positive, influential connections for the students (Beckett et al., 2001; Birmingham et al., 2005; Huang, 2001). First, the interaction between the staff members and students is vital for demonstrating affirmative adult-student relationships, aside from primary-based interactions within the home (Beckett et al., 2001; Birmingham et al., 2005; Bodily/Beckett, 2005; Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1994; Harvard Family Research Project, 2004; New Jersey School-Age Care Coalition, 2002). Quality-based afterschool programs are structured to have written guidelines for staff-student relations so that the staff members are able to set appropriate guidelines and limits for students through positive behavior management strategies.

Secondly, staff members should be expected to be emotionally invested in the lives of their students. Quality-based programs foster this relationship by enforcing a small staff-student ratio that provides a "family-like" atmosphere, and contributes to positive social development for students (Beckett et al., 2001; Bodily/Beckett, 2005; Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1994; Chung, 1997, 2000; National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1999). Staff members are able to form more personable, one-on-one relationships with students through daily conversations and engagement (St. Clair, 2004). Consequently, this initiates a sense of community and belonging for the students because they are personally bonded to staff members (Wright et al., 2006).

Thirdly, positive peer relationships and friendships are a key ingredient in shaping students' social-emotional development (Safe and Sound, 1999; Huang, 2001; Halpern, 2004; Harvard Family Research Project, 2004; Pechman/Marzke, 2003; Safe and Sound, 1999; Huang, 2001; Yohalem et al., 2004; Yohalem/Wilson-Ahlstrom/Yu, 2005). Students need to interact with each other, building strong "partner-

ships” based on trust and respect with their peers (Yohalem et al., 2004). Healthy interaction with other students of various ages, and being involved in age appropriate activities helps students to demonstrate appropriate problem solving strategies, especially during times of conflict (Wright et al., 2006).

Finally, the adult relationships between staff members are important in constructing an emotional climate within the program environment. Students observe positive adult interactions through effective communication and cooperation of the staff in working together to meet the needs of students and the program (Yohalem et al., 2005). This relationship is an appropriate way in which the staff can model positive behavior to students. Staff members, for that reason, need to embrace assessment-based improvement plans as “relevant, contextual, and potentially helpful” (Weisberg/McLaughlin, 2004). Staff members must see the relevance of quality-based standards in shaping positive developmental outcomes for students.

Thus, the program environment within high quality afterschool programs should offer a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment for all participants. This includes a physical and social environment that fosters resilient outcomes through the reinforcement of positive relationships, nutrition, and physical/academic activities (Harvard Family Research Project, 2004; Huang, 2001; New Jersey School-Age Care Coalition, 2002; St. Clair, 2004).

Instructional Features

Afterschool programs vary greatly in their emphasis: ranging from providing supervision or tutoring, to the promotion of specific learning and development. Increasingly, though, despite any specific curricular emphasis, programs are focusing on providing a well-rounded variety of activities and opportunities that support the physical, social, and cognitive development of their student participants. The three main instructional features, which are consistently referenced by the research include: 1) the quality of activity implementation ($n = 44$), offering a variety of activities (academic = 36, enrichment = 32, socialization = 18), and emphasizing principles of youth development ($n = 15$).

Quality of implementation. According to Yohalem/Wilson-Ahlstrom/Yu (2005), setting and opportunities provided to participants vary greatly across programs. However, despite the variety that exists, there are steps that programs can take during the design of their curriculum and implementation of activities to help ensure quality. This is especially important for quality-based programs since the tailoring of teaching strategies and curricular content to the needs of students may be associated with student outcomes (Bodily/Beckett, 2005). Employing a variety of research-proven teaching and learning strategies can help staff members to increase engagement among students with different learning styles (Birmingham et al., 2005). Furthermore, a failure to design activities that meet the needs and interests of students may result in reduced program attendance. For example, Sepannen and colleagues (1993) suggested that reduced afterschool enrollment for students in upper elementary and above may be the result of a lack of age appropriate activities for older students.

Variety of activities. Providing a variety of activities is a practice supported in the afterschool literature. By emphasizing variety, programs are able to extend rather than duplicate the school day experience (Wright, 2005; Wright et al., 2006). This is important since programs that focus rigidly on the school day curriculum have been found to have lower participation (Kugler, 2001). In part, this may be due to gender differences. For example, Rosenthal and Vandell (1996) found an association between participation in programs offering a variety of activities and positive social relationships for boys. In addition, their research suggested that a long-term lack of variety in programming might be associated with negative outcomes for boys, but not for girls. Posner and Vandell (1999) extended this finding when they found gender differences concerning activity preferences. In their study, they found that girls spent greater amounts of time socializing and doing academic activities during out-of-school time than boys, while boys spent greater amounts of time than girls participating in coached sports.

Support youth development. Increasingly, among the educational community, there is a call for the development of the whole child. In 2004, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development adopted the position that educational practice and policy should focus on development of the whole child. As part of this position, they provided a framework for how communities, schools and teachers can contribute to this movement. The child development literature also describes a whole child approach to cultivate the students' intellectual, social and emotional well-being in order for them to achieve their full potential (Hodgkinson, 2006; Schaps, 2006).

In order to develop the whole child, education programs need to focus on a variety of youth outcomes (American Youth Policy Forum, 2004). As schools are increasingly emphasizing cognitive outcomes on core academics, afterschool programs have the opportunity to fill an important gap. In other words, afterschool programs can provide students with additional opportunities to develop skills, knowledge, resiliency, and self-esteem that will help them to succeed in life (American Youth Policy Forum, 2006; Beckett et al., 2001; Huang, 2001; Wright et al., 2006). With this in mind, researchers and policymakers are placing increasing emphasis on the inclusion of youth development principles within afterschool settings (Birmingham et al., 2005; Kahne et al., 2001).

Therefore, the instructional features of afterschool programs should emphasize the quality and variety of activities, as well as principles of youth development. This includes giving students opportunities to develop personal responsibility, a sense of self-direction, and leadership skills (American Youth Policy Forum, 2006; C. S. Mott Foundation, 2005; Harvard Family Research Project, 2004, 2005, 2006).

Identifying quality indicators and benchmarks within these specific areas, that are not only preventive of negative outcomes but also promote positive youth development, will be an important step toward informing policy on afterschool activities and instruction. Efficient organization, environment and instruction are crucial for maintaining high quality afterschool programs. Mission and vision statements enable program staff to take leadership in achieving stated goals and organizing programmatic efforts to achieve those goals. Having a strong team of program staff who are qualified, experienced and open to professional development opportunities is critical for successful organization and an overall high quality program. Beyond program staff, involvement of children's families and communities can enhance the

afterschool program experience, foster program growth and increase program sustainability. It is important for quality afterschool programs to look continually for ways to improve. Thus, consistent and systematic methods of evaluation are important to ensure children, families and communities involved in the program are being effectively served.

2 Validation Study

Program Identification and Recruitment of Participants

In this study, external benchmarking was utilized. In order to ensure that the programs evaluated would demonstrate best practices, a referral list was passed among the California State coordinators for them to recommend afterschool programs that they deemed as functioning “above the par.” A comprehensive examination of program histories, profiles on parent satisfaction, awards received, and performance records was then conducted to affirm the quality of the five most frequently mentioned programs and their afterschool sites. The location of the programs in Los Angeles County and their service of elementary students was also taken into consideration.

Based on the recommendations and review of documents, five sites at each of three afterschool programs (Los Angeles Better Educated Students for Tomorrow [LA’s BEST], Lawndale Realizing Amazing Potential [RAP], and Pasadena Leading Educational Achievement – Revitalizing Neighborhoods [LEARNs]) were selected for the study. These three programs have each been designated as a *California After School Partnership (CASP) Regional Learning Center*. Furthermore, each of the programs serves similar student populations. The student population at all three programs were predominately Latina/o, followed by African American. Furthermore, White, Asian, Native American, and Pacific Islander students composed approximately 15% of the total population served at each program. On average, most of the students who were enrolled in the programs qualified for free or reduced lunch. The three programs also shared major grammatic features (i.e., homework assistance, academic enrichment, and non-academic enrichment) as required by their receipt of state or federal funding. Participants at each program site included the program directors ($n = 15$) and site staff ($n = 102$). At two of the afterschool sites the assistant program directors also participated ($n = 2$).

Data Collection Procedures and Instrumentation

During 2007, two-day site visits were conducted at each of the 15 afterschool sites. Three instruments were developed for use during these visits: an observation protocol, a program director survey, and a site staff survey.

Observations. The observation protocol was designed to examine quality indicators of program environment and instructional features. Within this instrument, items focused on the presence of instructional features were measured dichotomously. In most cases these measurements took place three times and normally lasted 45–60

minutes in length. Dichotomous measurements were also made concerning staff and student relationships. In contrast, items focused on program environment were primarily measured using a four-item scale: *not evident*, *somewhat evident*, *moderately evident*, and *consistently evident*. Each observer was trained on how to complete the ratings and scales before entering the field.

The observation procedures were designed to emphasize breadth rather than depth, with each researcher shadowing a different staff member over the course of an afternoon. Each site visit included two observers, resulting in four observations being collected per afterschool site. The afterschool staff members who were shadowed were selected in order to ensure that each site visit included different grade levels (i.e., primary and upper elementary) and programmatic requirements (i.e., homework assistance, academic enrichment, non-academic enrichment, snack time, and check-in and check-out). Furthermore, observations of the different programs were conducted at different times during the school year: LA's BEST during spring 2007, Lawndale RAP during summer 2007, and Pasadena LEARNs during fall 2007.

Surveys. All staff members at the afterschool sites were asked to complete one survey during the week prior to the research team's site visit. The program director survey focused on indicators of program management and was completed by the staff member at each site who manages day-to-day operations. All items on this survey were asked using four-point agreement scales with a score of 1 representing *strongly disagree* and a score of 4 indicating *strongly agree*. The activity leaders were also asked to complete a site staff survey, which included questions focusing on all three broad categories: program organization, program environment, and instructional features. Unlike the program director survey, this instrument included both the four-point agreement scale as well as *check all that apply* items.

Data Analysis for the Validation Study

When developing benchmarks, Scriven's (1981) weight and sum methodology can be used to measure criteria and calculate overall quality. Within this study, weighting systems were developed to analyze the relevance of (1) the indicators and (2) the benchmarks based on their prevalence at the high-quality afterschool programs.

Given the results of the synthesis of literature, the research team considered all of the benchmarks and indicators as criteria for determining what high-quality afterschool programs ought to have in place (under ideal conditions). However, in daily practice, afterschool practitioners constantly deal with competing demands and limited time, space, and resources; because of these factors, even high-quality programs may not be able to implement all of the benchmarks and their indicators. At the same time, afterschool programs with different focuses (such as academic or positive youth development) may not target the same skills and student outcomes. Under this rationale, it was decided to weight the surveys, observations, and benchmarks using a two-thirds rule.

Step 1 – Weighting the indicators. First, all data were analyzed at the site-level. If an indicator was examined by a single item from the instruments, then two-thirds of the responses aggregated to the site-level was required in order to consider the indi-

cator as prevalent or “met.” If an indicator was examined using multiple items from the instruments, then two-thirds of the responses, or at least two-thirds of those items aggregated to the site-level, would be required to consider the indicator as “met.” When an indicator was analyzed with items from both survey instruments (site staff, project director), aggregate responses were considered equally. When an indicator was analyzed with items from one or more survey instruments and the observation protocol, aggregate survey responses were considered more heavily (2:1) than the observers’ responses. This was done to account for the fact that the research team shadowed only four staff members at each site.

Step 2 – Weighting the benchmarks. Second, the data was analyzed at the benchmark-level. Benchmarks that were found to be present across at least two-thirds of the sites were considered “core,” or mandatory for high quality. In other words, the research team considered these benchmarks as necessary components for the daily operation of quality afterschool programs. Taking into account their prevalence in the literature, those benchmarks found to be present at less than two-thirds of the sites were then classified as additional or “exemplary” components that programs could use to further enhance their overall quality.

Step 3 – Finalizing the indicators. Finally, the results from the two-thirds rule were used to determine which indicators would be included in the QBRS. Indicators for benchmarks that met the criteria for being classified as core were automatically accepted. In contrast, only those indicators that met the two-thirds rule for the exemplary benchmarks were included.

Results of the Validation Study

Program organization. For program organization, seven benchmarks were extracted from the synthesis of literature, with each having between three and five indicators. When using the two-thirds rule most of the benchmarks had all or most of their indicators met. The exceptions included family involvement and community partnerships, with fewer sites having plans in place for parent involvement ($M = 0.46$), opportunities for parent feedback ($M = 0.46$), plans for community involvement ($M = 0.46$), or partnerships with local organizations ($M = 0.60$). As a result, the benchmark for family involvement barely met the threshold for core quality with a mean of exactly 7.00. Furthermore, community partnerships was the only benchmark failing to meet the two-thirds rule ($M = 5.73$) and was therefore classified as exemplary (see Table 1).

Program environment. In contrast to the previous category, only one of the indicators for program environment failed to meet the two-thirds rule. This indicator focused on staff efforts to minimize health risks ($M = 0.20$) and was classified under the student health and well-being benchmark. As a result, this benchmark barely missed meeting the two-thirds rule with a mean of 6.60. The remaining three benchmarks under this category each received a mean score of 9.33 or greater, and were therefore classified as core (see Table 1).

Instructional features. Three benchmarks were extracted from the literature concerning instructional features. In this case, all six of the indicators concerning quality of implementation met the two-thirds rule. In contrast, the indicators under variety of activities that focused on high quality tutoring and homework help ($M = 0.60$) as well as the indicator concerning a balance of both competitive and non-competitive team sports ($M = 0.40$) failed to meet the two-thirds rule. Despite this, since the remaining three indicators had mean scores ranging from 0.87 to 1.00, the benchmark for variety of activities was still able to meet the criteria for core quality ($M = 8.60$). The only benchmark in this category that was classified as exemplary was activities that support youth development ($M = 5.86$). In this case, four of the six indicators failed to meet the two-thirds rule and were later excluded from the QBRs. These focused on student opportunities to help with program selection and development ($M = 0.47$); student opportunities to share their ideas, concerns and opinions ($M = 0.60$); opportunities for student choice and self-direction ($M = 0.40$); and, the promoting of student leadership abilities ($M = 0.27$).

Table 1. *Quality Benchmark Rating System Score Sheet*

	Benchmark	Score	Core Quality	Exemplary Quality
Program Organization				
1.	Program management	8.50	√	
2.	Program administration	8.00	√	
3.	Staff support	8.00	√	
4.	Staff experience and training	8.40	√	
5.	Family involvement	7.00	√	
6.	Community partnerships	5.73		√
7.	Evaluation	8.27	√	
Program Environment				
1.	Safe environment	9.73	√	
2.	Student health and well-being	6.60		√
3.	Well-equipped and suitable physical space	9.33	√	
4.	Positive relationships	9.37	√	
Instructional Features				
1.	Quality of implementation	9.90	√	
2.	Variety of activities	8.60	√	
3.	Activities support youth development	5.86		√

Note. “√” indicates whether the benchmark met the criteria for core or high quality.

3 The Quality Benchmark Rating System Tool

Following the validation study, the research team designed the QBRS. The tool was structured with checklists (or comlists) for measuring the benchmarks and indicators. In addition, a score sheet was developed for users to record their benchmark scores and ratings.

The QBRS was divided into the three broad categories included in the theoretical model. Using the QBRS, scores could be used at the benchmark-level to determine primary indicators for a broad category (e.g., program organization) or could be used at the indicator level to determine specific strengths and weaknesses for continuous program improvement (e.g., where to focus future staff training).

Constructing the Checklists

With the core benchmarks established, the next step was to design the layout of the quality checklists concerning program organization, program environment, and instructional features. As shown in Tables 2–4:

- Each individual benchmark was provided with a definition under its title to clearly define what it stood for.
- Next, the associated indicators, as established by the two-thirds weighting system, were listed to the right of each benchmark. Each of these was adapted to the form of a question for ease of use.
- Lastly, the weight (or rating score) for each indicator was listed to its right.

Table 2. *Program Organization Checklist*

Benchmarks	Indicators		
Program Management: Program has a collaborative management system to meet specific goals outlined in the mission statement.	1. Does the program consider staff input in decision-making?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	2. Does the program consider student input in decision-making?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.0
	3. Is there a clear mission statement present for the program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.5
	4. Is there day school and afterschool collaboration?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.5
Program Administration: Program has effective management and plan for long-term sustainability and growth.	1. Have program policies been developed for student participation and attendance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.0
	2. Is the budget maintained and adjusted to meet resource needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.0
	3. Is a long-term financial plan in place for sustaining and fostering program growth?	<input type="checkbox"/>	4.0
Staff Support: Program staff are given adequate support.	1. Is the staff well-paid?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	2. Are staff provided performance feedback?	<input type="checkbox"/>	4.0
	3. Does staff receive an orientation before working with youth?	<input type="checkbox"/>	4.0
Staff Experience and Training: All staff members have adequate training and experience to ensure high quality instruction.	1. Is there an adequate staff-student ratio?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	2. Is the staff competent in core academic areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	3. Does the staff participate in professional development?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	4. Does the program director participate in professional development?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	5. Does the staff reflect the cultural diversity of the community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
Family Involvement: Program has a clear plan for family involvement.	1. Does the staff regularly communicate with parents/families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	5.0
	2. Is there a program plan in place for parent involvement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.0
	3. Are parents provided with opportunities to provide feedback about the program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
Community Partnerships: Program engages in community partnerships.	1. Are youth encouraged to participate in service projects/programs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	10.0
Evaluation: Program has a system in place for evaluation of students, staff, parents, and program activities.	1. Is there a method of evaluation for staff performance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	2. Is there a method of evaluation for program activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	3. Is there a method of evaluation for student engagement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	4. Are students' academic/social skills improvement evaluated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	5. Are evaluation findings used for program improvement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0

Table 3. *Program Environment Checklist*

Benchmarks	Indicators		
Safe Environment: Program space is safe, clean, and secure.	1. Is the program space safe, clean & secure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	4.00
	2. Is a system in place to keep unauthorized people from taking children from program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00
	3. Are youth carefully supervised?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.00
Student Health and Well-being: Program environment should enhance students' health.	1. Does the program environment enhance students' health?	<input type="checkbox"/>	4.00
	2. Are healthy and nutritious snacks provided?	<input type="checkbox"/>	4.00
	3. Is the equipment safe for activity play?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.00
Well-equipped/ Suitable Physical Space: Program provides physical space that is appropriately equipped and suitable for afterschool.	1. Does the program's indoor and outdoor space meet the needs of all program activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.33
	2. Is the space arranged well for a range of activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.33
	3. Is the space arranged well for simultaneous activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.33
Positive Relationships: Program develops, nurtures, and maintains positive relationships.	Staff-Child Relationship		
	1. Is there a small child-staff ratio?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.25
	2. Does the program have guidelines about staff-student expectations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.25
	3. Does the staff relate to children and youth in positive ways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.25
	4. Does the staff respond appropriately to the individual needs of children and youth?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.00
	5. Does the staff encourage children to become more responsible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.00
	6. Does the staff interact with children to help them learn?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.00
	Child-Child Relationship		
	7. Do children interact with one another in positive ways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.00
	Staff-Staff Relationship		
8. Does the staff work well together to meet the needs of children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.75	
9. Does the staff communicate with each other while the program is in session?	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.75	
10. Does the staff provide role models of positive adult relationships?	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.75	

Table 4. *Instructional Features Checklist*

Benchmarks	Indicators		
Quality of Implementation: Program provides a variety of age-appropriate activities that reflect the goals and philosophy of the program.	1. Are the activities appropriate (i.e., ages, learning styles, and abilities) for the children in the program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.5
	2. Are the activities in line with the interests of the children in the program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	3. Do the activities reflect the languages and cultures of the families served?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.5
	4. Do the activities meet the physical, social and emotional needs of the students?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.0
	5. Does the program use a variety of instructional methods and strategies that reflect current research and policies on teaching and learning?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
	6. Are children offered multiple opportunities for developing and practicing new skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.0
Variety of Activities: Program provides a balance between academics and enrichment.	Core Academics		
	1. Is high quality academic support offered, such as tutoring and homework help?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.0
	2. Is instruction offered in a variety of core academic areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.0
	Enrichment		
	3. Are there enrichment opportunities in a variety of areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.0
	4. When provided, do athletic programs include both competitive and noncompetitive team sports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.0
	Socialization		
	5. Are children provided regular opportunities for socializing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.0
Activities Support Youth Development: Activities provide opportunities for <i>development of personal responsibility, self-direction, and leadership.</i>	1. Does the program promote youth development?	<input type="checkbox"/>	5.0
	2. Does the program enable participants to develop life skills, resiliency, and self-esteem via activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	5.0

Quality Benchmark Score Sheet

CBO/District: _____

Afterschool site: _____

Program director: _____

Assessment period: From _____ To _____

Benchmark	Score	Core Quality (Y/N)	High Quality (Y/N)
Program Organization			
1. Program management			
2. Program administration			
3. Staff support			
4. Staff experience and training			
5. Family involvement			
6. Community partnerships			
7. Evaluation			
Program Environment			
8. Safe environment			
9. Student health and well-being			
10. Well-equipped and suitable physical space			
11. Positive relationships			
Instructional Features			
12. Quality of implementation			
13. Variety of activities			
14. Activities support youth development			

This score sheet provides an overview of program quality at a glance. Each of the three major program components are listed with the score of each associated benchmark listed. The score sheet also provides a quick reference as to whether the benchmarks are considered as "core" or "exemplary". In other words, core benchmarks are used to evaluate program quality and exemplary benchmarks are included as indicators for exemplary program practices.

Figure 1. Quality Benchmark Rating System Score Sheet.

4 Discussion

The validation study showed that all 15 sites had a clear mission statement, and staff input was considered strongly in program decision-making. In addition, and as expected, these 15 sites demonstrated strong standings on most of the benchmarks

under the three major components of program organization, program environment, and instructional features. As important as what these sites affirmed, it was also necessary to draw implications based on what the researchers learned. The experiences of visiting these high-functioning program sites accentuated the need for certain benchmarks to be further examined.

In the area of program organization, the benchmark for parent involvement barely met the criteria for being established as core, while community partnerships was the least prevalent benchmark at the sites. Parent involvement, defined as families being welcomed to visit and parents being able to provide feedback, was reported to be moderate and weak, respectively. Program directors also stated that there was not a clear plan for parent involvement at the sites. Additionally, although parents' comments were welcomed, they were not given an instrumental role in making important decisions within the programs. Similarly, community involvement was also confirmed to be low, especially with regard to having community members as guest speakers, thus decreasing the chances of building stronger partnerships between the program and the larger, surrounding community.

Similar findings were also concluded in a nationwide study (Herman/Huang,/ Goldschmidt, 2005), especially on parent involvement. Even though literature has consistently revealed the importance of parent involvement in their children's academic outcomes (Henderson/Mapp, 2002), a clear relationship between program outcomes and parent involvement in afterschool settings has not been established. In fact, very few successful afterschool programs could demonstrate that they had high degrees of parent involvement, though nearly all demonstrated that they had a high degree of parent satisfaction. Further investigation on which elements of parent involvement were the contributing factors to student outcomes, or a clearer definition of what one considers parent involvement in afterschool settings, are much needed.

For program environment, the benchmark of student health and well-being also needs to be further examined. Many afterschool studies drew on a school effectiveness model to set benchmarks for afterschool programs. Since afterschool programs were faced with limitations in terms of space (a sick room) and resources (school nurse, nutrition counselor), further examination on what should be considered as appropriate or not appropriate in afterschool settings ought to be conducted, and appropriate guidelines should be established. In this study, the weakness in this benchmark could be partially accounted for due to the handing out of both healthy and unhealthy snacks during nutrition time. There was also a lack of providing appropriate guidelines to staff in minimizing health risks. For example, only about a third of the sites had staff members actively making sure that students were washing their hands and separating students when they were ill.

Lastly, in the area of instructional features, the benchmarks on activities that support youth development could be further enhanced. While general forms of support for youth development were strongly prevalent across the sites, other, more specific forms of youth development were often lacking. For example, students were often not included in setting personal goals, providing suggestions, providing comments, or reflecting on the settings and activities of the program. Despite the lack of student choice and autonomy within these afterschool programs, at times, staff demonstrated a lot of willingness to promote general youth development skills. However, since it is a recently advancing field, many lacked the knowledge and skills to promote such concepts. Since positive youth development is the foundation for building good citi-

zanship, this could be a program element that enables policymakers to direct more funding toward staff development.

5 Conclusions and Implications

Current literature recognizes the need to identify good practices in quality-based afterschool programs (Beckett et al., 2001; Bodily/Beckett, 2005; C. S. Mott Foundation, 2005; Pierce/Bolt/Vandell, 2010; Yohalem/Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2010). Consequently, numerous studies have examined indicators and benchmarks that could define program quality (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1994; Goldsmith/Arbreton/Bradshaw, 2004; Huang, 2001). However, even though quality-based indicators have been identified, the research community still lacks a concrete, easily accessible system that can be provided to the afterschool programs for the purpose of continuous self-improvement. This study attempts to address this research gap through the development of a benchmark system that is based on a multi-method approach including a synthesis of literature, field studies, and data analysis.

Despite this, the research community should further this work by addressing some of the limitations of this study. First, the criteria for examining afterschool program quality were based on the theoretical framework set out by Huang (2001) and the primary indicators drawn from the synthesis of literature. Since few of the articles that met the search criteria included quantitative data or empirical evidence, the research team chose not to calculate effect sizes. Secondly, since the available literature on quality indicators has increased substantially since the original synthesis of literature was conducted, it would be advisable to expand the initial search and conduct further coding before drawing formal inferences to the larger population of afterschool programs. By including more recent studies, future studies might also be able to locate more empirical studies and calculate effect sizes. Thirdly, the number of afterschool sites could be increased in order to conduct subgroup analyses based on background variables or program characteristics such as those being explored in the current statewide evaluation of 21st Century Community Learning Centers and After School Education and Safety programs in California (See Huang et al., 2011)

Finally, this evaluation tool would be very useful for afterschool programs that do not have access to trained researchers to assess their effectiveness and begin a process of continuous self-improvement. Additionally this tool can also help afterschool researchers to expand their sample base by having the programs collect some of the preliminary data themselves.

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Note: An asterisk marks those publications providing data for the synthesis of literature.

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Presentation of Research on School-Age Educare in Sweden

Anna Klerfelt & Björn Haglund

Abstract: In this article a background to the growing need of establishing school-age educare as a field of research in Sweden is presented. Firstly a short review of the history of the school-age educare is given, followed by a description of how the activity is organized today. Some examples of studies produced within this field are presented. Both accomplished studies and ongoing research are given account for. The article concludes with actions suggested for covering existing gaps of research.

Keywords: School-age educare, leisure-time centres, extended education, children's perspectives, qualitative research

1 Introduction

In this article we are going to present examples of research directed to school-age educare in Sweden. The definition of school-age educare comprises and emphasises that both education and care are given in this activity directed towards children in the early school-age and, in Sweden, are placed in so called leisure-time centres. Other international denominations for kindred activities are 'extended education', 'whole-day school' and 'all-day school'. At first it is important to state that school-age educare is a well-established educational activity in Sweden, reaching back as far as the late 19th century. Today, it is a well-developed service, spread all over the country. Nearly all Swedish children between six to eight years of age attend leisure time centres where educare is provided. Although, research directed towards school-age educare is to be considered as scarce.

Before describing the research towards school-aged educare we want to give a short overview of how the leisure-time centre has developed and changed over the years, give some facts about the leisure-time centres, as well as mention some of the keystones of importance for establishing school-age educare as a field of research.

2 The History of the Leisure-Time Centre

The activity in so called 'work cottages' are the roots of the leisure-time centres of today. In her thesis Malin Rohlin (2001) describes how conceptions concerning the leisure-time centre and its predecessors have changed during different periods of time. She asserts that these conceptions have been accompanied by different power conditions that act and control in the name of children's free time. When she describes these leading conceptions she illustrates them as (1) a conception of work (2) a conception of recreation and (3) a conception of education.

Rohlin claims that the conception of work was the dominating idea from the end of the 19th century to the 1930s and was performed in the activity in work cottages. The work cottages were institutions that only directed their activities to the poorest children (cf. Johansson 1984; Karlsson 1998; Olsson 1999; Rohlin 1996). The founders of these institutions were philanthropic associations that strived for a moral improvement of the poor and the work cottage was seen as a tool in this ambition. From a philanthropic point of view the poor were not in need of charity, if anything they were in need of education and a proper upbringing. Only through education could the children be adjusted to the norms of the society; quit begging, stealing and stop performing all kind of mischief in the streets. Lars Karlsson (1998) describes the activities in the early 20th century work cottages as 'activity education'. The activities of the work cottages were, among other things, based on different kinds of handicraft, woodwork and textile craft. The staff consisted of different craftsmen who taught their craft, teachers who wanted to earn money on the side and young and rich women who wanted to give support to the poor. Work was one of the cornerstones in the activities and the children were taught that work was profitable. The children were rewarded with food and received a meal for the work they had performed. Through the work the children carried out they also got the chance to learn a craft they could support themselves with in the future. Another point of departure for emphasizing handicraft in work cottages was a criticism of the stress of theory in school. The philanthropic philosophy was, in that way, not entirely based on work as a moral value. There was also an educational idea, taking the view that manual labor should be more appreciated (Rohlin 2001).

The work cottage, however, became obsolete over time since the Swedish society developed and poverty decreased. These institutions also became questionable for political reasons and a new concept appeared that indicated that children should not work with the exception of their school related work. The conception of work was in that way followed by the conception of recreation. This conception was guiding the idea of younger schoolchildren's leisure at the afternoon centre¹ between the 1930s to the 1960s. This meant that the society was remodelled and changed social practices that offered younger schoolchildren the opportunity to take part in the afternoon centre activity, instead. Activities in the afternoon centre were very different compared to the activities in the work cottage (Rohlin 2001). The activities in the afternoon centre were often seen as a continuation of the activities in the day-care and were mostly based on child minding (Calander 1999; Hansen 1999). The notion of

1 Leisure-time centres were labelled afternoon centres during this period since the opening hours were circumscribed to afternoons. The name leisure-time centre was not common until the beginning of the 1960s when the opening hours also increased and included early mornings before school.

complementing theory in school with different kinds of manual work, as in the work cottage, was not present in the afternoon centre. Children's leisure should, from the point of view of the afternoon centre, be spent by doing homework, play, or recreate. This new organisation could be seen as a pre-schoolisation since the afternoon centres were mainly staffed by pre-school teachers (Rohlin 1996). This could also be seen as a stagnation since the education of pre-school teachers was not directed to schoolchildren and there was also uncertainty about the purpose of the afternoon centre (Rohlin 1996).

The notion that succeeded the conception of recreation started in the early 1960s and was a conception of education (Rohlin 2001). Rohlin asserts that the conception of recreation took place on a social arena while the conception of education initially took place in a socio-educational arena. Time, within the frames of the leisure-time centre, was now constructed in relation to school. Leisure-time centres were, from the 1960s on, not principally meant to deal with child minding. Instead leisure-time centres were supposed to arrange the activities as a support for social development. This should be done by mainly supporting the families but also by supporting the school.

A shorter education directed towards work in leisure-time centres started in the middle of the 1960s and it was also during this period the name of the profession "leisure-time pedagogue" was established. This education was later extended and became a university education in 1977. The education to leisure-time pedagogue had similarities with the education to pre-school teacher since these professions historically have had connections. Leisure-time centres were, in most cases, situated in the same buildings as day-care centres until the 1980s but nowadays the leisure-time centres are mostly located in schools.

Recognition of the Value of the Activity in the Leisure-Time Centre

In 1974 a national committee was appointed with the assignment of changing the inner work of the school. The committee criticized the school for having a strong theoretical bias and the committee suggested to extend the school day and set up both practical and aesthetical activities in the school for all children, not only for the children enrolled in the leisure-time centres (SOU 1974, p. 53). And the committee suggested that leisure-time pedagogues should lead these activities. The expectations were, accordingly, that the way of performing educational activity in leisure-time centres could contribute to resolve the problems in the schools. This can be seen as a strong recognition to the activity in the leisure-time centre. The suggestions for the committee were sanctioned and the new whole-day school was born.

3 Structure of the Leisure-Time Centre of Today

There are 4,316 leisure-time centres in Sweden (The Swedish National Agency 2013). 411,255 children between 6–13 years old are enrolled in the school-age educare in these activities. As there are, in all, 431,922 children aged 6–9 years living in Sweden (SCB 2013), this means that about 82.3% of the children this age attend

leisure-time centres. 18% of the children aged 10–12 are enrolled in leisure-time centres.

When it comes to the personnel working with school-age educare-activity there are 33,023 persons employed in leisure-time centres. Most of them are educated leisure-time pedagogues, but due to the shortage of educated leisure-time pedagogues there are also personnel who have backgrounds as preschool-teachers, primary or secondary teachers, recreation leaders and also a few persons working in the leisure-time centres without university education. The positions are regulated in employment agreements and there are no volunteers partaking in the Swedish leisure-time centres.

The amount of children per pedagogue has increased during the last 30 years. In 2013 an average group of children in leisure-time centre consisted of 40.4 children. At the beginning of the 1980s the average group consisted of 18 children. Most of this increase occurred during the 1990s. But the increase has continued into the twenty-first century and in the last ten years the groups have increased by one child per year.

2013 an average of 20.3 children was allotted on a full-time equivalent in leisure-time centres (one full-time equivalent has been adopted to work 40 hours/week). That is almost three times as many as in 1980 when the number was 7.4 children/personnel. The personnel take turns, working from early morning until late afternoon since the centres are mostly opened from 6.30 in the morning until 18.30 in the evening. Three meals a day are served.

To sum up, at the same time as the amount of children per leisure-time centre has increased the number of leisure-time centres and the number of leisure-time pedagogues has not increased, correspondingly.

From this presentation of facts about the leisure-time centre we will move to what is needed to establish school-age educare as a scientific field of research.

4 Keystones for Establishing School-Age Educare as a Scientific Field of Research

There are both several – already existing ones but also non-existent – foundations needed for establishing school-age educare as a field of research. Among the existing constituents the emergence of the modern leisure-time centres, the well educated professionals working in leisure-time centres, as well as the university based education to become a leisure-time pedagogue (today called teachers towards work in leisure-time centres) could be mentioned as very important. Further, the close connection between practice and modern educational theories as well as the emergence of modern and updated policy documents, are also important cornerstones for the urgent work of establishing school-age educare as a scientific field of research. There is also a considerably high amount of scholars interested in engaging in this field, but prerequisites in the shape of grants are lacking. Neither does higher education, such as a specific master education or a graduate education directed towards this field, exist.

Before describing the research produced towards this area we will present the above mentioned keystones more carefully.

Leisure-Time Centre as a Specific Practice

In early 1990 the Swedish professor Ingrid Carlgren (1999), drawing on theories launching a new way of understanding learning (Lave 1993; Wertsch 1998), claimed that the school should be viewed as a specific practice, working on certain demands, with specific aims and goals. Using the same theoretical starting points the leisure-time centre could, accordingly, be viewed as a specific practice governed by its own demands, aims, traditions, and goals (Klerfelt 1999; 2007).

The Activity in Leisure-Time Centres

Modern educational theories have created a growing interest in the processes of meaning making, care, and leisure that are supposed to happen in leisure-time centres. Through the practical educational attitude elaborated during decades the activity is characterized by a child centred perspective, where interaction between the children and the leisure-time pedagogues, constitutes the foundation for the educational activity.

The Significance of Governance, Control, and Curriculum

Leisure-time centres are regulated by the Education Act, just like the compulsory school and the preschool class. This new school law from 2010 and the common 'Curriculum for the compulsory school, preschool class and the leisure-time centre' (The National Agency for Education) from 2011 constitute important policy documents. Another important policy document is the 'General guidelines and comments for quality in leisure-time centres' (The National Agency for Education) from 2007. These guidelines are explicitly directed towards school-age educare and function as guidelines for municipalities and leisure-time pedagogues on how to perform and develop the activity.

University-Based Teacher Education

The importance of a well developed and specific teacher education cannot be undervalued. The first education to become a leisure-time pedagogue was set up in 1964. 1977 the education was further elaborated and moved into universities. The contemporary education could be considered to be of high quality, resting on both traditions and scientific ground.

During the last decades the teacher education has been exposed to several reorganizations. The latest reorganization took place two years ago and in the autumn of 2011 a new teacher education saw the light. The teacher education of today is now formed as one school for becoming a preschool teacher; three closely interrelated directions to be trained as a teacher towards the early years in school, which includes

one direction towards preschool class up to grade 3, one towards grades 4 to 6, and one towards work in leisure-time centres. Then, there are other schools for educating teachers towards grades 7 to 9, upper secondary school and adult education. This also means that the profession has changed title from 'leisure-time pedagogue' to 'teacher towards work in leisure-time centres'. Besides leading the activity in the leisure-time centre the 'teacher towards work in leisure-time centres' is trained for working as a teacher in school for pupils in grade 4–6, in one of the practical/aesthetic subjects and as a home-economics teacher.

5 Research

In the following section research concerning school-age educare will be presented. Examples of theoretical approaches, methods and results will be described.

Theoretical and Methodological Approaches Applied

Researchers devoting themselves to explore questions concerning school-age educare use different kinds of theoretical starting points depending on different purposes and different academic traditions (Klerfelt 2002). However, since many studies are directed towards constructing knowledge with the aim of understanding interaction between the participants in the activity mostly theoretical approaches emanating from socio-constructionistic traditions are employed. When it comes to methodological approaches research accomplished towards school-age educare is mainly characterized by qualitative method. However, a considerable amount of information in quantitative terms is also available. The Swedish National Agency for Education is frequently undertaking evaluations of the activity, mainly by measuring the quality. Each year the National Agency publishes a compilation of descriptive data on preschool activities, school-age educare, schools and adult education.

Different Ways of Presenting Research

Results from research presented concerning the leisure-time centre can roughly be divided into three kinds of publications: doctoral theses, journal articles and, finally, surveys and evaluations. The following presentation of research will not cover all studies that have been accomplished in this area but try to give examples of knowledge produced to illustrate an overall picture of content and knowledge in this field. Some examples of recent research presented in edited volumes will also be given.

Research Themes

If leisure-time centres are specific educational practices, different from other educational practices, they should have special potentials for adding unique possibilities for the children. The themes in this presentation are of particular interest when estab-

lishing well founded arguments for discussing school-age educare in terms of educational quality and potentials for extended education. They are also interrelated and mutually dependent on each other. Awareness concerning the content in the leisure-time centre is fundamental to get knowledge of what kind of activities the children benefit from when struggling with their meaning making processes. As well as the teacher education making use of the research results, it also asks for new theoretically based knowing and in that way the teacher education demands of the researchers to produce knowledge. The professionals in leisure-time centres are interested in new findings as inspiration for discussing and elaborating their way of working, both for the sake of the children and when supervising students and young colleagues. The emerging collaborations between researchers from different countries contribute in different ways of viewing school-age educare and constitute a breeding ground for comparisons, with possibilities to distribute and share new knowledge.

But the following presentation also gives account for information from evaluations and studies presented in books. Research directed at the leisure-time centres in Sweden seldom aims for measuring quality. This assignment is designated as a public function and evaluations are commissioned yearly by the National Agency. Also, edited volumes cover an important function for making results accessible for, among others, policy-makers, teacher education students and professionals.

The research to be presented will be grouped according to three themes: *content and activities in the everyday practice of the leisure-time centre*, *teachers' professionalism*, constructions of knowledge in teacher education towards school-age educare, and *comparative research*.

Content and Activities in the Everyday Practice of the Leisure-Time Centre

In the early 80's questions about values and democracy were central and this is also reflected in the research (Klerfelt 2002). A notion taken for granted is that if the leisure-time centres accomplish educational activity of high quality this activity should promote equality between the children. The expectations are that enrolment in the leisure-time centre can give children general knowledge that can minimize their prejudices and support their social competences. Roland Svensson discusses questions about the function of the educational activities as reproduction of the society and how the public socialization of children and young people takes place in his thesis from 1981. Svensson asserts that children were omitted to public socialization due to education and expert knowledge. In this public socialization the state set the frameworks for right and wrong. Independent of social class all children were exposed for the same public socialization.

In several other early doctoral theses directed towards the leisure-time centre (Evaldsson 1993; Johansson 1984; Karlsudd 1999; Ursberg 1996) various aspects of the social practice in the leisure-time centre were studied. Johansson (1984) tries to elucidate the characteristics of the leisure-time centre and its work (p. 227). He is discussing the role of the leisure-time pedagogue and the content of the work in leisure-time centres and his study gives a contribution to the discussion of the importance of practical knowledge.

Interaction Between Children and Leisure-Time Pedagogues

By observing children's play and communication Ann-Carita Evaldsson (1993) studies children's social order in the ordinary life in two leisure-time centres. By drawing on theoretical traditions in anthropology (ethnography of speaking and language socialization) and sociology (ethnomethodology and micro-sociology), she demonstrates that language, conduct and culture are interrelated. Situated activities such as play, disputes, teasing, secrets and control events are interpreted as they convey how talk and actions are organized and organize the social order at the respective centre. The interdependence between children's ways of acting and the way the staff deals with the children are discussed.

Ursberg (1996) studies the interplay between the leisure-time pedagogues and the children. The investigation has a qualitative inception where five leisure-time pedagogues are observed via video recordings. Characteristics appear in the main category "social order and group control" which have a dominating and controlling function for attitude and behaviour. Based on these characteristics, three interaction styles are derived. "Interaction style 1" is characterized by the social order's having an established structure, i.e. there are well-established routines for attendance, division into groups, ordering of priorities, and division of labours, which are consistently used. "Interaction style 2" is characterized by a social order with an open and flexible structure. One basic prerequisite is the adult's sensitivity to the children's interests, desires, and capabilities. The children participate on all the different levels of the planning and the teacher functions as a partner in discussions, a coordinator, and an organizer. "Interaction style 3" is characterized by a social order with a structure that is closed and controlled by the adult. Ursberg finds that the leisure-time pedagogue has a Platonic image of social order, and a detailed agenda for how routine situations will turn out, how norms and rules are to be observed, and how the contents and organization of activities are to be implemented.

Annika Löfdahl, Tomas Saar, and Maria Hjalmarsson also study the leisure-time centre activities that take place beyond the ordinary school day: during early mornings and late afternoons as well as school holidays. Their purpose is to explore which norms are created, manifested and displayed in the everyday practices of leisure-time centres. Further, they explore how the leisure-time centres are shaped, which borders are created in the interplay between different practices/actors and the leisure-time centres, how the leisure-time pedagogues 'market' the activities and how this is met by parents, politicians, and head teachers. Saar/Löfdahl/Hjalmarsson (2012) discuss how knowledge possibilities are created in the relation between the pedagogue's descriptions of the activities offered at the after-school centres – *what is this?* – and the children's curiosity to explore the activities – *what might this be?*

In a recent study Björn Haglund (manuscript) has conducted six weeks of fieldwork at a leisure-time centre in order to describe the activity as a social system that is both a medium for and a result of recursive social practices. He also analyzes power relations and prominent discourses that contribute to producing and reproducing the social system. By making the discourses visible the ongoing analysis gives opportunities to mitigate inequalities concerning power relations between children and leisure-time pedagogues.

Maud Ihrskog (2006) focuses on children's peer relations concerning constructions of identity, friendship and socialisation processes. She also emphasized the

formation of meaning and informal learning processes in these relations. Also Marianne Dahl (2011) is researching children's social life in the leisure-time centre. She focuses both on community practices as a social construction and children's alliance-building within and between the community practices that emerge. In addition, she studies gender aspects that are communicated and become visible in these community practices.

Children's Perspectives

In recent years, educational research has paid attention to children's opportunities and rights to be heard. Pia Haudrup Christensen (2004) has coined this different way of conducted studies as the "methodological turn". Her pioneering work has inspired Anna Klerfelt and Björn Haglund (2011; 2014, manuscript) to accomplish a study with the aim of constructing knowledge about children's perspectives on the activity in their leisure-time centre. The analysis intends to compare how children and pedagogues talk about their mutually constructed activity with the purpose of revealing the prominent discourses in the studied leisure-time centres. Klerfelt and Haglund also have a methodological interest in elaborating a specific way of using walk-and-talk conversations with both children and pedagogues. The results are described through narratives that depict the children's discourses in their leisure-time activity. The emerging discourses show that children's perspectives are met in several respects but also that their perspectives are not always those that adults expect. The study also shows, however, that children's perspectives are, in some respects, ignored. Klerfelt and Haglund maintain that these results have a potential to contribute by helping to make children's voices heard as a tool to change the social practices in leisure-time centres.

Also Saar (forthcoming) is discussing the activities from the perspective of the children, and formulates the possibilities of a unique pedagogy for the leisure-time centre.

Play and Cultural Meaning Making

Research focusing what children really do in their leisure-time centres is limited. Play is a cornerstone in the activity and Eva Kane is currently conducting an action research study about play in school-age educare workers practice. She focuses on how school-age childcare staff develops their skills to facilitate play as a team. Her research questions deal with how staff talks about play and how they believe that they support play individually and collectively, but also questions about what language is used and developed when focusing on play. She also puts questions about how staff support play in their daily interactions with the children and what processes support the development of skills for facilitating play (Kane/Ljusberg/Larsson 2013).

Klerfelt (2007) is interested in children's cultural meaning making. She explores the encounter between institution and media culture and how this encounter is shaped in the interaction between children and pedagogues in leisure-time centres. Her thesis focuses on the interactive processes that arise when children and pedagogues meet in the educational practice to create stories in words and pictures with digital technology. She continues to research and discusses the leisure-time centre as a cultural practice and shows how children use commonly shared symbols created

in their educare activity to build up metaphors in their digital stories (2004, 2006, 2012). The metaphors are discussed as expressions of discourse and as a way of creating prerequisites for making of meaning and identity. The stories spring from the children's everyday practice in the leisure-time centre and mirror their contemporary media culture.

Children in Need of Special Support

In policy documents for childcare during the 80s it was pointed out that preschools and leisure-time centres were for all children. And one can praise Swedish childcare to live up to these intentions in this period. Integration of children in need of special support in these activities was considered as a natural task. The question was, rather, how well the integration functioned. But towards the end of the 90s this view changed. It was no longer given that children who needed special support should be integrated in the regular activities. The conditions change drastically. The mid-90s saw extensive cuts of staff, while in some leisure-time centres the number of children has doubled. The activities children in need of special support will be integrated into, looked different at the end of the 90s than fifteen years earlier. Even the ideological debate changed. Words such as democracy, solidarity, and community had been replaced by market terms of efficiency and cost consciousness (Klerfelt 2002). Despite this change Peter Karlsudd (1999) names the leisure-time centre "The last integration reserve" in his theses. The decrease of the integration of children with special needs are most pronounced in the school and the preschool, while relatively many children still are integrated in leisure-time centres. Karlsudd is one of the very few Swedish researchers using both quantitative and qualitative methods when involving 96 integrated children participating in 73 institutions in his study. In his analysis he uses symbolic interactionism, but also other theories that are common when researching questions of integration. In his theses Karlsudd describes integrated children's situation at leisure-time centres as good. 2011 Karlsudd repeats his study. This time the results are nowhere near as positive as in the first study. The results from the new study show that there has been an increased segregation of children from special schools in leisure-time centres, in line with the change in the compulsory education. The researcher believes that cuts in the economy and the restructuring have played an important role in this change and not least a change in the approach to how knowledge is constructed, which is represented by the schools that have had influence on the activity in the leisure time centre.

Eva Siljehag (2007) also deals with special education in her thesis but she underlines that special education in some respects depends on school-age educare. Her point of departure is to describe, explain, and understand the importance of preschool and school-age educare for special education.

Teachers' Professionalism

In the middle of the 80s the leisure-time pedagogue entered the world of the school. The meeting with the school was turbulent. Why were there so many conflicts? The reasons for cooperation between school and the leisure-time centre were both of economical and pedagogical nature. The teamwork between the schoolteacher and

the leisure-time pedagogue was officially regarded an agent for educational change to take place in schools. Several researchers took interest in the deepened cooperation and integration between the leisure-time centre and school and the collaboration between leisure-time pedagogues and teachers and the social practice that occurred (Calander, 1999; Haglund, 2004; Hansen, 1999; Munkhammar 2001).

In his thesis Finn Calander (1999) finds that the teacher position in the educational institution dominates the position of the leisure-time pedagogue. An unequal occupational relation has, thus, been established, which makes collaboration in interprofessional work teams harder. The aim of his study was to analyse how occupational function of the leisure-time pedagogue was constituted through oral interaction during planning sessions in interprofessional work teams. One work team in two schools in the same municipality was chosen, and followed during one term. The study had a social constructionist/constructivist perspective. Data was constructed as episodes, and the notion of strategic context, derived from Anthony Giddens theory of structuration, was used in data analysis. In his conclusion Calander states that leisure-time pedagogues wishing to keep or develop an occupational identity as leisure-time pedagogues could best do so outside of school and outside of interprofessional collaboration with teachers.

Hansen (1999) studies the same phenomenon, but having partly different explanations why the meeting between the school and the leisure-time centre were so turbulent. She explores the relation between the two different yet related professional cultures, teachers and leisure-time pedagogues, in their collaborative work in the Swedish primary school. It is an ethnographic case study of development of collaboration between the two teaching traditions, in two schools with somewhat different organisational structures. The emphasis is on the intersection between these two professions and their two professional cultures. The two categories of teachers have different conceptions of their professional identity; depending on which tradition they belong to. The primary school teacher focuses her function as a mediator in children's learning, while the pedagogue, from the pre-school tradition, sees herself mainly as a model for the child. Teachers and leisure-time pedagogues also build and shape the physical and mental environment for their work with the children from different perspectives. These are summarised in the metaphors of "school as a work place" and "recreational centre as a home". These differences, in turn, are mirrored in different strategies in collaborative situations, strategies that sometimes give rise to misunderstandings and overt or covert conflicts between the two groups, since the underlying conceptions of the professional identities are not brought to the surface. The teachers' professional culture is described, here, as a culture with relatively strong classification and framing. A line of indicators point in the same direction in relation to their professional history. Correspondingly we can discern parallels between the weaker classifications and framing that characterise the professional culture of the pedagogues and factor in the historical background and development of their professional practice.

Haglund (2004) explores leisure-time pedagogues' ways of working with the children in the school. In his study he describes how 13 leisure time pedagogues' experience their work, accomplish circle times and use content within the circles. The description and analysis are based on different data-collection methods including interviews, video-recording of a circle-time, stimulated recall of the video-recorded material, follow-up discussion, and video analysis. Giddens (1984) theory of struc-

turation has been a point of departure for the analysis. The study has resulted in the identification of three different forms of working practice, described as social directed practice, school directed practice and integrating practice. These working practices are regionalised and support different social positions of labour. These positions are: social fosterer, school assistant, school follower, and integrating renewer. The results indicate that teachers do not necessarily dominate the leisure time pedagogues as regards the content of their activities in circle time. It is possible for leisure time pedagogues to demarcate and control their own work. The results also indicate that it is possible for leisure-time pedagogues to contribute to the integration of the different traditions and in that way help change existing work in school.

We can conclude by noting that during the 90s the profession was studied in relation to the assignment of the schoolteacher due to the cooperation with the school. Today, the researchers' attention is directed towards the mission.

Hjalmarsson/Löfdahl (forthcoming) dwell upon a new practice of leisure-time centres and a clarified leisure-time pedagogue profession and its relation to extended demands on high quality, and they also explore leisure-time centres as an arena for cultural governance of childhood (Hjalmarsson/Löfdahl, 2013). Further, Hjalmarsson (2013) discusses a tension between aspects of voluntariness and government in leisure-time centres on the basis of the pedagogues' interpretations and understanding of their commission and work.

There are also three other ongoing studies exploring teachers' professionalism. Anneli Hippinen (manuscript) studies leisure-time pedagogues pedagogical strategies in the classroom as well as during school-age educare time. Her main research question deals with how leisure-time pedagogues' pedagogical strategies can be described. Catarina Andishmand (manuscript) is interested in how leisure-time pedagogues design the activity in the leisure-time centre in relation to the children's age, maturity, interests, needs and earlier experiences. The purpose of her study is to shed light upon how norms and social categories are expressed in the way pedagogues talk and act. Anna Klerfelt (manuscript 2014) are also interested in teachers' professionalism and by listening to leisure-time pedagogues' narratives about their mission. She tries to reveal if there is a shared general discourse in the educational traditions providing the basis for leisure-time centre activity. And if so, how do teachers in leisure-time centres describe their work and how do they say that they realize their intentions?

If there are goals to achieve, maybe assessment is needed and this is a task new to the leisure-pedagogues. Birgit Andersson (2010, 2013) presents a study that focuses on leisure-time pedagogues' experiences of assessment in school and leisure-time centres. She asserts that leisure-time pedagogues often assess the development of children's social competencies, activities in the centre and the leisure-time pedagogues' own contributions. These assessments are, however, mainly based on informal observations without any other documentation. She claims that the leisure-time pedagogues do not have an entirely positive attitude towards assessments and that one explanation for this is that assessments are closely associated with "...the type of assessments that were previously common in schools. [...] This is far from the sphere that leisure-time pedagogues are used to" (Andersson 2010, p. 205).

Comparative Research

Over the years many researchers have been interested in comparing the Swedish school-age educare system with other countries (Cohen et al 2004; Moss/Petrie/Poland 1999). Their interest is motivated by the fact that "...the educational and public policy whose discourse and value system are fairly typical of other Nordic countries, but less common elsewhere" (Moss/Petrie/Poland 1999, p. 48). And they continue:

Important considerations within developing policy and practice are decentralisation, the openness of the school as a community institution and the respect given to pupils and to parents as co-operators with professionals and as co-constructors of knowledge, rather than passive recipients of services. Because the discourses around children and childhood are so distinct and powerful in Sweden, we start (rather than conclude) this consideration of 'school inclusion' by exploring something of this rich and developing thinking on children and childhood, because these must be taken into account and given full weight if the aspirations of the Swedish educational system are to be understood. (1999, p. 48)

Other researchers interested in comparative studies are Haglund and Anderson (2009). They compare the content in Swedish leisure-time centres to after school programs in the US. In their article they relate the content in these institutions to definitions and discourses regarding meaningful leisure and learning. It is argued that "...the content of the activities and the way they are organized can be experienced as joyful and even fun, although many of these activities are developing, enriching and are conducted with a purpose over and above being fun" (Haglund/Anderson 2009, p. 127).

Marie Karlsson, Annika Löfdahl, Marja-Leena Böök, and Satu Perällä-Littunen study (manuscript) relations between before-and after-school care and childhood institutionalization in Sweden and Finland. In their ongoing project they specifically aim to study how responsibility for children's lives between home and school are negotiated and allocated in parents', children's and teachers' stories of before- and after-school care.

From research we now turn to evaluations directed at school-age educare.

Evaluations of the Swedish Leisure-Time Centre

The Swedish National Agency for Education is the central administrative authority for the Swedish public school system for children, young people and adults, as well as for preschool activities and school-age educare for school children. The National Agency has published several reports and evaluations concerning the activity in leisure-time centres since the responsibility for the leisure-time centres were transferred to the Ministry of Education and Science in 1996. One of the first reports was called 'Finns fritids? En utvärdering av kvalitet i fritidshem' (2000). The provocative title, translated to English, is 'Do leisure-time centre exist? An evaluation of quality within leisure-time centres', aimed to critically discuss the content of activity in the leisure-time centres since the Swedish National Agency for Education did not consider the leisure-time centres to reach the expected standard. The Swedish National Agency for Education has repeatedly criticized certain aspects of the leisure-time centre (for example 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010). Criticized aspects have, just like mentioned earlier, been the increasing child to staff ratio, but also the fact that the staff

had no time to take part in the children's activities and that the activities often only consisted of free play. The Swedish National Agency for Education also asserted that free play is valuable but asked for a variation of activities and the agency also criticized the municipalities for their lack of objectives and evaluations concerning leisure-time centres.

More Recent Research Presented in Edited Volumes

The scarcity of reports and constructions of knowledge directed to leisure-time centres and the pedagogy developed in this practice has also resulted in a shortage of teaching media, a shortage that university teachers interested in this pedagogy have taken seriously. Teachers interested in school-age educare employed at Swedish universities have, for decades, connected to form national network. This network is a committed and vibrant organisation that meets annually and works closely and discusses actual issues in the education of teachers towards work in leisure-time centres. One issue discussed in recent years is the lack of publications of research-based findings on leisure-time centres and school-age educare. To cover this gap several edited volumes have been formulated and we can expect more to come.

6 Reflections

Modern theories emphasising the importance of meaning-making processes in everyday practices and changed conditions for the profession and the teacher education imply changed prerequisites for research directed towards school-age educare in Sweden. These changed prerequisites have caused a newly awakened interest for the educational mission of this field.

Wants and Requirements

Grants for research and implementation of higher education in the shape of master programmes and post graduate studies are important bricks in the work for constructing a solid field of research. The lack of these two important constituents holds back the development of the field and requires actions from the national policymakers, in order to be able to function as tools for initiating change in both the activity for children attending school-age educare and the teacher education.

Support From the Swedish National Agency for Education

The Swedish National Agency for Education has, in a commendable way, highlighted the importance of children's rights to educare activity of high quality, parents' rights of good care for their children, and the rights for the leisure-time pedagogues to carry out their intentions to build an inspiring, challenging, and attractive activity for the children. As mentioned before, the National Agency has evaluated the Swed-

ish municipalities in a number of reports. These evaluations have shown that public subventions intended for the activity in leisure-time centres have been assigned for activities in the preschools and the schools and not to leisure-time centres which was the purpose. Leisure-time centres have suffered significant cuts which in some places have resulted in large groups of children in the leisure-time centres, decreases in the quality of the activity, often run in substandard facilities which has resulted in poor working environment for the leisure-time pedagogues and the children. Different parts of the activity have been subjected to careful scrutiny and political leaders have been criticized. These criticisms have led to some municipalities designating leisure-time centres as a strategic area and promptly allotting means to improve the situation, such as reducing the number of children in groups and ensuring that the leisure-time pedagogues receive training. Two big Swedish municipalities, Stockholm and Malmö, have also evaluated their own educational outcomes and reached the conclusion that school-age educare is one important factor for school success and wellbeing (Falkner /Ludvigsson, 2012; Isaksson, 2012).

Research Gaps

In the existing stock of research covering school-age educare in Swedish leisure-time centres research gaps do exist. The following section will highlight some issues that should be researched more thoroughly. Most research directed at school-age educare has neglected the children's perspectives concerning their everyday activity in their leisure-time centre. This means that the view from a vital group, the children, has, to a great extent, not been taken into consideration when it comes to content, activities, and opportunities to develop social skills and new interests in the leisure-time centre. To find out how children reason concerning the time they spend in their leisure-time centre is of importance in future research.

Another issue to study is the content of the activities in leisure-time centres. More research should be directed towards describing the social practice and the activities in leisure-time centres and how and in what way this educational practice can make a difference when it comes to children's making of meaning.

An additional issue to research is the profession of the leisure-time pedagogues/teachers towards work in leisure-time centres. Further, another issue could be how responsible civil servants at a national and municipal level regard their understandings of official policy documents considering the leisure-time centre. In other words, researchers need to try to find out the opinions of both the pedagogues and the policy-makers concerning the meaning of the activity in the leisure-time centre and the way it is governed.

Important Points for International Collaboration

From a Swedish point of view an international collaboration is of great interest.

Research collaborations could be accomplished through comparative studies concerning for example the construction of knowledge in leisure-time centres, the profession, the teacher education towards work in educare activities, government and policy documents, and quality issues.

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A Developmental Study of Expanded Learning Time, Norm-Breaking, and Antisocial Behavior

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Abstract: Expanded learning time (ELT) refers to a longer school day, week, or year. ELT schools are becoming common in the United States and aim to provide all students with additional opportunities for learning, recreation, and enrichment. ELT schools differ from after-school programs that take place immediately following the regular school day and serve a select group of students. Research on ELT schools has tended to focus on academic outcomes. This study examines whether extended school time relates to norm-breaking (e.g., cheating) and antisocial behavior (e.g., violence). A nationally representative sample of 496 schools from the 2007 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) data was used and involved students in Grades 4 and 8. Results showed a longer school day predicted high norm-breaking behavior for 4th-graders. For 8th-graders, a longer school year predicted high norm-breaking and antisocial behaviors. Results underscore studying social outcomes to evaluate ELT schools.

Keywords: expanded learning time, antisocial behavior, developmental, out-of-school, school curriculum

Expanded learning time (ELT) refers to a longer school day, week, or year. In the United States, children spend an average of 6.5 hours a day, 5 days a week, and 180 days a year in school. That amounts to an average of 1,170 hours per year at school. After-school programs also provide educational and recreational services in the school setting, but this occurs immediately following the regular school day and services are directed primarily to select groups of children. In contrast, ELT schools are designed to seamlessly integrate school and after-school time with the goal of redesigning the school curriculum for the entire student body (Citizen Schools, 2013; Stonehill/Lauver/Donahue/Naftzer/MeElvain/Stephandis, 2011). There has been considerable debate between organizations advocating for the benefits of after-school programs (e.g., Afterschool Alliance, 2012) who maintain after-school should not be more school and those arguing in favor ELT (e.g., National Center on Time and Learning, 2011b) who contend all children deserve extended, individualized and engaging learning experiences.

Although decades of literature have explored the relation between the amounts of time children spend in school and developmental outcomes – primarily academic performance such as school academic achievement – a review of the evidence does not yield strong conclusions. Specifically, Patall, Cooper, and Allen (2010) summarized prior reviews, and conducted a synthesis of recent studies, on the link between ELT and academic achievement. The authors concluded that, despite weak methodo-

logical designs and mixed findings, with some program showing robust findings, the literature indicates there may be a small, positive effect of ELT on academic achievement. Moreover, the associated benefits of ELT might be most apparent for economically disadvantaged children. Finally, they note that only four studies examined non-academic achievement measures and recommended, "Future research should make efforts to empirically assess the impact of extending school time on various non-academic achievement outcomes." (p. 428). Nevertheless, the daily schedules and outcome assessments of ELT schools continue to focus on academic content (e.g., Herrera/Linden/Arbreton/Baldwin Grossman, 2011; Hoxie/DeBellis/Traill, 2011).

This paper begins to fill that gap by considering non-academic outcomes in relation to ELT; namely norm-breaking that involves less severe school infractions (e.g., skipping class, cheating, and profanity) and antisocial behaviors that involve more severe school infractions (e.g., vandalism, theft, and violence). The introduction is divided into three main parts. First, we discuss the recent expansion of ELT schools with particular attention to political issues and influences. Second, literature assessing whether ELT schools and after-school programs and activities such as sports, arts, and music relate to norm-breaking and antisocial behavior for young people is overviewed. Finally, following Patall et al. (2010), the potential moderating roles of age and socioeconomic status are considered in this relation.

1 Political Issues and Influences in the Expansion of ELT Schools

ELT schools have been present in the United States for decades (Patall et al., 2010). However, the number of ELT schools has increased in recent years. The increase makes the research aimed at understanding whether and how attending ELT schools relates to developmental outcomes timely and important. One reason for the increase is the suboptimal performance of the United States on international academic achievement tests such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA, 2009) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS, 2011). Advocates of ELT schools suggest that the extra time can increase the use of existing facilities, provide more time for learning and enrichment activities, offer additional opportunities for staff professional development, and allow for comprehensive school reform that restructures the school day (e.g., Bishop/Worner/Weber, 1988; National Center on Time & Learning, 2011a). Whether ELT schools engaging in such practices are enough for American children to better compete in a global society has yet to be determined (Herrera et al., 2011). Although the United States' performance on international academic achievement tests has remained relatively stable, the ELT expansion has begun recently so it is premature to draw conclusions.

A second reason is the growing federal and local support for ELT schools (National Center on Time & Learning, 2012). There is bipartisan support for ELT schools in the U.S. Senate (U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, 2011) and President Obama's Administration (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). For example, the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21stCCLC) funds have historically been available to states for the purpose of fund-

ing after-school programs. However, because there are a large number of “failing schools” under the U.S. education policy known as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB; over 30,000 schools have failed to make adequate yearly progress (Stonehill et al., 2011)) alternative uses of educational funding have been explored.

In 2011, President Obama’s Administration began offering flexibility to states in the form of educational waivers that provide relief from aspects of NCLB in exchange for state plans that support components of the Administration’s college and career readiness goals. Among the flexibility options, states can choose to use 21st CCLC funds for the purpose of developing ELT schools or continue to maintain and develop after-school programs. This broadening in the use of the 21stCCLC funds represents an alternative effort to enhance learning and development. However, there is some debate as to whether adding more time or using existing time more effectively (or both) is the answer (Bishop et al., 1988; National Center on Time and Learning, 2011a).

In addition, ELT is now a component for turning around chronically low-performing schools in the U.S. (Stonehill et al., 2011). The most disadvantaged children attending the poorest schools frequently have the fewest opportunities for learning after 3 PM. The schools they do attend are often focused on remedial education instead of a well-rounded, whole child approach (The After-School Corporation (TASC), 2010). The U.S. Department of Education (2010) awards School Improvement Grants (SIGs) to states on a competitive basis. States must follow one of four models to improve their persistently low performing schools; namely, turnaround, restart, school closure, or transformation models. Approximately 92% of SIG schools choose the turnaround or transformation options that require extending school time. “Both the turnaround model and the transformation model require an LEA [local educational agency, often a school district] to provide increased learning time, which is generally defined as using a longer school day, week, or year schedule to significantly increase the total number of school hours to include additional time for instruction in core academic subjects; instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities; and teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development.” (U.S. Department of Education, 2010, p. 16).

Finally, at state and district levels, support for ELT schools has also increased. For example, in 2005 Massachusetts supported the Mass2020 ELT initiative that has added 300 hours to the school year (Mass2020, 2013). The program takes place in 19 schools serving over 10,000 students. Likewise, in partnership with community organizations, TASC’s ELT initiative involves 17 public schools in New York City and adds more than 60 days of school per year (Hoxie et al., 2011). A final example is the Citizen Schools that serves 4,300 children and is now located in states across the nation including California, Illinois, Massachusetts, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, and Texas. These programs target low-income young people who experience an extended school day that ends around 6pm. Approximately 300 hours of instruction in homework, math, literacy, and apprenticeships are added to the school year (Herrera et al., 2011).

2 Relation between ELT with Norm-Breaking and Antisocial Behavior

The increase in ELT schools and related expenditures raises the question of whether they impact youth development. As noted earlier, a number of studies examined the link between ELT schools and academic achievement, but few have studied social behavior outcomes (Patall et al., 2010). Here we focus on two outcomes that, if reduced, have potential positive effects in terms of long-term financial and social returns for society. Specifically, there is reason to think that ELT schools could influence school-based norm-breaking (e.g., truancy, cheating) and antisocial behaviors (e.g., property offenses, violence). However, the influence of ELT schools in these domains may differ for children and adolescents.

Levels of cognitive and psychological development are likely to shape the choices that young people make. Many fundamental cognitive skills emerge in childhood and continue to develop through adolescence. For instance, the prefrontal cortex that is involved in planning, judgment and decision-making is thought to mature into late adolescence (e.g., Steinberg/Scott, 2003). Executive functioning that includes aspects such as the initiation of activity, self-regulation, and goal setting that allows for the capacity to plan actions, and the ability to focus attention for prolonged periods of time, develops rapidly throughout childhood but is not fully mature until mid-adolescence or later (Anderson, 2002). Similarly, effortful control that includes the ability to inhibit tendencies to grow distracted, sit still and focus attention, and delay gratification, develops across childhood into adolescence. These abilities relate to children's success in school such that difficulties in these areas predict frustration and diminished school liking (Valiente/Lemery-Chalfant/Castro, 2007).

In ELT schools, the elongated school day may "wear down" children's cognitive abilities to focus on schoolwork, increase their frustration, diminish school liking, and detract from their ability to inhibit behavioral responses. The result may be increased levels of norm-breaking behavior during school such as "acting out", talking back to the teacher, and avoiding school. As is true in the United States, this may be particularly true when children attending ELT schools are aware that their peers are attending schools with a traditional schedule. By mid-adolescence these cognitive capacities may have matured somewhat permitting youth to demonstrate greater ability to manage their behavior and avoid misconduct as a result of an elongated school day.

ELT schools may have a different impact on more serious antisocial behaviors such as property crimes and violence. These behaviors are relatively uncommon in childhood but increase markedly in adolescence (Uniform Crime Reports, 2011). Attending an ELT school may reduce the likelihood that adolescents engage in antisocial behavior. For example, Fox and Newman (1997) showed that the hours following school dismissal are the peak time for juvenile violence. Adolescents attending ELT schools would be in school and supervised by adults during that peak time and therefore not involved in perpetrating (or witnessing) the violence in the school or community. In addition, some ELT schools devote time to enrichment activities such as music, sports, art, and apprenticeships as part of their daily schedule. These types of activities have been linked to a reduction in crime and antisocial behavior

(Mahoney, 2000; Mahoney/Stattin, 2000) and an increase in positive youth development (Larson, 2000; Lerner/Lerner/Almerigi et al., 2005).

There is some support that the summer months, characterized by warmer weather, may augment crime and violence (e.g., Rotton/Cohn, 2004). There is also support for Routine Activity Theory (RAT) which posits that young people are most likely to engage in risky behaviors when they are in unstructured situations with peers in the absence of adults (Hipp/Bauer/Curran/Bollen, 2013; Osgood, Wilson/Bachman/O'Malley/Johnston, 1996). Unsupervised time increases from childhood to adolescence. For youth in self-care, out-of-school and summertime afford opportunity for the components of RAT to occur. Accordingly, ELT schools that extend the length school year into the summer months may protect adolescents from these risks and reduce antisocial behavior (Parente/Sheppard/Mahoney, 2012).

Finally, for academic outcomes the impact of attending an ELT school has sometimes been greater for disadvantaged children (Patall et al., 2010). In the after-school activity literature, the associated reduction in antisocial behavior and crime has also been most apparent for high risk youth (e.g., Mahoney, 2000). However, the existing literature has not examined interactions between ELT, economic disadvantage, and norm-breaking or antisocial behavior outcomes. Possible interactions among these aspects are explored in this study with any associated benefits of ELT expected to be more apparent for economically disadvantaged youth compared with their more advantaged counterparts (Patall et al., 2010).

3 Summary and Significance of Expected Findings

Children are expected to show increased norm-breaking behaviors as the length of the school day increases. Adolescents are expected to show less antisocial behavior as the school day and school year lengthen. The possible benefits of ELT might be most apparent for economically disadvantaged youth. There are no expectations between a longer school week and either norm-breaking or antisocial behavior for children or adolescents.

If these findings hold, then they have implications for the policy debate surrounding the expansion of after-school programs and/or ELT schools. Specifically, because after-school programs and activities have shown associated reductions in antisocial behaviors (Darling, 2005; Fredricks/Eccles, 2006; Gottfredson/Gerstenblith Soulé/Worner/Lu, 2004; Mahoney, 2000), then support for these types of programs might increase if ELT schools are found to be associated with increased norm-breaking and antisocial behavior. At the least, the findings would suggest that investments in ELT schools need to be undertaken with an eye towards understanding and preventing the occurrence of problematic social behaviors. These issues have heretofore not been explored. Therefore, beginning to develop a knowledge base around the social aspects of ELT schooling should help to develop schools that benefit the whole child.

4 Method

Dataset and Participants

Data for this study come from the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) which began in 1995 and provides a rich source of information. TIMSS reports every four years on 4th- and 8th-grade students in 59 countries worldwide. Data for this study come from the most recent, available wave of data collected in 2007 for 4th- and 8th-grade students in the United States. The U.S. sample included both public and private schools, randomly selected and weighted to be representative of the nation. In total, 257 4th-grade U.S. schools and 7,896 4th-grade students, along with 239 8th-grade U.S. schools and 7,377 8th-grade students participated in TIMSS 2007. School-level data for TIMSS 2007 was used for this study (i.e., the unit of analysis is the school). Additional details on the research sample and design are available from the TIMSS 2007 Technical Report (U.S. Department of Education, 2009)

Procedure

All data were collected through questionnaires completed by a school principal or administrator. Parallel questions were asked at the 4th- and 8th-grade.

Measures

Expanded learning time was assessed through three questions: (1) How many days per *year* is your school open for instruction? (2) What is the total instruction time, excluding breaks, in a typical *day*? (3) In one calendar *week*, how many days is the school open for instruction. Little variability existed in the length of the school week (e.g., 97% of 4th-grade schools and 98% of 8th-grade schools followed a 5-day school week). As a result, this variable was not included in the analyses.

Norm-breaking involved the average of seven items rated on a 5-point scale (1 = never, 5 = daily). The items were as follows: arriving late at school, absenteeism, skipping class, violating dress code, classroom disturbance, cheating, and profanity. These items form an index, not a scale, and therefore alpha reliability was not assessed.

Antisocial behavior involved the average of six items rated on a 5-point scale (1 = never, 5 = daily). The items were as follows: vandalism, theft, intimidation or verbal abuse of other students, physical injury to other students, intimidation or verbal abuse of teachers or staff, physical injury to teachers or staff. These items form an index, not a scale, and therefore alpha reliability was not assessed.

Demographic Controls: Several control variables were included to account for potential school-level differences in norm-breaking and/or antisocial behavior as well as extended learning time (e.g., Kellam/Ling/Merisca/Brown/Ialongo, 1998; Olweus, 1994; Patall et al., 2012).

Economic disadvantage was determined by principals' responses to the question "Around the first of October, 2006, what percentage of students at this school was eligible for free or reduced-price lunches through the National School Lunch Program?" Responses were coded on 5-point scale (1 = less than 10%, 5 = more than 75%).

Three additional school-level demographic variables were included in the analyses to control for aspects related to ELT and the outcomes of interest (e.g., Leithwood & Jantzi, 2009; Uniform Crime Reports, 2011). *Geographic population* was assessed as the number of people in the geographic area where the school was located and was coded on a 6-point scale (1 = 3000 people or fewer, 6 = more than 500,000 people). *School enrollment* was assessed as the number of students enrolled in the school and ranged from 41 to 1,831 (Grade 4) and 90 to 2,175 (Grade 8). *Public or private school* was coded dichotomously (1 = public school, 2 = private school). Collectively these variables predict rates of crime and violence, curricular diversity, attendance, discipline problems, and student participation in voluntary activities.

5 Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 shows correlations, means, and standard deviations for all study variables. Norm-breaking and antisocial behaviors during 4th- and 8th-grade were significantly related to the demographic controls (i.e., area population, school enrollment, public/private school, and free/reduced lunch) in the expected directions. In terms of the main study questions, for 4th-graders, length of the school year showed a positive and significant correlation with norm-breaking. For 8th-graders, length of the school day showed a positive and significant correlation with norm-breaking and antisocial behaviors. However, given the significant associations between control variables and outcomes, a regression analysis where ELT predicts norm-breaking and anti-social behavior and accounts for the control variables was called for. This analysis can also test the hypothesized interaction between school economic status and ELT.

Regression Analyses

Ordinary least squared regressions were performed to predict norm-breaking and antisocial behavior for 4th- and 8th-graders, respectively. The analysis accounted for control variables and included a term for the interaction between school economic status and ELT. For Grade 4 schools, Table 2 shows that beyond controls, length of the school day and the free/reduced lunch x length of the school day interaction were significant predictors of norm-breaking. These results indicate that *for 4th-graders longer school days relate to more norm-breaking and the association is stronger for schools with a lower proportion of children receiving free/reduced lunch*. For antisocial behavior ELT was not a significant predictor.

For Grade 8 schools, Table 3 shows that the length of the school year and the free/reduced lunch x length of the school year interaction were significant predictors

of norm-breaking. These results indicate that for 8th-graders a longer school year relates to more norm-breaking and this association is stronger for schools with a lower proportion of adolescents receiving free/reduced lunch. For antisocial behavior in Grade 8, like norm-breaking, the length of the school year and the free/reduced lunch x length of the school year interaction were also significant predictors of antisocial behavior. *These results indicate that, for 8th-graders, a longer school year relates to more norm-breaking and antisocial behavior and this association is stronger for schools with a lower proportion of adolescents receiving free/reduced lunch.*

6 Discussion

This was one of few studies to use a nationally representative dataset to evaluate relations between school-level ELT and non-academic achievement outcomes. It is one of the only studies on this topic to employ a developmental design to examine norm-breaking and antisocial behavior in two cohorts of young people. The length of the school day and year were examined in relation to the externalizing behavior outcomes. The length of the school week was also considered, but found to vary little between schools. This indicates that ELT may primarily occur through adjusting the length of the school day or year.

The main finding is that, according to school principal or administrator reports and controlling for several school-level demographic factors, *ELT schools were not associated with a reduction in norm-breaking or antisocial behavior for Grade 4 or Grade 8 schools. In contrast, there was significant evidence that a longer school day or year was linked to increased norm-breaking and/or antisocial behavior.* Thus, in a clarification to Patall and colleagues' (2010) conclusion that ELT programs "do no harm" with respect to academic achievement, the associations may be different for some social behavior outcomes. That the same context may have different impacts depending on the outcome considered has been found in other studies of out-of-school time (e.g., Mahoney, 2011).

Evaluation of Study Expectations

Before discussing the findings in relation to study expectations, it is important to note that this study represents a first step toward understanding the relation between ELT and behavioral outcomes. As such, the study is limited to assessing whether an association exists. Subsequent steps would require more rigorous designs (e.g., longitudinal, experimental), replication, generalization to different populations, and comparison of different approaches to time use in ELT schools.

With respect to norm-breaking the study expectations were supported. For Grade 4, schools with a longer school *day* positively predicted norm-breaking behavior. In contrast, by Grade 8, norm-breaking was no longer associated with a longer school day. This is consistent with the proposal that executive functions and cognitive skills involved in regulating attention and behavioral inhibition continue to mature through adolescence. It appears that youth reach a point of maturity allowing them tolerate the longer school day. Also as expected, in Grade 4 schools, antisocial behavior was

unrelated to ELT. This was anticipated by the fact that more serious deviant behavior is relatively uncommon in childhood but increases rapidly across adolescence. However, contrary to expectations, in Grade 8, norm-breaking and antisocial behaviors were positively predicted by a longer school year. It was expected that ELT for Grade 8 schools would be related to relatively low norm-breaking and antisocial behavior. The effect sizes for each finding ranged from moderate to strong. The results suggest that although ELT may have a small, positive association with student academic achievement (Patall et al., 2010), the social behavioral consequences of adding time to the school day for young people could be more substantial and warrants further study.

Why should a longer school year differentially relate to externalizing behavior for children and adolescents? As a post-hoc explanation, the elongated school year may relate to youth norm-breaking and antisocial behavior for social, rather than cognitive, reasons. An expanded school year ordinarily involves extending school into the summer months (e.g., one school in the sample added 60 days to the calendar year). As noted in the introduction, summer can be a season of risk and adolescents are more likely to engage in antisocial behaviors than their childhood counterparts. A longer school year could aggravate these circumstances. Specifically, a school year that cuts into summer (ordinarily the longest period of discretionary time) would restrict the autonomy, freedom, and opportunities that come with the transition to adolescence (e.g., more self-care, hanging out with peers, diversity of extracurricular activities, work, and romantic relationships). Schools that extend the length of the school year need to offer a curriculum that is at least as interesting as the alternative ways that youth like to spend their free time during the summer. Moreover, because youth are often aware that other adolescents their age have finished the school year weeks or even months earlier, this may accentuate the frustration and desire to “act out” at school in minor and more severe ways.

However, we do not know what proportions of youth are responsible for the relatively more frequent occurrence of norm-breaking and antisocial behavior in ELT schools during Grade 8. For example, approximately 5–6% of offenders are responsible for about 50% of crime (e.g., Farrington/Ohlin/Wilson, 1986; Moffit, 1993). It may be a fraction of youth in ELT schools that are aggravated by a longer school year. If so, the ELT school curriculum needs to be organized so that it fits the needs, abilities, and interests of all students during the summertime.

Associations and interactions between economic disadvantage and ELT with norm-breaking and antisocial behavior were also explored. For both Grades 4 and 8 schools with a greater proportion of students receiving free/reduced lunch had substantially higher norm-breaking and, for Grade 8, antisocial behaviors as well. However, these findings interacted with ELT. For Grade 4, a longer day predicted norm-breaking more strongly for schools with lower proportion of students receiving free/reduced lunch. Likewise, for Grade 8, norm-breaking and antisocial behaviors were higher in schools with lower proportion of students receiving free/reduced lunch. The effect sizes for these results were strong and likely reflect the powerful role of economic disadvantage on the development of externalizing behavior problems in young people.

Although analyses of these interactions were exploratory, the higher levels of externalizing problems in ELT schools with a lower proportion of disadvantaged students may seem counter-intuitive. One explanation is that advantaged students

would, on average, have higher academic performance than their disadvantaged counterparts (e.g., Alexander/Entwisle/Olson, 2001). As a result, they may feel the extended school year – particularly if it merely extends the school day curriculum – is unnecessary. ELT could be seen as preventing them from participating in more desirable summer opportunities such as organized activities (e.g., sports), paid employment, etc. leading to frustration and externalizing behaviors. In contrast, disadvantaged students report wanting to participate in out-of-school programs that emphasize opportunities to complete homework, stay off the streets, learn new skills, and meet with peers (e.g., Borden/Perkins/Villarruel/Stone, 2005). ELT programs likely offer such opportunities and, therefore, could be desirable for disadvantaged youth. However, this post-hoc explanation is speculative and more work is needed to replicate and understand the interactions. Indeed, this study could not determine whether ELT is associated with greater benefits for schools with more disadvantaged youth, greater risks for schools with more advantaged youth, or both.

Curriculum Content and Organization

It is generally agreed that adding time to the school year is not necessarily the key to improving student outcomes. The time must also be used well (NCTL, 2011). For example, quality organized activities are linked to improved social outcomes not because they take up time, but because they offset risks and build social-academic skills (Durlak/Weissberg/Pachan, 2010; Smith/Akiva/Sugar/Devaney/Peck et al., 2013). The content of ELT schools is also important. Ideally, ELT schools will offer a diverse curriculum across the school day that includes organized activities such as sports, music, and art that are integrated with more traditional academic subjects. This diversity may be most beneficial if it occurs regularly and is provided by individuals trained to deliver quality programming.

For example, in divvying up the responsibilities for different areas of the curriculum, it has been argued that community partners may have greater skill in providing quality organized activities compared to school-day classroom teachers (e.g., Jacobsen/Blank, 2013). As a result, some have concluded that school-community partnerships are desirable for ELT schools and this idea received bipartisan support from the U.S. Senate HELP Committee (2011). Nonetheless, the stated contribution of school-community partnerships within ELT schools comes primarily from Internet reports and anecdotal evidence. ELT schools are not organized after-school programs and counter arguments to school-community partnerships can be made. For example, school-day teachers often lead extracurricular activities and can offer sports, arts, music, dance, cheerleading, etc. within an ELT framework. Thus, the key is whether ELT schools have a quality, well-rounded curriculum. Ultimately, we need empirical research that yields publishable, verifiable results demonstrating the effectiveness of school-community partnerships.

This study was seldom able to look beyond school-level estimates of time. For instance, school schedules, estimates of availability and participation in organized activities, or whether school-community partnerships had been established were not provided in the dataset. Including this information may elucidate the conditions under which ELT schools are, and are not, likely to be associated with positive social (and academic) outcomes. This may also shed light on how best to organize the

school curriculum for young people – particularly those at-risk for poor developmental outcomes such as economically disadvantaged youth. If a longer school day or year leads to burnout, fatigue, aggravation and misconduct, then providing active, engaging activities during those periods of peak problem behavior may reduce their occurrence.

Overall, we need to follow an ecological approach to the study of ELT schools. The approach emphasizes the study of individuals in context (Bronfenbrenner/Morris, 2006) and is concerned with the “fit” between individual needs and interests at different developmental levels and how well the context is able to match those needs (Eccles/Midgley/Wigfield et al., 1993). From this perspective, individuals are viewed as integrated systems and, for example, academic functioning and social behavior co-effect one another. Thus, ELT schools aiming to boost academic achievement cannot ignore the role that student conduct plays in the learning process. More broadly, the approach calls for simultaneous examination of the diversity of curricula, young people, and developmental outcomes linked to a variety of ELT schools. This information should enhance our understanding of different models of effective ELT schools for different young people and outcomes.

Limitations

There are limitations to this study. First, the TIMSS dataset is cross-sectional and causal interpretations are not warranted. Despite employing a nationally representative sample and making developmental comparisons of two age cohorts, the analyses could not control for prior adjustment or past school attendance. Moreover, although youth are unlikely to select the school they attend, their parents may influence school choice. Schools that offer longer school days or years may differ in other ways that could affect how students behave. In general, the selection process into ELT schools or features that differentiate ELT and non-ELT schools are not well understood and represent an area for further study.

Second, principals or school administrators completed the surveys and reported norm-breaking and antisocial behaviors occurring in the school context. They may be the single best source for reporting school-level phenomena and norm-breaking or antisocial behaviors related to ELT that occur in the school context. But, they did not report school-level information on students’ behavior outside of the school. It is possible that in-school and out-of-school externalizing behaviors linked to ELT may differ and could even be inversely related. For example, Osgood and colleagues (1996) found that youth antisocial behavior was highest in out-of-school settings without an agenda, involving peers, and lacking adult supervision. Students attending schools with shorter school days or years would probably have more opportunities to experience these risky out-of-school conditions. Thus, overall levels of norm-breaking and antisocial behaviors in the lives of these students are unknown. Ideally the timing of these behaviors both within and beyond the school setting as reported by multiple informants would help to isolate the role of ELT in the development of norm-breaking and antisocial behaviors.

Third, data on the length of the school year does not specify the time at which the extra days were added. Although this ordinarily means a longer school year that

extends into the summer, it is not possible to tell. For example, some additional days could reflect shortened holiday or seasonal breaks occurring during the school year.

Finally, we note that the data came from the 2007 TIMSS survey – the most current one available. However, the 2011 TIMSS is scheduled to be released soon. Given recent changes in ELT policies described earlier, a comparison of these results between 2007 and 2011 datasets would be of interest.

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Table 1. *Study variables correlations for 4th grade (bottom diagonal) and 8th grade (top diagonal) schools.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Area Population	1.00	.37***	.34***	-.19**	.11	.08	.08	.17*
2. School Enrollment	.30***	1.00	-.30***	.15*	.24***	.16**	.38***	.44***
3. Private School	.15*	-.27***	1.00	-.57***	.02	-.11	-.56***	-.54***
4. Free Lunch	.02	.18**	-.50***	1.00	.05	.10	.42***	.44***
5. Length of School Year	.05	.19**	-.29***	.27***	1.00	.10	-.00	.08
6. Length of School Day	.06	.03	.11	.03	.03	1.00	.16*	.14*
7. Norm-breaking	.21**	.20**	-.17**	.40***	.21**	.10	1.00	.77***
8. Anti-social Behavior	.15*	.13*	-.31***	.44***	.20**	.05	.68***	1.00
<i>M</i> Grade	2.98	437.40	1.17	3.01	179.01	5.56	2.32	1.73
<i>SD</i>	1.66	252.58	.37	1.38	4.53	.68	.56	.46
Range	1-6	41-1831	1-2	1-5	165-215	4-7	1.29-4.71	1.00-4.50
<i>M</i> Grade 8	2.86	489.97	1.27	2.96	179.39	5.80	2.71	1.94
<i>SD</i>	1.62	333.92	.44	1.32	7.77	.65	.80	.51
Range	1-6	104-2175	1-2	1-5	167-240	4-8	1.43-4.86	1.00-3.83

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, $p < .001$

Table 2. *Ordinary least squares regression models (N = 257) predicting norm-breaking and antisocial behavior for Grade 4 schools. Standardized coefficients are shown.*

Variables	Norm-breaking		Antisocial Behavior	
	β	SE	β	SE
Area Population	.19**	.02	.17**	.02
School Enrollment	.14	.00	-.03	.00
Private School	-.02	.12	-.16	.10
Free/Reduced Lunch	1.99***	.22	.39	.18
Length of School Year	.07	.01	.06	.01
Length of School Day	.55**	.14	.06	.11
Length of School Day x Free/Reduced Lunch	-1.74**	.04	-.04	.03
R^2	.26		.24	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Note. The interaction between school year x reduced/free lunch term was dropped from the equation due to multi-collinearity with the school day x reduced/free lunch term.

Table 3. *Ordinary least squares regression models (N = 239) predicting norm-breaking and antisocial behavior for Grade 8 schools. Standardized coefficients are shown.*

Variables	Norm-breaking		Antisocial Behavior	
	β	SE	β	SE
Area Population	.20**	.03	.28***	.02
School Enrollment	.16*	.00	.18*	.00
Private School	-.36***	.15	-.38***	.10
Free/Reduced Lunch	7.72***	1.30	5.12*	.85
Length of School Year	.70**	.02	.50*	.02
Length of School Day	.07	.06	.02	.04
Length of School Year x Free/Reduced Lunch	-7.58***	.01	-4.93*	.01
R^2	.47		.48	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Note. The interaction between school day x reduced/free lunch term was dropped from the equation due to multi-collinearity with the school year x reduced/free lunch term.

Narrowing the Gap? The Role of All-Day Schools in Reducing Educational Inequality in Germany

Natalie Fischer, Désirée Theis, & Ivo Züchner

Abstract: The introduction of all day-schools in Germany was due in part to the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study 2000, which revealed a striking social inequality in the German education system. It was expected that in all-day schools especially “at risk” groups would be supported and thus the gap in achievement based on socioeconomic status (SES) would be narrowed; however, few studies have explored this. In this paper the potential of all-day secondary schools is investigated through analysis of data from a nationwide study on the development of all-day schools (StEG [Studie zur Entwicklung von Ganztagschulen]). The findings support the idea that all-day schools could help to narrow the gap between low and high SES students in several ways.

Keywords: all-day schools, extracurricular activities, social inequality

1 Introduction

In virtually no other OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) country were the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2000 as influential as in Germany. PISA revealed that in Germany a student’s chance of success at school is highly dependent on his or her socioeconomic status (SES) (Baumert/Schümer 2001). It also showed that socioeconomic background is an important predictor of school performance at the school level. Thus, children attending schools composed of students with higher SES were likely to perform better than their peers of the same SES in schools where the mean SES was lower (OECD 2010).¹

The so-called “PISA-shock” led the German government to take various steps to address the social inequality in the education system, including the financial support of all-day schools. It was expected that in all-day schools especially at risk groups of students would be better supported; thus, the SES-based gap in achievement would

¹ Although the results of PISA 2009 show that this relationship has weakened between 2000 and 2009, the impact of family background on the performance of students in Germany was still slightly above the OECD average (OECD 2010). As this research is based on data from 2009, the focus is on PISA 2009 here. This research was funded by the German Federal Ministry on Education and Research and the European Social Fund.

be narrowed (BMBF 2003). Between 2003 and 2009 the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research financially supported converting and equipping schools to the all-day format through its 4-billion-euro Zukunft Bildung und Betreuung (IZBB) [Future of Education and Care] investment program. Analyses in this paper are based on 2009 data of the study on the development of all-day schools (StEG) which was conducted to evaluate the implementation of the new school format.

This study adds to previous research by investigating how all-day schools can help reduce social inequality in the German education system, a topic which hardly has been investigated. In the following, a definition of all-day schools in Germany will be given and their assumed impact on social inequality in the education system will be reflected. Furthermore, results of prior research will be summarized and corresponding research findings from StEG will be presented.

The Assumed Impact of All-Day Schools on Social Inequality

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Laender in the Federal Republic of Germany defines all-day schools as schools that offer timetabled lessons and an all-day program at least seven hours a day and at least three days a week. Moreover, extracurricular activities in the afternoon have to be organized under the supervision and responsibility of the school principal and related conceptually to classroom lessons. Finally, all-day schools have to provide lunch on the days they offer all-day supervision (Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Laender in the Federal Republic of Germany 2008, p. 356). In addition, different types of all-day schools are distinguished according to the students' obligation to participate² (Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Laender in the Federal Republic of Germany 2012):

- (1) Open all-day schools: Participation is voluntary and each student chooses to participate individually.
- (2) Compulsory all-day schools: Students are required to stay at school for extended hours at least three days a week.
- (3) Mixed all-day schools: Certain groups (i.e., one grade or one group per grade) join the all-day program.

Between 2003 (the onset of the investment program) and 2011 the number of all-day schools in Germany increased from 23% (6,810 schools) to 54% (15,349 schools). In 2011, 31% of all students in Germany participated in an all-day program (Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Laender in the Federal Republic of Germany 2013).

The organization and structure of all-day schools are based on different guidelines of the 16 federal states of Germany and therefore differ considerably with respect to organization and conceptual base across the country. Despite these differences, they all provide, in addition to regular lessons, academic enrichment programs

2 The selection process into the three types of schools is complex because students in most German states can freely choose their secondary school. Moreover, the federal states have different strategies to support all-day schools (for example equipping schools of lowest vs. highest track to the all-day format, building all-day schools in socially deprived areas, etc.).

such as remedial courses and homework support, as well as extracurricular activities such as sports, drama, and gardening (Fischer/Klieme 2013). Based on the extended school day concept, all-day schools were expected to offer more academic support to students, which in turn might help reduce the influence of family background on academic achievement.

The introduction of all-day schooling was the result of a number of motivations and various changes in German society (BMFSFJ 2005). *Education policy arguments*, for example, were in response to the aforementioned poor PISA results. At the beginning of the investment program, it was anticipated that the extracurricular activities offered at all-day schools would boost academic achievement (Tillmann 2004). In particular, as all-day schools offer additional support for weaker students (e.g., homework support, remedial lessons in specific subjects), it was argued that all-day education would provide at-risk groups with the assistance needed to achieve better results at school. This could prevent *primary effects* of the family background that rely on social, economic and cultural resources provided by the family (Boudon 1974). Thus, in all-day schools the link between academic achievement and social background in Germany should be weakened. Because all students seem to need to participate in all-day school programs to achieve these results, compulsory all-day schools in particular are expected to succeed in diminishing the influence of SES on students' achievement.

Family policy arguments emphasized that having both parents gainfully employed causes changes in family structures and thus in a child's upbringing (Baumert/Cortina/Leschinsky 2003). Due to the growing number of double income households there is a growing demand for professional child care, which can be provided in all-day schools.³ Traditionally, it was expected that parents would support their children's preparation for school (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat für Familienfragen 2002). All-day schools were supposed to help families educate their children by supporting the students' academic and psychosocial development. Families of low SES are particularly in need of such support because differences in parents' abilities to provide a stimulating learning environment for their children are reflected in the primary background effects mentioned above (Boudon 1974). Thus, supporting parents could be another way to weaken the link between SES and children's performance at school.

Youth policy arguments assumed that young people's psychosocial development and their integration into the adult world would be enhanced by attending all-day schools. This assumption was based not only on the extension of academic learning time but also on the provision of extracurricular activities. In Germany there is a long tradition of youth activities organized by clubs and institutions outside of school. Research has shown that participation in these activities is socially selective (Zerle 2008; Rauschenbach/Bien 2012; Grgic/Züchner 2013): children from low SES and immigrant families rarely join sports clubs or participate in music and arts activities (Engels/Thielebein 2011; Thole/Höblich 2008). According to Boudon (1974), this can lead to *secondary background effects*, which are based on decisions of families concerning the children's education (Ditton/Krüsken/Schauenberg 2005; Merkens 2012).⁴ Thus, all-day schools were expected to prevent secondary background ef-

3 Note that the employment policy perspective emphasizes that all-day schools increase parents' opportunities to be gainfully employed or working – this is in line with findings from StEG (Züchner 2012).

4 A common example is transition to secondary school in Germany. The education systems in the various German states consist of either a two- or a three-tiered structure. Secondary effects may stem from parents from

fects by providing extracurricular activities such as sports, music and arts, and so they should benefit especially children from low SES families (BMBF 2003).

To summarize, all-day schools could help to reduce social inequality in schools in Germany by addressing primary and secondary background effects through the provision of academic support, extracurricular activities and parental support. This is a topic that scarcely has been analyzed in empirical research. In the next section a short summary of empirical results is given with a focus on previous analyses of the StEG data.

Research on Social Inequality in All-Day Schools

Prior research on educational effectiveness of all-day schools in Germany is scarce and often limited with respect to sample size, representativeness, and methodology (Ludwig 1993; Radisch 2009). Hence, results of the very few studies comparing academic achievement in all-day schools and half-day schools have been inconsistent (Balluseck 1996; Bellin 2012; Köller/Trautwein 2003; Radisch/Klieme/Bos 2006; Witting 1997). However, all-day schools seem to compare rather favorably with half-day schools concerning their influence on social integration and school climate (Witting 1997; Köller/Trautwein 2003).⁵ A recent longitudinal study investigating participation in extracurricular music and arts programs revealed that these activities are not as socially selective when offered in all-day schools as when they are offered outside of school (Lehmann-Wermser et al. 2010). However, if all-day schools are to provide support and to promote integration of children at risk, it is crucial that children with diverse family backgrounds are reached. This is the case in secondary schools. In the StEG data no differences in participation rates based on SES or immigrant background were found (Fischer/Klieme 2013; Steiner 2011). Previous analyses of the StEG data supported the assumption that the quality and quantity of extracurricular activities are crucial to achieve positive outcomes from participating in them. Thus, duration of participation is associated with advantages in the development of academic performance from grades 5 to 9 (Fischer/Kuhn/Klieme 2009; Kuhn/Fischer 2011). Student perceived quality (i.e., autonomy, challenge and social support) in extracurricular activities is related to the development of school attachment and, indirectly, to achievement. Moreover, long-term participation in extracurricular activities and quality of the activities are associated with better social behavior (Fischer/Kuhn/Züchner 2011). Nevertheless, all these results are independent of the students' SES (StEG-Konsortium 2010). So, in this paper – instead of emphasizing quality and dosage of extracurricular participation – the potential of all-day schools to reduce social inequality in the education system was focused analyzing the social gradient, parents' support and extracurricular participation.

high SES households being more likely to enroll their children in the highest school track, which in turn helps those children develop superior competencies (Maaz et al. 2008).

5 This could also be shown with the StEG data, enduring extracurricular participation throughout secondary school is associated with less deviant behavior at school (Fischer/Kuhn/Züchner 2011).

2 Research Questions and Hypotheses

In this paper the remedial potential of all-day schooling in secondary schools is determined first by investigating whether all-day schools succeed in overcoming primary effects of school-level SES on students' performance in mathematics and German. As stated above, especially enduring extracurricular participation leads to positive results. As students in compulsory all-day schools are obliged to participate in extracurricular activities, it is expected that in these schools the relationship between social background and academic performance is weaker than in all-day schools with voluntary participation. The second question is whether all-day schools support especially low SES parents by providing academic support to their children and thereby preventing primary background effects. Experts argue that all-day schooling is needed to compensate for the ongoing decline in the quality of children's upbringing at home (Appel 2004). In particular, it is assumed that all-day schools will help raise children to become successful adults by supporting families of low SES, children at risk, and immigrant children. Above all, the decision to participate in after-school activities can be seen as a secondary effect of social background. Thus, the third question is whether all-day schools reach all children, independent of SES, with extracurricular sports, arts and music activities. Our hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: The socioeconomic gradient (i.e., the relationship between school-level SES and, in this study, school performance in mathematics and German) is lower in compulsory all-day schools than in open all-day schools.

Hypothesis 2: Parents feel supported by all-day schools in terms of handling academic challenges (e.g., helping their children with homework) and other education issues. Low SES parents feel especially supported.

Hypothesis 3: In all-day schools there is no significant gap between children from high SES families and those from low SES families in participating in extracurricular sports, music and arts programs.

3 Method

Study Design

StEG is a multi-perspective and multi-criteria longitudinal study⁶ involving 371 schools in a nationwide sample. Questionnaires were completed at three measurement points in 2005, 2007 and 2009. This paper is based on the data collected in 2009 of secondary school students and their parents. For sample size information see Table 1. Students completed the questionnaire at school. Each student took one parents' questionnaire home to be completed either by their father, mother or legal guardian. Thus, the sample size of the parents was smaller than the students'. The parents' willingness to answer the questions declined with the age of their children.

6 Further information: www.projekt-steg.de.

So, for the students in grade 9, more than half of their parents' questionnaires were missing. Missing data analyses have revealed that low SES and immigrant background often predicts parents' non-participation in such data collection activities (Furthmüller et al. 2011).

Table 1. *Sample (StEG: 2009) (Gender, age and grade in the table refer to children)*

	total	female	male	5th grade	7th grade	9th grade	mean age (SD)
Students	24,488	11,710	12,614	6,808	8,840	8,840	13.1 (1.8)
Parents	14,323	6,989	6,910	5,038	5,252	4,033	12.7 (1.8)

Note. *M* = Mean, *SD* = standard deviation.

Measures

The following variables were included in the analyses:

a) Dependent Variables

Grades: As a measure of school performance, students' grades in mathematics and German on their latest report card were assessed. In Germany, grades range from 6 (lowest) to 1 (highest). For the analyses grades were recoded: low numbers indicated low achievement and high numbers indicated high achievement.

Participation in extracurricular activities in all-day schools: The students were asked whether they participated in extracurricular sports, arts and/or music activities on a weekly basis in their all-day school. The corresponding dummy variable distinguished between students who did not participate in the pertinent extracurricular activities at all and those who participated in them.

Parents' support and relief: Parents were asked if they felt supported by the all-day school in two ways: a) relief from the task of helping their children with their homework (academic support, 1 = yes), and b) support from the school in raising their children (upbringing support 1 = yes).

b) Independent Control Variables

The following dummy variables were controlled at the individual level.

Single father/mother: 1 meant that the father/mother stated that he/she was not living with a partner.

Immigrant background: This variable was coded 1 if one of the parents or their child was born outside of Germany.

Employment: 1 meant that both parents (or the single father/mother) were employed/working.

Active in a sports club: This variable was coded 1 if the student was participating in a sports club outside of school at least once a week.

Instrument: This variable was coded 1 if the student stated that he/she played a musical instrument at least once a week outside of school.

Grade 7 and grade 9: These are two binary variables indicating whether the students were attending fifth, seventh or ninth grade at the time of the assessment.

In addition, the following interval-scaled variables were controlled for:

Intensity: Number of days per week that the students attended the all-day program of their school.

KFT: The result of the verbal subtest of a cognitive ability test (Heller/Perleth 2000) was included in the analyses at the individual level.

Two binary control variables were included in the analyses at the school level:

Highest track: The variable was coded 1 if the student attended a school of the academic track (Gymnasium).

East Germany: This variable was coded 1 for schools located in the eastern states of Germany, which formed the territory of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) from 1949 to 1990.

c) Independent (Predictor)Variables

SES (at the school level and the individual level) and all-day school types were analyzed as predictors.

All-day school type: As stated above, there are different types of all-day schools. The compulsory school variable was coded 1 if participation in the all-day program was obligatory for all students.

SES: The international socioeconomic index of occupational status, a measure to capture income and education, was used to assess SES. The index is based on the father's or the mother's occupation, whichever is higher (HISEI; Ganzeboom/de Graaf/Treiman 1992). The HISEI scale ranges from 16 to 90, with 16 being an unskilled worker and 90 being a courtroom judge. On average, the students' families had a value of 47.4 (SD = 16.4), which corresponds approximately to the average HISEI in the German PISA 2009 sample (=48, Klieme et al. 2010). The sample was grouped into quartiles for the analyses based on the HISEI. Comparison groups were the highest and lowest quartile (high SES/low SES) and the two quartiles in the middle (middle SES).

Statistical Analyses

To analyze the relationship between SES and performance (*hypothesis 1*) the social gradient, that is, the average gap in performance between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds, was investigated. It was calculated corresponding to PISA 2000 (Baumert/Schümer 2001).⁷ The HISEI values were z-standardized at the mean of all participants in order to estimate the social gradient of students attending

⁷ PISA 2009 Germany: 44 score points/OECD average was 38 score points (OECD 2010).

all-day schools in Germany. To analyze the relationship between grades and SES, a linear regression model was estimated for each school with the z-standardized HISEI as the independent variable. Subsequently, the slope coefficients were compared to determine the influence of SES on grades. A slope almost equal to 0 indicates a weak relationship between social background and grades.

The percentage of parents feeling supported by the all-day school was associated with SES (*hypothesis 2*). Moreover, two multilevel logistic regression models were estimated to identify factors leading to the feeling of relief. Variables confounded with missing values in the parents' sample were included in the analyses as control variables.

Furthermore, descriptive statistics were analyzed to determine whether participation in extracurricular activities varied among students from low, high and middle SES households (*hypothesis 3*). Additionally, three multilevel logistic regression models were estimated to explain variance of the three dependent binary variables indicating participation in extracurricular sports, music and arts activities in all-day schools. By doing this, the influence of the school level and thereby the different opportunities schools offered could be taken into account.

Multilevel regression analysis was used to test hypotheses 2 and 3. This made it possible to take into account the clustered structure of the data and differences among schools. Multilevel models allow residual components at each level. The residual variance is split into a between-school and a within-school component. Between-school residuals indicate the unobserved school characteristics that affect the outcomes (Goldstein 2010).

4 Results

Hypothesis 1: Social Gradients in Different Types of All-Day Schools

Social gradients differed according to the all-day school type (see Table 2). Nonetheless, a positive correlation between SES and grades in mathematics and German was found in all types of all-day schools. The students' average grades in mathematics and German were better when the mean SES of the school's student body was higher.

Table 2. *Average social gradient of school grades at different types of all-day schools (2009)*

	Slope b mean grade in mathematics (SD)	Slope b mean grade in German (SD)
Schools with an open all-day program (n=78 schools)	.114 (.134)	.112 (.156)
Compulsory all-day schools (n=37 schools)	.068 (.145)	.077 (.153)
Mixed school type (n=58 schools)	.107 (.132)	.102 (.100)
Significance of the difference (ANOVA)	**	n.s.

Note. Source: StEG 2009, Students' survey (secondary schools), parts of these analyses are also reported in Züchner/Fischer 2014.

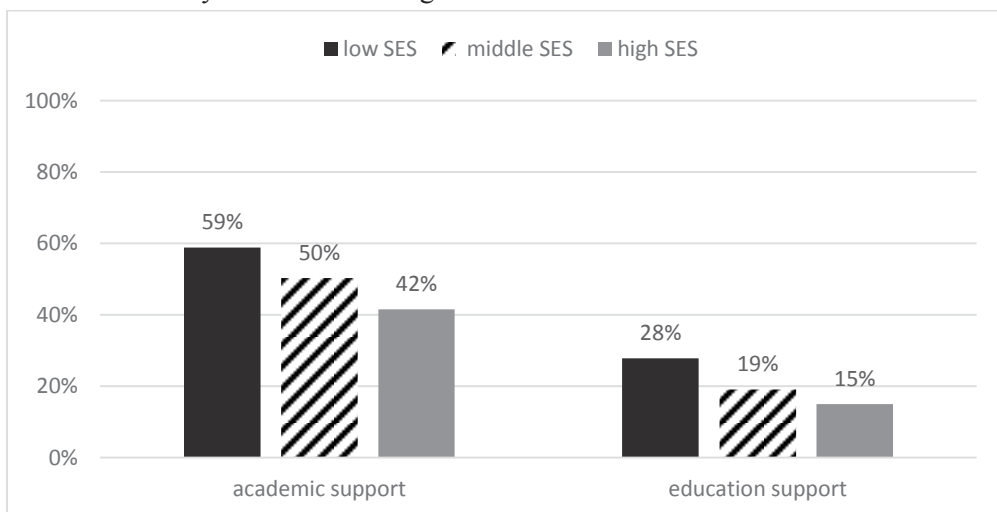
n = sample size, * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$, unstandardized estimates and standard deviations (*SE*) Grades recoded. Range Grades: 1 (lowest) to 6 (highest).

Comparing the means of the slope coefficients revealed that the relationship between performance and SES was weaker in compulsory all-day schools than in open all-day schools. However, this difference was significant only for the grades in mathematics. To determine whether the relationship between SES and achievement in mathematics was lower, if the number of students attending the all-day program was higher, the correlation of the social gradient of grades in mathematics and the percentage of students participating in all-day programs in each school was analyzed. A correlation of $r = .128^*$ ($p < .05$, $n = 236$ schools) was found. Thus, the relationship between SES and grades in mathematics was weaker if more students attended the all-day program.

Hypothesis 2: Support and Relief for Parents via All-Day Schools

In StEG, parents were asked if they felt support or relief by means of the all-day program. Figure 1 shows that parents reported feelings of relief from the task of giving homework support to their children and that particularly parents from low SES households felt supported when their children attended all-day schools. Overall, about half of the parents felt relieved of homework support. About 20% of the parents reported that all-day schools supported them in educating their child. This also differed according to the parents' SES.

Figure 1. Percentage of parents feeling supported, because their children attend all-day schools according to SES



Source: StEG parent survey 2009; only parents whose children attended all-day schools; this data also is presented in Züchner 2011.

To analyze this in detail, two multilevel regressions were established (Table 3). Results showed that especially parents with low SES or with an immigrant background as well as single parents felt supported by the all-day school. However, the parents' employment status did not significantly affect that kind of relief. Support was experienced more strongly if the children were attending the all-day program more frequently during the week. Moreover, results showed that parents felt more relieved if they had a son or if their child was scoring low on cognitive tests. At the school level, parents of children in the lower track schools (mainly composed of low SES students) reported that they felt even more supported in educational problems. These results indicate that the all-day program particularly supports parents with low SES in raising their children. Furthermore, all-day schools in eastern Germany (the former GDR) were more often rated as supportive concerning education issues. Overall, these results confirm the importance of all-day schools especially for families with low SES or an immigrant background.

Table 3. *Logistic multilevel analysis on the support parents receive from all-day schools*

	Academic support		Educational support	
	b (SE)	Odds ratio	b (SE)	Odds ratio
Fixed effects				
Intercept	-.697 (.177)***		-1.996 (.181)***	
Individual level				
SES (HISEI, gm-centered)	-.011 (.002) ***	1.0	-.007 (.002)**	1.0
Immigrant background (both parents)	.417 (.133) **	1.5	.899 (.134)***	2.5
Single father/mother	.380 (.119)**	1.5	.513 (.125)***	1.7
Employment	.041 (.071)	1.0	-.071 (.083)	0.9
Age (gm-centered)	-.121 (.020)***	0.9	.025 (.022)	1.0
Sex: male	.177 (.066)**	1.2	.266 (.077)***	1.3
KFT_testb score (gm-centered)	-.032 (.009)***	1.0	-.033 (.009)***	1.0
Intensity (per week)	.366 (.029)***	1.4	.249 (.030)***	1.3
School level				
Highest track	-1.019 (.175)***	0.4	-.860 (.144)***	0.4
Eastern Germany	.185 (.137)	1.2	.325 (.097)***	1.4
Random effects				
School level variance	.661 (.813)		.105 (.325)	
Deviance	5,922.5		4,399.7	
n (parents)	5,081		5,007	
n (schools)	218		219	

Note. Source: StEG – parent survey 2009; only parents whose children attended all-day schools.

n = sample size, * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$, unstandardized estimates and standard deviations (SE)

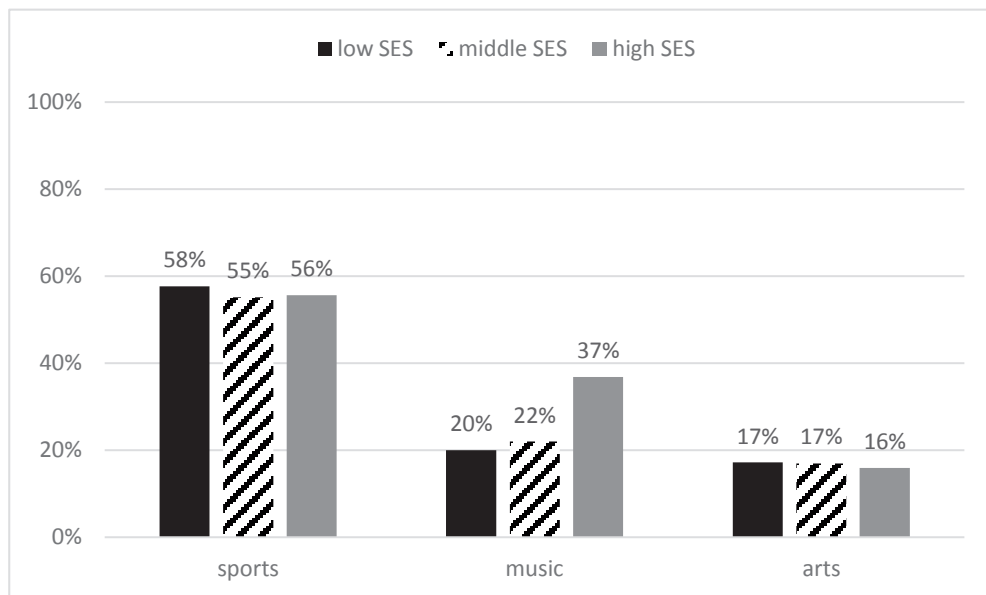
^agm-centered = grand mean centered. ^bKFT_Test = verbal subtest of the cognitive ability test

Hypothesis 3: Participation in Extracurricular Activities at All-Day Schools

A recent study on out-of-school engagement of German youth (AID:A, Grgic/ Züchner 2013) showed that while 72% of children aged 13 to 17 from high SES households participated in sports activities after school, only about 50% from low SES households did so (calculation: Züchner). It is assumed that all-day schools have the potential to reach all students with their extracurricular activities. This was examined using the 2009 StEG data of 5th, 7th and 9th graders (aged 10 to 17). Figure 2 shows the percentage of students participating in extracurricular sports, music and arts activities at all-day schools. More than half of the students attending all-day schools were participating in sports activities. About a quarter of the students were participating in music and about 17% in arts (multiple answers were possible). Compared to the activities organized by the clubs and institutions outside of school, participation in

extracurricular activities at all-day schools depended far less on the children's social backgrounds.

Figure 2. Percentage of students participating in different types of extracurricular activities in all-day schools according to SES



Source: StEG- student survey 2009, secondary schools, only students attending all-day schools; these results also are depicted in Züchner/Arnoldt 2011.

Figure 2 illustrates that the students' socioeconomic background had no significant influence on participation in extracurricular sports and arts activities. Nevertheless, it seems that children from high SES households more often participated in music activities at all-day schools. This was examined by conducting logistic multilevel regression analyses.

Table 4. *Multilevel logistic regression model to analyze participation in extracurricular activities (sports, music, arts) at all-day schools*

	Participation in sports activities		Participation in music activities		Participation in arts activities	
	b (SE)	Odds ratio	b (SE)	Odds ratio	b (SE)	Odds ratio
Fixed effects						
Intercept	-.137 (.119)		-2.928 (.176)***		-3.004 (.144)***	
Individual level						
Sex: male	.476 (.047)***	0.6	-.723 (.058)***	2.1	-1.612 (.065)***	5.0
SES (HISEI, gm-centered)	-.004 (.002)*	1.0	-.001 (.003)	1.0	.001 (.002)	1.0
Immigrant background	.384 (.073)***	1.5	-.061 (.089)	0.9	.294 (.083)***	1.3
School grade (ref.: Grade 5)						
Grade 7	.034 (.058)	1.0	.134 (.069)	1.1	-.020 (.069)	1.0
Grade 9	-.264 (.062)***	0.8	.067 (.075)	1.1	-.031 (.075)	1.0
Intensity (per week)	.128 (.021)***	1.1	.110 (.024)***	1.1	.099 (.025)***	1.1
Active in a sports club	1.031 (.049)***	2.8				
Instrument			1.444 (.175)***	4.2		
Interaction term HISEI* Instrument			.010 (.004)**	1.1		
School level						
Highest track	-.275 (.105)**	0.8	.584 (.104)***	1.8	.146 (.113)	1.2
Compulsory all-day school	.218 (.092)*	1.2	.019 (.094)	1.0	.009 (.098)	1.0
Eastern Germany	.088 (.084)	1.1	-.064 (.087)	0.9	.080 (.092)	1.1
Random effects						
School variance	.213 (.462)		.169 (.411)		.209 (.458)	
Deviance	11,267.285		8,124.7		82,733.7	
n (students)	8,929		9,011		9,995	
n (schools)	210		210		210	

Note. Source: StEG- student survey 2009, secondary schools; only students attending all-day schools
n = sample size, * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$, unstandardized estimates and standard deviations (*SE*)

^agm-centered = grand mean centered

Table 4 reveals that students from lower SES households and/or with an immigrant background were *more* likely to participate in sports activities at school.

For music activities, the multilevel regression showed that there was no direct influence of SES on participation. However, the interaction term of SES and playing an instrument outside of school had a significant impact on music participation. Thus, the SES difference in Figure 2 was moderated by the ability (or opportunity) to play

an instrument (outside of school), which in itself depended on the students' SES. The number of days students participated in the all-day programs evidently played an important role. Furthermore, in the highest school track these extracurricular activities were offered more often. The multilevel regression analysis also showed that girls and students with an immigrant background were overrepresented in arts activities. However, in these activities there was no significant influence of the students' SES.

5 Discussion

Research on the impact of all-day schools on social equality in the German education system has been scarce. Furthermore, results of the few studies that examined academic achievement in all-day schools are diverse. Obviously, this relies partly on the huge differences in the organization and conceptual bases of all-day schools in the German federal states. Moreover, schools have different structures and concepts independent of school type and federal state. Thus, it is no surprise that effects are rather small. In this paper, new indicators of social equality were considered to collect evidence for the assumption that all-day schools can narrow the gap between students and families with high SES and those with low SES in Germany based on the nationwide study StEG.

The potential of all-day schools to reduce primary and secondary background effects was analyzed. Concerning primary effects of SES on achievement, it was shown that the relationship of SES and school performance was weakened in compulsory all-day schools, where all students are obliged to participate in extracurricular activities. Further analysis revealed that this result could be based on the fact that in compulsory schools *more* students were reached by the all-day program. Thus, the number of students participating seemed to have an influence on social equality. This could be an argument in favor of compulsory schools, which might be more effective in narrowing the gap than voluntary models. Nevertheless, the extent to which this relies on the specific opportunities and learning environments in compulsory all-day schools or just on a high percentage of students participating remains unclear. Further analyses of the StEG data could focus on structures and quality of the pertinent school types and relate that to the social gradient. Moreover, this finding is limited to grades in mathematics. Unfortunately the StEG design did not include tests to assess achievement. Consequently, additional research that includes achievement tests to differentiate between students' competencies and effects of a school's grading practices is needed. Due to the diversity of all-day programs across Germany, it is difficult to give general recommendations on how to organize an all-day school.

As for all-day schools providing parents with support in educating and upbringing their children and thereby preventing primary background effects, by and large, parents reported that all-day schools were supportive. This is especially true for parents with low SES and for parents with immigrant backgrounds. Thus, by providing homework support and helping parents solve education problems, all-day schools in Germany seem to meet the needs of low SES parents in particular. This is an important finding although it is not clear how the fact that parents felt supported related to the behavior and achievement of their children. Although, it already has been shown

that all-day schools have the potential to improve social behavior of children with high SES *as well as* of those with low SES (Fischer/Kuhn/Züchner 2011), additional research is needed to relate parents' feeling of being supported to their children's outcomes. Also, it must be borne in mind that fewer parents with low SES completed the questionnaire. The data remain self-reports that can be influenced for example by the different aspiration levels and expectations of parents with low or with high SES.

Differences in enrollment in extracurricular activities offered by the school can be seen as secondary effects of SES on the education of children. This paper supports the assumption that participation in extracurricular activities at all-day schools depends far less on the children's social background than participation in similar activities outside of school does. The multilevel regression results indicate students from lower SES households and/or with an immigrant background are *more* likely to participate in extracurricular sports activities. Although the time spent in school and being enrolled in a sports club outside of school influence the likelihood of participating in extracurricular sports activities, a small compensatory effect of all-day schools (compared to sports clubs out of school) can be identified. Moreover, participation in extracurricular arts and music activities at all-day schools does not depend directly on SES. As stated above, this already has been shown for participation in extracurricular music activities (Lehmann-Wermser et al. 2010). Consequently, all-day schools provide children from low SES households with opportunities to enhance extracurricular learning experiences. Nevertheless, until now there has been no strong evidence for a link between participation in extracurricular activities and a decrease in the social gradient in all-day schools. Therefore, StEG currently is collecting data on participation profiles of individual students and quality features of extracurricular activities to predict the results of achievement tests. Thus, in the near future, hopefully more will be known about processes that can help to narrow the gap.

In summary, the results substantiate the assumption that all-day schools may offer opportunities to reduce social inequality by supporting students and their families especially those with low SES and by offering advanced opportunities because they provide a broad range of extracurricular activities. Nevertheless, further research is needed to strengthen evidence that all-day schools are a valuable instrument to increase social equality in the German education system.

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Developing an Evidence-Based Rationale for a Children's Zone Approach

Kirstin Kerr & Alan Dyson

Abstract: The Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) is arguably one of the most extensive extended education approaches established to date. It has sought to create a seamless programme of support for children living in Harlem, from birth to early adulthood, in family, school and community settings. The evidence on HCZ's impacts is limited, but its approach nonetheless has many proponents internationally, who see it as a means to further an extended education agenda. In this paper, given the lack of robust evidence on HCZ, we seek to advance an evidence-based rationale for adopting a 'children's zone' approach. We conclude it may have the potential to achieve greater impacts than more limited school-led approaches to extended education.

Keywords: Harlem Children's Zone, extended services, research evidence

1 Introduction

With a focus on the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) in New York (see www.hcz.org), in this paper we raise strategic questions for scholars and policy makers internationally about the scope and scale of extended education initiatives. HCZ is given specific attention for two reasons. Firstly, it is arguably one of the most extensive extended education approaches to be established anywhere to date. It focuses intensively on a specific neighbourhood and seeks to provide seamless support for children from birth to early adulthood, and across all the contexts in which they learn and develop. In its target neighbourhood, HCZ runs its own kindergartens and charter schools called 'Promise Academies', which also have an extended education offer. It also runs an extensive range of family and community programmes, addressing issues from foster care prevention, to diet and nutrition, community safety, and housing (see www.hcz.org for a full list of programmes).

Secondly, HCZ's influence extends far beyond its target area. Its approach is being rolled out across the US through federally-funded Promise Neighborhoods¹ and internationally, it has been seen as a way of furthering existing approaches to addressing the link between poor educational outcomes and disadvantage (see for instance, Edgar 2010). In England, leading national charities including Save the

1 See <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html?exp=0>.

Children are in the process of setting up pilot ‘zones’ (Dyson et al 2012) and HCZ’s approach has also been advocated in working papers commissioned by Ofsted – England’s national school inspectorate (Mongon 2013). In Hungary, links to HCZ appear even closer; as Martin (2010) reports:

With the help of the US government, Hungary is hoping that it will be able to replicate the HCZ’s success by applying the program as its own aptly-named Rising Kids Zone designed to empower Roma youngsters.

Dobbie/Fryer (2010, p.2) also note ‘...Israel, the Netherlands, Uganda and South Africa are developing plans similar to the HCZ model’.

What is particularly notable about this is that HCZ is stimulating debate and informing wider action, despite limited evidence of its ability to achieve impacts. As Hanson (2013) explains:

The Zone is still relatively new...so drawing firm conclusions from the available data is difficult. Some programs have simply not operated long enough for their lasting impact on student achievement or the community as a whole to be evaluated adequately, and some are not easily evaluated due to their novel structures.

Furthermore, while data from HCZ’s schools are readily available, data on its community programmes are lacking. This has led to calls for more extensive evaluation of HCZ before its approach is adopted elsewhere (Whitehurst/Croft 2010). It is, however, not always possible for policy makers and practitioners to wait for research to catch up with the need to find new ways of tackling disadvantage and poor educational outcomes – and given some of the evaluative challenges indicated above, the wait for evidence in relation to HCZ could be considerable.

Our view is that in the absence of an overarching evaluation of HCZ, it should nonetheless be possible to explore whether a children’s zone approach ought to achieve better outcomes for disadvantaged children. The key to this is to examine the rationale underpinning a children’s zone approach and to consider whether there is sufficient evidence to suggest that, by acting on this, it is both possible and likely to achieve better outcomes.

As such, this paper sets out to develop an evidence-based rationale for a children’s zone approach. To do so, firstly, we will situate HCZ’s approach in the wider field of extended education to explore its potential for impact in comparison to other extended education approaches. Secondly, we will unpack some of the core assumptions on which a children’s zone approach rests – namely, that interventions are required, simultaneously, in school, family, and neighbourhood contexts; that interventions in one aspect of a child’s life can have positive impacts on other aspects; and that interventions can have more powerful effects if used in combination. In doing so, we will seek to establish whether there is sufficient evidence to support these assumptions, and will draw on: i) evidence that there is a relationship between disadvantage, place and educational outcomes; ii) evidence that aspects of this relationship can indeed be disturbed through currently available interventions, and iii) evidence that these interventions are more powerful in combination than in isolation.

To be clear, we are not setting out to present a comprehensive review of the research on the wide range of interventions a children’s zone approach might employ. Rather we are setting out to explore whether a children’s zone approach ought, in principle, to ‘work’. In doing so, this paper has an important contribution to make

to international debates on extended education by considering if the wider use of a children's zone approach appears justified.

2 Locating HCZ in the Field of Extended Education

As *Ecarius et al.* (2013) note, internationally, there is a common expectation that extended education will bring about:

Improvements in the scholastic support of lower as well as higher achieving students... a better utilisation of the educational potential of all social classes, a reduction in social inequalities in acquiring education... (p. 7)

They go on to note that:

In almost all countries not only educational policy arguments, but also questions of the employment market and family policy, play an essential role in the justification of out-of-school programmes and activities. (p. 8)

As this indicates, there is a widespread belief that extended education is necessary to tackle social inequalities and requires some engagement with contexts outside school. It also suggests a focus on addressing the impacts of socio-economic disadvantage on educational outcomes. In England, for example, the creation of a national, school-led 'extended offer', was seen as a way of addressing the impacts of social factors (poor family support, low incomes, poor living conditions and a lack of access to opportunities) on outcomes in education, and health and employment (*DfES 2005*). To achieve this, extended schools were required to provide: extra-curricular opportunities for children; parenting support and childcare provision; adult and community leisure and learning opportunities; and improved access to specialist services. Similar approaches have been pursued in other administrations, for example, as 'SchoolsPlus' in Saskatchewan (*Tymchak 2001*) and 'Full Service Schools' in South Africa (*Department of Education, Republic of South Africa 2005*).

HCZ, like such school-led initiatives, is committed to tackling inequalities. However, it differs fundamentally by pursuing a comprehensive area-based strategy. In his 2007 speech 'Changing the Odds for Urban America', President Obama summarised the rationale behind this:

If poverty is a disease that infects an entire community in the form of unemployment and violence; failing schools and broken homes, then we can't just treat those symptoms in isolation. We have to heal that entire community. And we have to focus on what actually works... We know Harlem Children's Zone works.

Distinctively, while HCZ involves schools as a key element of its strategy, it is not based on or led by schools. Rather, it operates as an independent charitable foundation focusing on an approximately 100 block area of Harlem. The resident population is predominantly low-income black families, and HCZ provides them with access to an interlocking network of education, health, family, and social welfare services. These are not simply 'add on' out-of-hours opportunities as in the English model of extended schools. Rather, HCZ has a long-term strategic plan for transforming its target community. Firstly, it is developing a 'seamless pipeline' of sup-

port for children at every stage of their schooling: from parenting support for 0-3 year olds, to high quality kindergarten programmes, to Promise Academy schools, to programmes to support transition to employment and college entry. Secondly, throughout their schooling, HCZ aims to support children in out-of-school contexts. As such, it runs family and community programs intended to support positive outcomes across a wide range of domains – health, education, housing, employment. (Throughout, we will use the term ‘doubly holistic’ to capture this dual strategy, as it is holistic both in addressing a child’s whole school career, and school, family and community contexts.)

In taking this approach, HCZ is setting out to make much more than the modest improvements in outcomes typically associated with extended schools (see *Cummings/Dyson/Todd 2011*). Ultimately, it is aiming to change the culture of its target neighbourhood, so that it reaches a ‘tipping point’ where ‘children are surrounded by an enriching environment of college-oriented peers and supportive adults, a counter to “the street” and a toxic popular culture’ (<http://www.hcz.org/about-us/the-hcz-project>). In principle, therefore, HCZ should be well placed to address some of the known limitations of school-led extended education. These include: the limited positive impacts of extended activities at school and community levels (*Cummings/Dyson/Todd 2011*); and a tendency for schools to remain narrowly focused on teaching and learning, and on making short-term gains in attainment, without also seeking to address the underlying causes of poor outcomes, or to engage with wider social agendas (*Ainscow et al. 2008, Dyson 2008*).

HCZ’s approach therefore appears to have considerable potential. To explore this more fully, we will now turn to consider whether an evidence-based rationale can be advanced in support of a children’s zone approach.

3 Building Rationale for a Children’s Zone Approach

In building a rationale for a children’s zone approach, we start by considering two of the central assumptions on which HCZ is based – namely that to improve children’s outcomes it is necessary to:

- (i) acknowledge the importance of family, school and neighbourhood contexts; understand how these interact to shape children’s lives; and to intervene in these contexts to strengthen those factors which help children to do well, and offset those which put them at risk of doing badly.
- (ii) adopt an explicitly spatial framing. This assumes that where children live is important in shaping their outcomes – not just their individual and family circumstances.

Taking these in turn, below we consider whether they present a plausible basis for action.

Intervening in the Relationship between Disadvantage and Poor Outcomes

There is a strong evidence base which shows that children and young people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, tend, as a group, to do less well than their more advantaged peers – both over time and in relation to a wide range of outcomes (*OECD 2008*). But while the link between socio-economic disadvantage and poor outcomes is unequivocal, it seems unlikely that one causes the other in any simple way. Instead, research evidence points to mediating factors which, in the ways in which they influence people's lives, seem likely to link the two. These factors may include: a lack of material resources, parental attitudes and behaviours, children's own attitudes and behaviours, access to good schools, the characteristics of the neighbourhoods where children live, and parents' levels of education (*Chowdry/Crawford/Goodman 2009*).

While the causal links between these factors and their relative contributions to poor outcomes are not yet clearly understood, there are nonetheless conceptual frameworks which can be drawn on to help make sense of this complexity. These can be advanced as part of a theoretical rationale for a children's zone approach. One such model is Bronfenbrenner's 'ecological systems theory' (*Bronfenbrenner 1979*) which sees the child as interacting with a series of 'systems' – the family, the school, the neighbourhood, and the wider social and cultural context in which these are located, and the links between these different levels and contexts. Together these systems can be considered to form a 'social-ecology' which influences the child's outcomes (*Crowson 2001*). These different 'systems' may influence the child directly, but they can also have an indirect influence as one system interacts with another.

From this perspective, it cannot simply be said that the family 'causes' the child to do better or worse, or that schools 'produce' educational outcomes. Rather, each system plays its part – some with powerful direct effects, some with weaker and more indirect effects. Understanding the social-ecology in which children's lives are embedded, and the complex interactions between the different systems within these ecologies, therefore becomes central to explaining outcomes. Finding ways to intervene effectively in these interactions then becomes central to improving outcomes.

A second powerful theoretical framework explores factors in social-ecologies linked to 'risk', 'protection' and 'resilience' (*Schoon 2006*). This has often been used to understand why some individuals do better than would be expected given their background, and is concerned to identify factors in people's lives which: (i) lead to an increased risk of poor outcomes; (ii) can offset risks and protect against poor outcomes; and (iii) can be strengthened to promote resilience to potential risks. Lifecourse studies, for instance, have traced associations between the outcomes achieved by individuals and groups, and various factors in their family and social backgrounds. For example, in discussing the factors affecting children's outcomes, *Siraj-Blatchford et al.* (2011) draw attention to the importance of: encountering supportive schools and teachers, accessing enriching extra-curricular activities, and parents who are able actively to 'cultivate' their children's learning by accessing high-quality pre-school provision. They go on to argue:

it is never 'just' the one factor of child, family or school, or broader social context that brings about success or failure in an academic trajectory. Rather, it appears to be the particular eco-

logical niches that arise through the active reciprocal interactions between these factors that determine the parameters for children's pathways to academic success. (p. 71)

This has two important implications: firstly, that poor outcomes are not an inevitable consequence of disadvantage; and secondly, that it is possible to develop interventions which can reduce risks in children's social-ecologies and strengthen the protective factors which help them to be resilient to those risks. In principle at least, children's ecologies could be changed to improve the chances of their doing well, by strengthening families, improving schools, enhancing access to supportive adults, developing better health provision and so on. A children's zone approach suggests it might be possible to achieve this strategically and at scale by drawing together an ecological understanding of how outcomes arise, with a risk and resilience framework. Rather than simply addressing specific issues within specific aspects of children's lives, it suggests that a 'seamless' programme of interventions can be developed to address multiple factors in the interacting family, school and neighbourhood contexts, which make up a child's social-ecology.

The Importance of Neighbourhood Contexts

Where a child lives, and the neighbourhood 'system' they experience, are particularly important in a children's zone approach. Although children experiencing socio-economic disadvantage tend to do worse regardless of where they live, 'place' also plays a role in shaping their experiences and outcomes. There are particular places where poor families appear in particularly high concentrations (*Dorling/Pritchard 2010*) and emerging evidence to suggest that such concentrations may create 'neighbourhood effects' which compound the disadvantages people experience, as different places may attract different populations, services, reputations, and employment and leisure opportunities (see *van Ham et al. 2012*).

In-depth studies have also repeatedly found that experiences of living in areas that appear to be similarly disadvantaged are in fact markedly different. For instance, *Kintrea et al. (2011)* found that young people's aspirations were shaped significantly by a wide range of characteristics in their neighbourhoods, rather than simply by the level of disadvantage. This led them to conclude: 'places with a shared status of deprivation can be quite different in their social make-up and the way that this plays out in the life experiences of residents' (p. 7). One implication of such studies is that to improve children's outcomes in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, it is necessary to intervene in neighbourhood dynamics as these form an integral element of children's social-ecologies. It also suggests that standard policies and standard interventions are not always appropriate for different places, and some strategies to tackle the impacts of disadvantage on educational and wider outcomes may need to be developed on a place-by-place basis.

This forms a second important part of the rationale for a children's zone approach. It suggests that interventions in children's social-ecologies must also be interventions in particular places. This is because to offset the risks children face, and to build their resilience, it is necessary to engage with the factors and processes which operate in particular places to generate poor outcomes.

4 Considering Indicative Evidence Around Impact

While there is a strong rationale for a zone's neighbourhood focus and its emphasis on intervening in school, family and community contexts, a children's zone approach must also be able to demonstrate that it has the potential to impact significantly on outcomes. To identify the full range of impacts a children's zone might have is a complex task, and needs to consider:

- the impacts of any single-issue interventions a zone uses to address 'risk factors' within a child's social-ecology
- the interactions between different interventions and outcomes
- a zone's impacts on children (with different experiences of 'risk' factors)
- a zone's impacts on different systems in children's social-ecologies – i.e. their families, schools, and communities.

In order to consider all of these points, in the following sections, we will draw on a wide range of evidence. For instance, there is already a considerable body of knowledge on single issue interventions (see, for example, Higgins et al's review of effective interventions to raise the attainment of low attaining students), out-of-hours programmes (Afterschool Alliance 2013) and extended schools (Cummings/Dyson/Todd 2011). To supplement this, we have also searched specifically for evaluative reports on initiatives – in addition to HCZ – which are: area-based; have multiple strands of action attempting to improve a range of outcomes simultaneously; have explicitly employed strategies to improve children's outcomes, including educational outcomes; have had sufficient time to at least begin to become embedded in practice; and have been subject to (relatively robust) evaluation. We have focused primarily on: (i) the UK, where, as we have previously reported (Dyson et al. 2012), the emphasis on extended schools and nationally-mandated area-based strategies has supported the emergence of 'zone like' approaches; and (ii) the U.S., where, in addition to HCZ and Promise Neighborhoods, there are other high profile initiatives, for instance, the Chicago Community Schools Initiative and City Connects.

By searching academic publication databases including ERIC and the British Education Index, we identified 39 evaluative reports relating to 12 different initiatives. We also searched wider 'grey literatures' where, for instance, evaluative findings have been included in reports to trustees. For each initiative identified, we produced a summary detailing: evidence for outcomes (from separate activities within the initiative and from the interaction of different activities); any explanation of how these outcomes were produced; and any details of the evaluation methodology used. Although the number of 'zone-like' initiatives we identified is modest, it is worth restating that our purpose in this paper is to consider the rationale for a children's zone approach and whether there is sufficient evidence to support this. As such, these studies form an important – if not widely reported – part of a much larger body of evidence and experience relating to different aspects of a children's zone approach.

We will now turn to explore the possibility and likelihood of a children's zone's approach achieving positive impacts on outcomes. We will begin with what is known about ways of improving individual outcomes through single-issue interventions, and build up step-by-step to what is known from the initiatives we have reviewed for this paper, which share some of the complexities of a children's zone approach.

'Standalone' Single-Issue Interventions

The rationale underpinning a children's zone approach suggests that to be effective, zones will need to offset 'risk' factors, and strengthen those protective factors in a child's social-ecology which can promote their resilience. It is therefore important that initiatives following a children's zone approach seek to identify effective interventions which can impact positively on these particular factors. A considerable evidence-base already exists on the effectiveness of many 'standalone' single-issue interventions – i.e. interventions used to target short-to-medium term outcomes in a single aspect of a child's life. For instance, there is good evidence on the effectiveness of different parenting support programmes (Moran et al., 2004), of approaches to health promotion in schools (Stewart-Brown, 2006), and of interventions to develop speech language and communication skills (Law et al., 2012).

On one level, this suggests that a children's zone approach could achieve a wide range of positive impacts simply by bringing together a range of high quality interventions to address particular 'risk' and 'resilience-building' factors in children's social-ecologies. However, the situation is more complex than this, not least because there are known limitations to single-issue initiatives. These include the 'fade out' of gains over time, the fact that interventions may not 'work' equally well in different contexts, and the destabilising situation – not least in terms of 'initiative overload' and of contradictory goals – which can result if multiple uncoordinated interventions are introduced into an area (see, for example, *Ainscow et al. 2008*). Most importantly perhaps, while standalone interventions are typically aimed at single outcomes and implemented and evaluated in well-controlled conditions, this is unlikely to be the case when trying to intervene in complex social-ecologies. Rather, an ecological understanding suggests that tackling problems one at a time is likely to be ineffective because other negative aspects in children's ecologies may undermine any gains. It may be that if a children's zone approach is able to employ interventions strategically to engage with the complex, open and interrelated nature of children's ecologies, that some of the known limitations of single-issue interventions could be overcome.

Transferred Outcomes

In seeking to engage with the complex nature of children's social-ecologies, a zone approach anticipates that particular outcomes in one aspect of a child's life can influence their outcomes in other aspects. It is therefore important to establish whether interventions aimed at particular aspects of children's lives can indeed generate 'transferred' outcomes – i.e. outcomes in aspects of children's lives that are not the immediate target of the intervention, and which may be achieved over a much longer time scale than the duration of the intervention itself.

Some forms of transfer are straightforward. For instance, HCZ has an asthma initiative with the primary aim of improving health outcomes for children with the condition. However, in addition, the initiative has been found to improve school attendance for its target group (*Nicholas et al., 2005*), which, in turn, seems likely to support improvements in attainment. In the same way, programmes of 'out-of-hours' activities can enrich pupils' experiences and offer them an alternative to potentially more risky activities outside school. Meta-analyses suggest they can achieve a wide

range of positive outcomes including improvements in: school attendance, engagement in learning, attainment, health, and even in parents' attendance at work (*After-school Alliance 2013*).

Other studies have explored 'transfer' over longer time periods. For instance, Huang et al. (2011), in evaluating the long established LA's BEST program (a structured programme of afterschool homework help, extra-curricular activities, nutrition, and access to supportive adults; see Huang in this issue) were also able to demonstrate a link with school completion. They noted 'students who had participated in the program for three or more years had significantly lower [school] drop-out rates than the non-participant comparison group' (Huang et al. 2011, p. 18), with higher levels of participation leading to greater reductions in the risk of drop-out.

There is further evidence that an intervention which produces positive outcomes at one point in a child's life can lay the basis for positive outcomes later on. For instance, the High/Scope study (see *Schweinhart et al. 2005*) has found that a relatively brief exposure to high-quality pre-school provision, with fairly modest outcomes at the time, continues to bring benefits throughout childhood and adolescence, and on into adulthood, in terms of higher achievement, better employment prospects, and reduced criminality amongst other outcomes. Similarly, the Effective Pre-School, Primary and Secondary Education Project (EPPSE 3-14) in England is finding that the effects of high-quality pre-school provision last into adolescence, and can be found both in terms of higher academic attainments and better social and behavioural outcomes (*Sylva et al. 2012*).

While it seems improbable that what happens in pre-school has a direct impact some 10 or 20 years later, it is possible that there is an indirect, cumulative impact, and that children who achieve good outcomes in early years contexts are then able to take greater advantage of the next and each subsequent set of educational experiences. This suggests that the effect of multiple interventions is not necessarily an additive one, where a series of interventions, working in isolation from each other, each add a little more to the final outcome. Instead, there are likely to be interactions between interventions, with one enhancing or diminishing the contribution made by another. For example, a longitudinal study of schooling in Chicago (*Bryk et al. 2010*) has found that there are better outcomes for children in schools which have a set of strong 'supports' (including leadership, a focus on learning and ambitious teaching, and community engagement). However, each of the supports does not simply add an amount to pupils' outcomes. Rather, it creates conditions under which the other supports can have maximum effect, so that schools with all the supports present tend to do particularly well, whilst schools with weakness in two or more of the supports tend to do badly.

Multi-Strand Interventions

The notion of 'transferred' outcomes indicates the importance of multi-strand interventions in which one strand of intervention can facilitate and build upon others – even if their precise contributions cannot be determined. It also recognises that different outcomes in different domains – health, education, employment, and so on – are interrelated. Therefore, we also want to consider evidence from interventions with multiple strands of activity.

One example noted earlier is the Full Service Extended Schools (FSES) initiative in England which encouraged schools serving highly disadvantaged areas to develop wide-ranging approaches to supporting students, their families and local communities. The initiative was subject to rigorous national evaluation over a three year period, which included statistical analyses using national pupil-level data and a survey of all FSES nationally; and in-depth school case studies of FSES and brief comparator case studies of non-participating schools (Cummings et al. 2007). Although only small impacts on overall levels of academic attainment in the schools were found, there were important – even transformational – impacts on individual children, adults and families who experienced the greatest disadvantages and were therefore the target of schools' activities. These impacts took the form of retention in education, higher achievement, increased family stability, and the re-engagement of adults with learning and employment.

There are other school-focussed initiatives which, whilst not quite adopting the holistic approach of a children's zone, nonetheless suggest that such approaches might be effective. 'City Connects', for instance, is an initiative in Boston MA which identifies children and young people 'at risk' in schools and then links them to a customised package of services. These might include sports and physical activity, health and wellness curricula, arts enrichment programmes, academic support, family support and counselling. There is evidence of the effects of these services on health-related knowledge and behaviour (*Boston College Center for Child Family and Community Partnerships 2009; Boston College Center for Optimized Student Support 2011*). There is also evidence for positive impacts on attainment, well-being, behaviour, attendance and drop-out reduction as well as on school climate and teachers' practice (*Boston College Center for Child Family and Community Partnerships 2009; Boston College Center for Optimized Student Support 2011, 2012; City Connects 2011*). The reported improvements are impressive – with claims, for instance, that students perform at or about state benchmark levels, despite their disadvantaged backgrounds – and appear doubly so, given that the greatest gains are claimed to accrue to those who experience the greatest disadvantages.

'Redwood City 2020' in California is even closer to a children's zone model, since it brings together a range of local organisations, including but not restricted to schools, to pursue a wide range of outcomes for children. Although the literature search strategy revealed no publicly available, substantial evaluation of the initiative as a whole, there has been some research on the work of its: community schools (*Castrechini/London 2012*), youth development services (*John W Gardner Center 2011*), and mental health services (*John W Gardner Center 2008*). Again, the findings are encouraging, with evidence for positive impacts on targeted outcomes, including attainment, well-being and health-related behaviours. Moreover, there is indicative evidence of the kind of 'transfer' outlined above, with, for instance, greater gains in attainment by users of mental health services than by their peers, and with community school approaches being associated not only with higher attainment, but also with greater affiliation to school, increased motivation and greater confidence.

Overall, then, there is a body of evidence which indicates that multi-strand initiatives, with many similarities to a children's zone approach, can produce improvements across a range of outcomes for children. Furthermore, it suggests that impacts come not simply from the direct effects of the individual strands of intervention, but from interaction between those strands.

Evidence from the Harlem Children's Zone

Whilst the evidence from multi-strand interventions is encouraging, none of the interventions referred to above could claim to be taking a fully-fledged children's zone approach. Some, for instance, are school-based, and have limited engagement with the wider range of contexts which make up children's social-ecologies, and some focus on only part of the childhood years.

Similarly, some of the evaluations tend to be limited by focusing only on school-related outcomes, or on particular strands of action within a more wide-ranging initiative. These limitations are, however, also reflected in evaluations of HCZ to date, and as noted earlier, there has yet to be an overarching evaluation of the zone's activities.

Nonetheless, there is some evidence that HCZ has achieved important outcomes. HCZ's own internal monitoring processes identify improvements in health outcomes, parenting practices, school readiness, and levels of educational attainment and participation (HCZ 2011). In addition, there have been two independent evaluations focusing on academic attainment (Dobbie/Fryer 2010, 2011, Whitehurst/Croft 2010). Both have tested HCZ's assumption that strong and effective schools *and* strong and effective family and community support services, are need to overcome the impacts of disadvantage on education. In doing so, they have explored whether children who engage in HCZ's full range of services have higher attainment than those who do not.

Dobbie and Fryer compared groups of students with varying levels of access to different elements of HCZ's provision. They compared outcomes for students living in HCZ's target area who attended its Promise Academies, and those who attended other schools. They also compared outcomes for Promise Academy students living in the zone, who could access its full range of family and community services, and those living outside the zone, who could not. They found notable impacts on academic outcomes, concluding that HCZ's Promise Academies were 'effective at increasing the achievement of the poorest minority children' and could even 'close the black-white achievement gap in mathematics' (Dobbie/Fryer 2011, p. 158).

Whitehurst and Croft compared the effectiveness of HCZ's longest established Promise Academy relative to other New York City (NYC) charter schools with similar populations. Like Dobbie/Fryer they found notable gains in academic attainment, with students at the Promise Academy having higher attainments than would typically be expected given their backgrounds.

However, whereas some of the studies cited in the previous section identified some important 'transfer' effects, both studies of HCZ have concluded that educational outcomes are attributable to the improvements in HCZ's schools, rather than to the range of other interventions it deploys. Whitehurst/Croft found the Promise Academy they studied was only mid-ranking among NYC's charter schools, and those with a strong school-centric approach were the highest attaining. This led them to question whether HCZ's holistic neighbourhood approach is necessary. Similarly, Dobbie/Fryer found little evidence of a link between access to the Zone's wider provision and academic attainment. They argue that both school improvement and wider area interventions produce positive outcomes, and that ideally both are needed, but that one does not significantly enhance the other (Fryer/Katz 2013).

In these circumstances, the lack of a comprehensive evaluation does not help, since it is not clear whether the negative findings are due to an absence of transfer effects – which seems improbable – or to the evaluation methodology being too narrowly-focused, time-limited, and lacking the necessary data to find them. It is also possible that comparator children receive services from elsewhere, or that many of the Zone’s children do not receive a full set of additional services, or that the effects of these additional services are felt strongly only by particular groups of children, and that they may be felt most strongly in other domains, taking time to show any impact on educational outcomes. These issues cannot be resolved without further evaluative efforts. Nonetheless, it does appear that there are a range of positive impacts which can be attributed directly to HCZ’s intervention, even if the causal mechanisms at work are uncertain.

5 Concluding Comments: Is There a Case for Promoting a Children’s Zone Approach?

As we noted at the start of this paper, HCZ has attracted international attention for its ‘doubly holistic’ approach to improving children’s outcomes in a highly disadvantaged neighbourhood. With its area-based focus, which includes but is not restricted to or led by schools, it appears to be in a position to develop a comprehensive strategy to address the needs of all the children in the neighbourhood from birth to early adulthood. Compared even to the most wide ranging and well-developed school-based extended education, the children’s zone model has the potential to achieve impacts at a greater scale and possibly across a wider range of outcomes.

If there were robust, unequivocal evaluative data to support this claim, there would be no doubting the rationale for pursuing a children’s zone approach. However, the evidence base on HCZ is insufficient for this purpose, and a weakness in the field of extended education more generally has been the lack of a robust evidence base (*Cummings/Dyson/Todd 2011*). There is a pressing need for an overarching evaluation of HCZ which reflects its approach more fully, and which is sensitive to factors which are known to be important in achieving positive outcomes – not least the quality of different activities and frequency of participation.

Nonetheless, a children’s zone approach appears to be founded on a strong rationale. We can say that:

1. The established evidence-base on why some children do better than others suggests that outcomes arise from children’s complex social-ecologies, and that place plays a role in these ecologies. The implication is that improvements in outcomes for those facing the greatest difficulties in the most disadvantaged areas are possible through holistic area-based approaches. This means that the children’s zone approach is based on a defensible theoretical rationale.
2. There is an empirical evidence base which suggests it is possible to impact positively on a range of outcomes for children, even when they experience significant disadvantages. There are many well-evidenced interventions available. In principle, a children’s zone approach is well placed to marshal a portfolio of such inter-

- ventions in a particular place, and to manage these in ways which help to mitigate some of the known limitations of standalone single-issue interventions.
3. There is evidence that the effects of individual interventions can ‘transfer’ to a wider range of outcomes and can continue to be seen after the intervention is finished, perhaps even into adulthood. This not only strengthens the case for undertaking interventions, but also suggests that multiple interventions across childhood, and across the contexts which make up children’s social-ecologies, may well be able to build on each other to produce more powerful effects than isolated individual interventions.
 4. There is evidence that multi-strand interventions can have impacts on a range of outcomes and that there can be positive interactions between the different strands of intervention.

In addition, it is notable that, some of the evaluative reports we reviewed on initiatives that already offered quite wide ranging out-of-hours and extended activities, concluded they would need to move toward an area-based and more holistic model in order to achieve a wider range of impacts at greater scale. For instance, Cummings et al. (2007) reflected that if FSES were to maximise their potential to impact on child, family and community outcomes, they would need to become a connected part of coherent local strategies, linking their actions to those of other organisations and agencies tackling issues around disadvantage. In a similar vein, reflecting on the LA’s BEST programme, Huang et al. (2011) identified the need for a strategy which: connects and ensures coherence between in-school and after-school provision across children’s school careers; targets populations in their locales; and is systemic, involving schools and schools districts, not-for-profit agencies and community leaders to support students and families. Both sets of recommendations have strong resonance with a children’s zone approach.

On the basis of the rationale and evidence presented in this paper, we believe it is fair to conclude that in those neighbourhoods where poor outcomes are most starkly entrenched, and where the odds are stacked most heavily against children’s chances of achieving good outcomes, a children’s zone approach has much to offer and can help take an extended education agenda forward. Future developments must, however, be subject to rigorous and appropriately sensitive evaluation if the impacts of such an approach are to be better understood.

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Examining the Long-Term Effects of Afterschool Programming on Juvenile Crime: A Study of the LA's BEST Afterschool Program

Denise Huang, Pete Goldschmidt, & Deborah La Torre Matrundola

Abstract: This article examines the extent to which participation in a large urban afterschool program had an impact on reducing participants' future juvenile crime rate. The research tracked the academic and juvenile crime histories for a sample of 6,000 students, including 2,000 participants in LA's BEST and 4,000 matched control students not participating in the program. Multilevel propensity scores were used to match control to treatment students, and applied to multilevel longitudinal models and multilevel survival analyses methods to analyze the data. Results indicate that LA's BEST positively impacted the probability of juvenile crime. Furthermore, analyses indicated that students who were actively and intensely engaged benefited the most from the program.

Keywords: afterschool, juvenile crime, resiliency

Over the past few years, there has been an increased interest in understanding the impact of afterschool programming on positive youth development. Numerous research studies have investigated the short-term impact of afterschool programming on students' academic and social development, but there is limited research on the long-term effectiveness in lowering juvenile crime rates. Given that afterschool programs have demonstrated many potential positive effects on juveniles (Durlak/Weissberg, 2007; Snyder/Sickmund, 2006); and considering that the annual cost of juvenile crime is estimated to be approximately \$56.7 billion (Caldwell/Vitacco/Van Rybroek, 2006), the impact of these programs on juvenile crime warrants further analysis. This study intends to reduce the research gap by examining the long-term impact of participation in afterschool programs and juvenile crime by using LA's BEST (Los Angeles' Better Educated Students for Tomorrow), the largest afterschool program in Los Angeles County, as a representative sample. Accordingly, the research question for this study is: Does participation in LA's BEST have a long-term impact in influencing participants' future juvenile crime rate?

This study also extends the literature on the impact of afterschool programs on juvenile crime in two key ways. First, the analyses explicitly models individual crime trajectories longitudinally for 10 years; and second, it uses a large sample of almost 6,000 students. Given that LA's BEST primarily serves at-risk students in a large urban area, the study results may also be generalized to other large urban afterschool

settings as well. As such, the findings of this study on the long-term effects of LA's BEST on juvenile delinquency will be particularly salient for various stakeholders such as policymakers, law enforcement officials, and educators.

1 Do Afterschool Programs Help Prevent Delinquency?

Research literature indicates that there are a multitude of risk factors associated with juvenile delinquency, and these risks are present in the lives of many urban children and adolescents. For example, adverse or punitive environments in home, community, and school can contribute to antisocial behaviors such as aggression, vandalism, rule infractions, defiance of adult authority, and other violations of social norms (Case/Haines, 2009). To counter juvenile delinquency, Siegel and Welsh (2008) affirm that youth need to have access to protective buffers that will decrease the likelihood of them engaging in problematic antisocial and anti-school behaviors and increase the likelihood of them developing into competent and successful adolescents. Researchers have further declared that youth with access to resources, particularly for those in adverse environments, can develop resiliency and competency skills (Durlak/Weissberg, 2007).

As such, afterschool programs may be beneficial to student resiliency and the prevention of juvenile delinquency in three critical ways. First, afterschool programs provide participants with supervision during a time when they might normally fall prey to deviant or antisocial behaviors (The Afterschool Alliance, 2007). Secondly, afterschool programs provide experiences that may benefit students' social skills and classroom conduct. Students who participate in quality afterschool programs exhibit better behavior in school, higher academic achievement, better social skills, better self-control, and improved self-confidence through the development of positive relationships with adults and peers (Lauer et al., 2006). Finally, afterschool programs may help improve academic achievement and reduce student truancy, which is a key predictor of juvenile delinquency (George/Cusick/Wasserman/Gladden, 2007; Russell/Mielke/Miller/Johnson, 2007). Students who participate in these programs often are more positive about school and their own schoolwork, and are more likely to have ambitions to graduate from high school and attend college (New York State Afterschool Network, 2009).

Evidence of Support

A study conducted by Posner and Vandell in 2008 found that attending a formal afterschool program was associated with better academic achievement and social adjustment in comparison to other types of afterschool care. Students who participated in formal programs spent more time in academic activities and enrichment lessons and less time watching TV and playing outside unsupervised. In another study conducted by Nears in 2007, they found that high school participants in the Wake County Super Opportunities with Afterschool Resources program significantly outperformed students who were not involved in the program, or who attended infrequently, in end-of-course academic scores. Furthermore, the group effect appeared

to be greater for African Americans than for European American students. The study provided evidence that a well-designed afterschool program that focuses on increasing students' resiliency by building their academic skills, their sense of belonging, their sense of usefulness, and their personal potency can close the achievement gap between African Americans and European Americans and can yield positive results for all students involved.

Based on this evidence, this study sets out to examine the long-term impact of participation in afterschool programs and its effect on students' resiliency against juvenile crime. The participants in LA's BEST were used as a representative sample. First, a brief description of the LA's BEST program is provided.

2 LA's BEST – The Program

LA's BEST was first implemented in the fall of 1988. The program is under the auspices of the mayor of Los Angeles, the superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), a board of directors, and an advisory board consisting of leaders from business, labor, government, education, and the community.

LA's BEST seeks to provide a safe haven for at-risk students in neighborhoods where gang violence, drugs, and other types of antisocial behaviors are common. Since its inception in 1988, LA's BEST has adapted and updated their goals in response to educational policies, research, and theory. Over the years, the program has moved past its initial emphasis on providing a safe environment and educational enrichment to an emphasis on the development of the whole child (Hodgkinson, 2006) by centering on activities to enhance students' intellectual, social-emotional, and physical development. The program is housed at selected LAUSD elementary schools and is designed for students in kindergarten through fifth/sixth grade.

LA's BEST is a free program open to all students in the selected sites on a first-come, first-serve basis. These sites are chosen within LAUSD based on certain criteria, such as low academic performance and their location in low-income, high-crime neighborhoods. LA's BEST served a student population of approximately 30,000, with about 80% Hispanic and about 12% Black elementary students. English language learners comprise at least half of the student population at most sites. Of this population, the majority's primary language is Spanish, while the other percentage of the English learner population is composed of those whose first language is of Asian/Pacific origin.

3 Study Design

This study utilized a quasi-experimental design that consisted of a longitudinal sample of both demographic and juvenile crime data. The sample was composed of 2,331 students from LA's BEST programs, 2,331 matched students who attended the same schools as those in the LA's BEST programs but did not participate in LA's BEST, and 1,237 matched students who attended schools that had no LA's BEST

program. The base years for these students were 1994–95, 1995–96, and 1996–97. Hierarchical survival analysis was applied to crime outcomes. LA's BEST students were compared to non-LA's BEST students. Moderating factors such as gender, race/ethnicity, language proficiency, and socioeconomic status (SES) and potential programmatic mediating factors were examined.

Data Analysis Methods

Propensity scoring methods were used to sample comparable control schools and control students. A Multilevel Discrete-Time Hazard (MDTH) Model was employed to estimate hazard functions and survival probabilities.

The importance and advantages of using multilevel analyses in program evaluations have been discussed in Seltzer (2004) and Raudenbush and Bryk (2002) for cross-sectional designs, and in Singer and Willett (2003) for longitudinal studies. The important aspect to consider is that students are clustered within schools and do not represent independent observations. This clustering leads to underestimation of standard errors and misconceptions in interpretation when analysis examines multiple levels of data (Burstein, 1980). To counter this aspect, survival models with hazard functions were utilized in this study within the general framework of hierarchical (random coefficient) models. This allowed the study to handle multiple levels of data efficiently.

This study follows the modeling steps outlined in Singer and Willett (2003) and Barber, Murphy, Azinn, and Maples (2000). The basic MDTH model then takes the following form:

LEVEL 1 MODEL

$$\text{Prob}(\text{CRIME3} = 1|\beta) = \varphi$$

$$\text{Log}[\varphi/(1 - \varphi)] = \eta$$

$$\eta = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{YEAR}) + \beta_2(\text{YEARSQR})$$

LEVEL 2 MODEL

$$\beta_0 = \gamma_{00} + u_0$$

$$\beta_1 = \gamma_{10} + u_1$$

$$\beta_2 = \gamma_{20}$$

The natural log likelihood function was used to estimate parameters of interest (Singer/Willett, 2003). In this study, the basic specification included two terms to track time: year and year squared. This allows the study to model a non-linear hazard function. The fitting of this model to the actual hazard is presented in the results section. The effect of both intercept and time were specified as being random or varying across schools.

The level 2 model allows the study to examine whether there is significant variation among schools in the hazard function. The final parameterized model includes both student and school-level covariates, and is specified in the appendix.

Methodology Limitation

Given students were not randomly assigned to the afterschool program, the consistency of estimated treatment effects depends critically on the matching procedures used. The details of the sampling and matching strategies are listed in the following sections.

Constructing the Data Set

The study sample was constructed from the LA's BEST student dataset that the study team collected and stored since the 1992–93 school year. The first step in building the study sample consisted of generating a sampling frame. The structure of this sampling frame was determined by examining historical records and tracking all available information for all students from the 1994–95 school year through the 2002–2003 school year.

Additionally, contextual changes in schools and communities were considered. The 1990 census data were used to examine the neighborhoods of the treatment and control schools. In combination with detailed analyses of the LAUSD student database, data from the National Center for Education Statistics and Los Angeles School Police data for the same period were also examined. This analysis of demographic changes over the past 10 years allowed the study to account for potential school and community factors, to provide additional information from aggregated student characteristics, and to consider how these factors had changed over time.

Selecting the Treatment Students

It was very important to establish a sample that carefully matched students who attended LA's BEST with those who did not attend LA's BEST so that valid inferences could be generated. To reduce biases from potential confounding factors, propensity score matching methods were used. The following steps were taken to analyze and construct the study sample:

First, participants in LA's BEST were identified. For school sites that operate 9 months out of the school year, the maximum number of days for possible program attendance was 180 days and 240 days for year-round schools. Upon examination of the students' attendance patterns, results indicated that many students participated sparingly and then dropped out of the program. In order to define and identify "treated" student participants, a criteria was set so that students had to attend the program at least one day per week (i.e., 36 days per school year) so as to be considered treated students. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics of the students.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics of Attendance in the LA's BEST Afterschool Program*

School year	Days of attendance				
	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
1991	462	32.8	32.7	0	154
1992	282	12.9	5.7	0	20
1993	4,364	29.7	32.0	0	205
1994	7,109	62.9	48.1	0	203
1995	8,438	75.5	58.4	0	240
1996	9,028	76.6	58.4	0	240
1997	7,338	67.6	46.8	0	195
1998	---	---	---	---	---
1999	---	---	---	---	---
2000	20,451	83.0	61.9	0	240
2001	25,440	90.1	65.7	0	240
2002	32,478	118.1	63.2	1	240

Note. Missing data in 1998 and 1999.

Another consideration was the number of years students participated in the program. Given that students could participate in the program from one to five years (e.g., first through fifth grade), students were tracked for five years in this study to obtain an accurate representation of program attendance. Finally, only students that attended the program in the same schools were selected. This consideration was important in avoiding cross-classification problems since the quality of program implementation likely varied from school to school. These restrictions, along with the goal of being able to follow the students through high school, restricted the sampling frame of treatment students to the 24 LA's BEST school sites that implemented the afterschool program in the years of 1994 through 1996.

Based on these considerations, two cohorts were identified. The first cohort was composed of 1,692 students who attended the afterschool program in the same school beginning in 1993–94 when students were in the first grade. The second cohort was composed of 1,596 students who attended the program in the same school beginning in 1992–93 when students were also in first grade. The total sample of the two cohorts of students was 3,288. The counterfactual, or control group, consisted of two sets of students: non LA's BEST participants attending the same school as the LA's BEST participants and students attending comparable schools without the LA's BEST program.

Given that students can attend the LA's BEST program for up to 5 years and between 36 to 240 days within each year, both the number of years and days attended needed to be accounted for in order to measure the level of individual exposure to the program. Three definitions were set up in this study: exposure was defined as the number of years a student attended LA's BEST; intensity was defined as the total number of days a student attended LA's BEST; and engagement was defined as the average number of days per year that a student attended LA's BEST.

Selecting the Control Students at the Same School

The following criteria were used to select the control students within the treatment schools:

Using the same 24 schools, “potential” control students from the same years and grade levels were selected. Propensity scores were estimated separately for each grade and year using a Multilevel Logistic Model.

Once the propensity score was estimated, each treated student was matched to a student from his or her own elementary school. Since the treatment and control conditions shared a series of characteristics within each school (e.g., individual characteristics such as SES, race/ethnicity, achievement, and language proficiency, and school characteristics such as school policies, facilities, and amount of resources), approximately 40 student-level and 21 school-level variables were used in the propensity models. As stated by Shadish, Clark, and Steiner (2008), a rich set of variables and regression-based analyses with covariates can significantly reduce bias related to quasi-experimental studies.

The matching procedure applied was a 1-1 nearest neighbor algorithm within a 0.6s caliper and with no replacement. The selection of students had to be sequential given that the same group of students was followed over the course of three years. In that regard, the matching was without replacement because once a control student was matched in one year, it was removed from the reservoir of controls for the following year.

Selecting the Control Students at Non-treatment Schools

To verify the consistency of treatment effect and to make sure that the matching and adjustment of observed covariates were sufficed in estimating the treatment effects, a second control group in non-treatment schools was sampled. These were comparable schools that did not have the LA’s BEST afterschool program at their sites.

Demographic Analysis

Before matching students from non-LA’s BEST schools, zip codes and/or neighborhood demographic characteristics (ethnicity, census household information) for sampled schools were examined. The analysis was conducted to determine how representative schools were of the surrounding neighborhood in which they were located. The purpose was two-fold: first, to establish whether contiguous neighborhoods were the best option for matching control and treatment schools; and second, to establish a current and historical demographic context that potentially accounted for between-school variation in juvenile behavior.

The 1990 and 2000 census data by zip code were used to compare these schools’ demographic composition to that of the community. Given the strong correlations, one can be confident that census data were an appropriate proxy for average family resources available to students in a particular school. Thus, census-based family income and wealth information were incorporated to set the school economic context as a principal, between-school moderating variable.

Table 2 presents the baseline characteristics of the sample groups, including gender, race, parent education, language status, socio-economic indicator of free and reduced price lunch (FRL), and achievement scores.

Table 2. *Baseline Characteristics of the Sampled Groups in 1993*

Variables	Control 2 ^a			Control 1 ^b			LA's BEST group		
	Obs.	Mean	SD	Obs.	Mean	SD	Obs.	Mean	SD
Female	1902	.50	.50	2210	.50	.50	2458	.49	.50
Hispanic	1902	.85	.35	2210	.81	.39	2458	.81	.39
African American	1902	.13	.33	2210	.16	.37	2458	.16	.37
Asian	1902	.00	.06	2210	.00	.09	2458	.01	.11
Other Ethnicity	1902	.00	.05	2210	.00	.06	2458	.00	.05
Parnt Edu ^c	1902	.14	.35	2210	.16	.37	2458	.16	.36
EL 1993	1445	.94	.22	1523	.94	.23	1787	.93	.25
RFEP 1993	1445	.00	.04	1523	.00	.03	1787	.00	.02
EO 1993	1445	.05	.22	1523	.05	.23	1787	.06	.25
D res. ^d 1993	1766	.02	.15	2007	.03	.18	2256	.03	.18
R CTBS ^e 1993	1379	33.58	21.07	1508	34.42	21.61	1750	34.77	21.16
M CTBS ^f 1993	1433	35.89	20.71	1561	38.69	21.52	1814	39.08	20.97
GATE	1902	.00	.05	2210	.00	.04	2458	.00	.02
SWD	1902	.00	.06	2210	.00	.04	2458	.00	.04
FRL	1250	.95	.20	1422	.92	.26	1656	.93	.24

Note. Obs. = Observation; EL = English Learner; RFEP = Redesignated Fluent English Proficient; EO = English Only; GATE = Gifted and Talented Education; SWD = Students with Disabilities; FRL = Free and Reduced Lunch.

^aIn different schools. ^bWithin LA's BEST schools. ^cParents' education is equal to or greater than college level. ^dStudents' residence different from school location. ^eCalifornia Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) Reading Scores. ^fCalifornia Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) Mathematics Scores.

The selection of control students in non-treatment schools included two steps. The first step involved the selection of control schools that were as comparable as possible to the treatment schools. For this purpose, all schools from the same school district were pre-selected as tentative controls. Pre-treatment school-level variables and community indicators from the baseline year (1993) were used to estimate the probability of being a treatment school. Since the principal qualifications for a school to receive the LA's BEST treatment were poverty (as measured by the percentage of students in the school receiving free or reduced lunch) and low academic performance, these key selection predictors were included along with community variables that captured other relevant dimensions of poverty (21 variables in total).

Similar to the selection of treatment students, the estimated propensity score was used to match treated and control schools by the nearest neighbor algorithm within a caliper (0.6s). The structure was 1-1 matching.

Once the matched pairs of treated and control schools were identified, the second step was to select the same grade levels from the control schools. Subsequently, the probability of being a treated student was estimated by using a logistic regression model as a function of student-level variables. Finally, within the matched pair of schools, treated students were matched with control students from other schools using the same matching algorithm used for matching students within the treatment schools.

The resulting sample is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. *Number of Students in the Sampling Structure*

Sample	Number of students
LA's BEST	2,331
Control I	2,331
Control II	1,237
Total	5,898

4 Student Exposure, Intensity, and Engagement

The common practice of simply using a treatment indicator (i.e., splitting students into a treatment and non-treatment group) is usually insufficient to adequately capture the important program dynamics of student engagement (student average attendance). Noting the importance of regularly attending the program in order to be benefited by the experience (Huang, Leon/La Torre/Mostafavi, 2008), student engagement was added to clarify treatment effects in this study. It is theorized that exposure and intensity are likely related to unobserved student program participation decisions (e.g., parents work afterschool and the child has no other place to go) as opposed to student engagement, which is assumed to be related to students' interest in the program and program quality.

Examining the Relationship between Juvenile Crime and LA's BEST Participation

Based on duration of attendance in the LA's BEST program, the treatment group was divided into four exposure sub-groups. The category "low" corresponds to those students who attended the LA's BEST program for only one year, "medium low" to those who attended for two years, "medium high" to those who attended three years, and "high" to students who attended four or five years during the period between 1993 and 1997. Student engagement is classified into three levels: low (4 to 9 days

of attendance per month), medium (10 to 14 days of attendance per month), and high (at least 15 days per month). Table 4 displays the descriptive results of the criminal offenses committed by students in both control and treatment groups.

Table 4. *Percentage and Number of Offenses by Crime Categories and Treatment Groups*

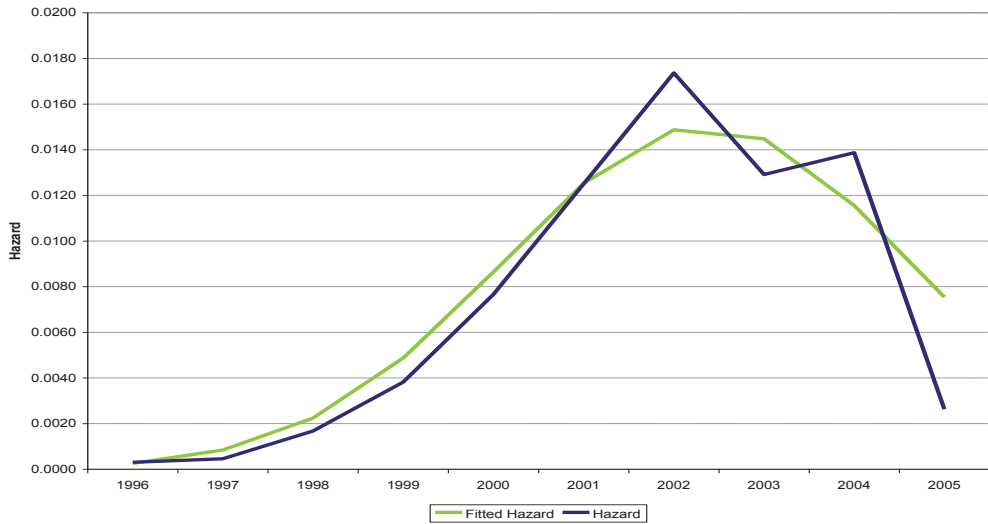
Groups	General crime categories		Felony categories				
	Misdemeanor	Felony	Violent	Property	Drug offenses	Sex offenses	Other
Control II	62	118	25% (30)	43% (51)	14% (16)	4% (5)	13% (15)
Control I	149	218	35% (77)	41% (89)	10% (22)	1% (2)	12% (27)
Treatment							
Low	46	112	37% (41)	41% (46)	12% (13)	3% (3)	8% (9)
Med low	54	63	29% (18)	52% (33)	11% (7)	0% (0)	8% (5)
Med high	19	30	40% (12)	40% (12)	10% (3)	7% (2)	3% (1)
High	6	17	24% (4)	41% (7)	6% (1)	0% (0)	29% (5)
Total	336	558	33% (182)	43% (238)	11% (62)	2% (12)	11% (62)

In general, results indicated that students who attended four or five years tended to commit fewer drug and sex-related crimes than those who attended fewer years. Since treatment students (LA's BEST students) varied in exposure and intensity, the patterns observed in this table were explored in more detail, controlling for students' engagement. Using multilevel survival analysis, a series of models were estimated to examine the relationship between youth crime, concomitant student and school characteristics, and the effects of the LA's BEST afterschool program. All crimes, including felonies and misdemeanors, were treated as the outcome variable.

5 Results

First, the unconditional hazard was determined. The time metric was defined and the unconditional baseline hazard of committing a crime was reproduced. Although there were several options for defining the time metric, in order to balance a sufficiently fine-grained measure of time with an adequate number of events per time period, a yearly time metric was used. Figure 1 displays the actual and fitted hazard.

Figure 1. Actual and fitted hazard of juvenile crime over time.



The unconditional hazard displayed is consistent with expectations of an increasing hazard from elementary through early high school and a decreasing hazard from juvenile to adult. The results of fitting the basic hazard model are displayed in Table 5. Consistent with the plotted hazard, it was found that both the linear and quadratic terms for time were highly significant ($p < .01$). The results indicated that the maximum hazard was when students were in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades.

Table 5. Base Hazard as Function of Time

Variable	Estimate	Standard error	Approximate p-value
Base rate (numerare)	-8.26	0.12	0.00**
Annual change in rate	1.28	0.06	0.00**
Quadratic effect of time	-0.10	0.01	0.00**

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Effects on Program Exposure and Engagement

Next, the effects of program exposure and engagement were investigated in Model 1. As defined earlier, exposure was measured by the number of years of LA’s BEST afterschool attendance. In this model, the three levels of engagement were included (i.e., low, medium, and high). The three coefficients of engagement were introduced simultaneously in the model; the reference group was students with “zero engagement.”

Model 2 tested whether unconditioned on concomitant variables, the afterschool treatment, significantly impacted the probability that a student would commit a crime. The results indicated that student exposure had no marginal impact on the crime hazard once student engagement was taken into consideration. Model 2 results

also indicated that students who were sporadic attendees (low engagement) did not benefit from the treatment (LA's BEST afterschool experience). However, students who were engaged on a more consistent basis were significantly less likely to commit a crime. Students who were medium attendees were about 30% less likely to commit a crime ($p < .05$) and students who were high attendees were about 50% less likely to commit a crime ($p < .05$).

In order to isolate potential treatment effects further, the marginal impact of the treatment accounting for student characteristics was examined. Model 3 results indicated that the treatment effects were quite robust with the inclusion of student characteristics. However, the estimated afterschool treatment effects did not change substantively from Model 2 to Model 3.

More specifically, consistent with expectations, the results in Model 3 indicated that girls were significantly less likely to commit a crime ($p < .01$). In fact, boys were about three times more likely to commit a crime as were girls. Asians were predicted to commit crimes at a significantly lower rate than White students ($p < .01$), *ceteris paribus*. Hispanics were also estimated to be less likely to commit crimes than their White classmates ($p < .05$). African American students were estimated to commit crimes at about the same rate as their White classmates, *ceteris paribus*. It is important to bear in mind that African American students had a greater unconditional crime rate than their White classmates, but that after controlling for concomitant factors, the rates were virtually identical. Accounting for the other student characteristics in the model, students with disabilities were estimated to commit crimes about 30% more often than were their non-disabled classmates.

Another key aspect of Model 3 was the inclusion of the proxy (parent education) for student SES. This was included because the original indicator FRL represented about 94% of the sample and could not differentiate students. In contrasting students with college-educated parents against students whose parents had less than a college education, results revealed that students with parents that had less than a college education were about 25% more likely to commit crimes than were students of college-educated parents.

Table 6 presents the summary of the Multilevel Survival Analysis results.

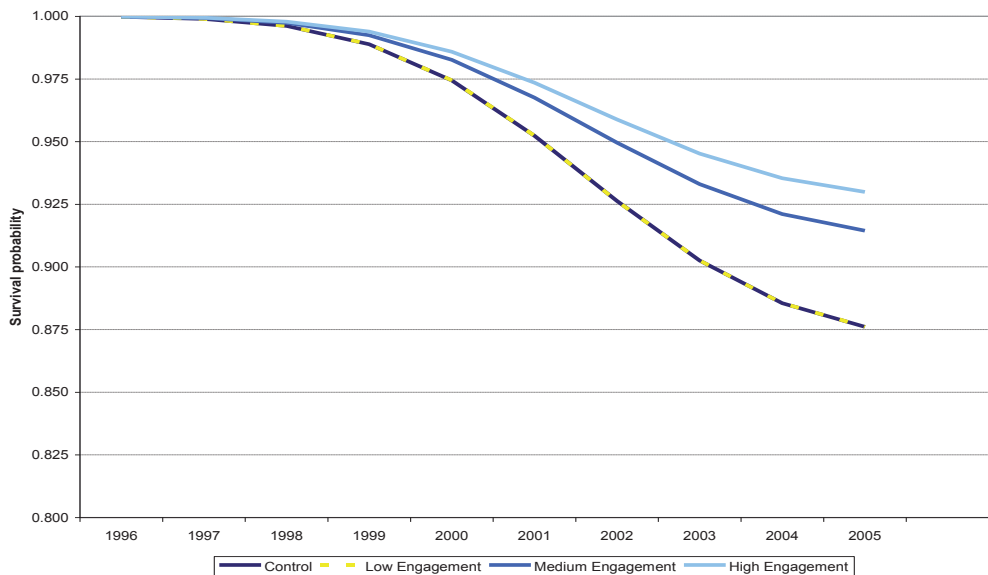
Table 6. *Summary of Multilevel Survival Analysis Results*

Variable	Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	Estimate	SE	Aprox p-value	Estimate	SE	Aprox p-value	Estimate	SE	Aprox p-value
Base rate (numerare)	-8.36	0.13	0.00**	-7.80	0.37	0.00**	-8.51	0.45	0.00**
School percent African American							0.04	0.01	0.00**
School percent parents w/ college							-0.15	0.06	0.02*
LA's BEST school							0.02	0.02	0.30
Later becomes LA's BEST school							0.23	0.16	0.15
School's zip code% HH in poverty							-0.33	0.11	0.00**
Annual change in rate	1.29	0.06	0.00**	1.39	0.07	0.00**	1.58	0.09	0.00**
School percent African American							-0.01	0.00	0.00**
School percent parents w/ college							0.03	0.01	0.01*
Later becomes LA's BEST school							-0.01	0.03	0.73
School's zip code% HH in poverty							0.07	0.02	0.00**
Quadratic effect of time	-0.10	0.01	0.00**	-0.11	0.01	0.00**	-0.13	0.01	0.00**
Low engagement									
Effect of low engagement	0.19	0.14	0.19	0.13	0.15	0.38	0.04	0.16	0.81
School's zip code% HH in poverty							-0.06	0.03	0.05*
Medium engagement									
Effect of medium engagement	-0.36	0.14	0.01**	-0.38	0.15	0.01*	-0.38	0.15	0.01*
School's zip code% HH in poverty							-0.04	0.06	0.57
High engagement									
Effect of high engagement	-0.66	0.23	0.00**	-0.59	0.24	0.02*	-0.60	0.25	0.02*
School's zip code% HH in poverty							-0.01	0.10	0.94
Background characteristics									
Girls vs. boys				-1.02	0.09	0.00**	-1.02	0.09	0.00**
Hispanics vs. Whites & other				-0.81	0.31	0.01**	-0.81	0.34	0.02*
African American vs. Whites & other				0.05	0.34	0.89	0.08	0.38	0.82
Asian vs. Whites & other				-2.00	0.84	0.02*	-2.03	0.88	0.02*
SWD vs. non-SWD				0.26	0.11	0.01*	0.26	0.11	0.02*
Parent Educ college vs. less				-0.24	0.13	0.07	-0.26	0.14	0.06
Years of Exposure				0.14	0.07	0.06	0.12	0.08	0.10
Years of EL				0.03	0.01	0.01**	0.03	0.01	0.01*

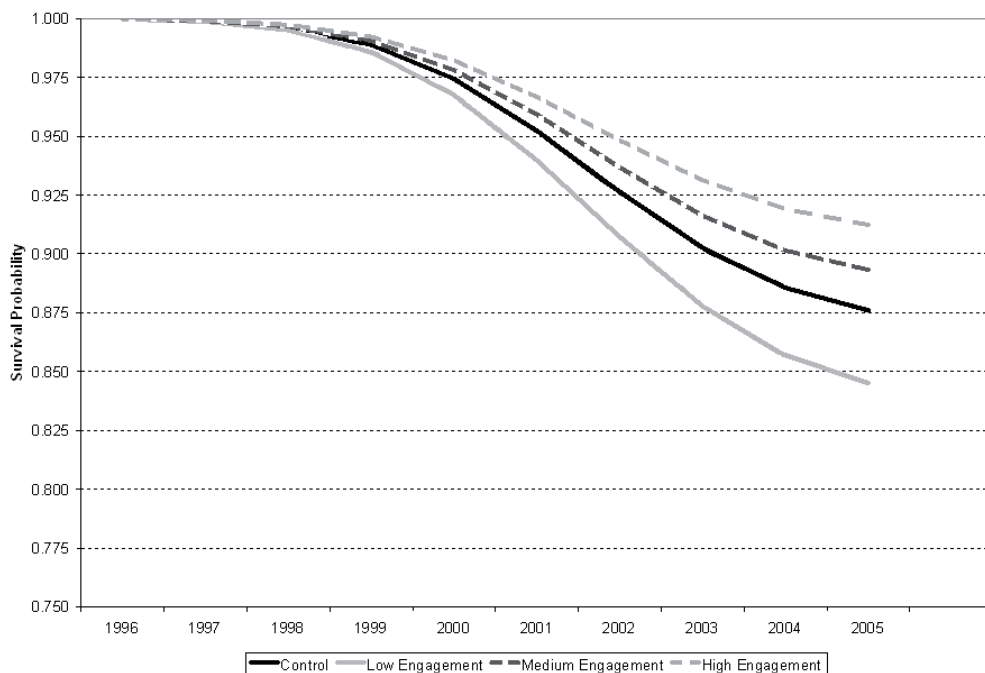
Note. HH = Household; SWD = Students with Disabilities; EL = English Learner
 * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

As recommended by Singer and Willett (2003), several subsets of interactions were tested. First, treatment-by-time effects were analyzed to examine whether the effect of LA's BEST waned over time. As previously mentioned, the effect of LA's BEST on juvenile crime was negligible during the treatment period because the hazard in elementary years was very low. No interaction effects were evident. The most discernible impact was found during the peak hazard years. This effect did have a significant impact on the survival probability. The survival curves highlighted the lack of benefit to LA's BEST students with sporadic attendance (low engagement). However, benefits increased when engagement and attendance increased. The cumulative benefit of the treatment was also demonstrated. As illustrated in Figure 2, by the end of the study period one would have expected about 9% of the medium engagement students and about 7% of the highly engaged students to have committed a crime.

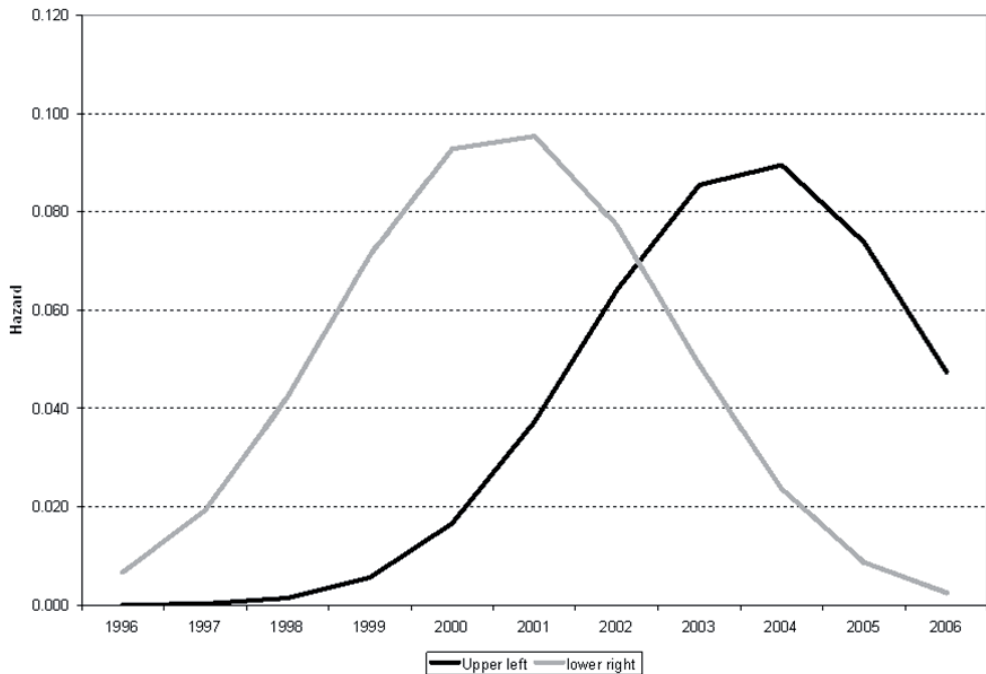
Figure 2. *Survival probabilities for treatment and control groups.*



Next, the effect of exposure was examined. This effect was not statistically significant at the 5% level. The model results suggested that the number of years a student attended LA's BEST was irrelevant and implied that as long as a student was engaged with the program for at least a year, benefits accrued. Further analyses revealed that the cumulative difference between the medium and high engagement groups and the control group were 1.8% and 3.7%, respectively. This reduction was associated with a 14% and a 29% increase in survival for the medium and high engagement groups. Figure 3 illustrates the results.

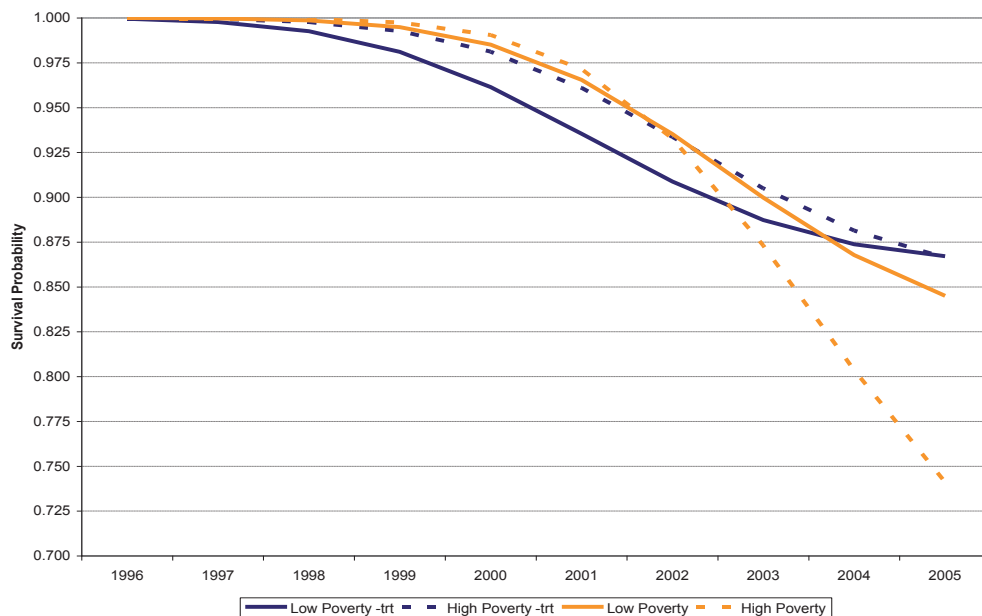
Figure 3. *Survival Probabilities including the effect of engagement.*

Furthermore, the nested nature of the data allowed the study team to examine the between-school and neighborhood effects that potentially mediated the hazard functions. As indicated in Figure 4, there was a different dynamic associated with student crimes at each school that was not accounted for by whether or not the school had a LA's BEST program. However, given the multilevel propensity scores method that was used to match students and schools, one would not expect substantive differences merely due to whether the school had LA's BEST program or not. Furthermore, the results of Model 4 employed the same set of treatment indicators and individual student characteristics as in Model 3. Thus, the variables carried over from Model 3 remained consistent in the expanded specification presented in Model 4. This implies that the treatment effect observed for students was not due to the school-level effects that could be associated with LA's BEST systematically selecting schools.

Figure 4. *Two school-specific hazard functions.*

Finally, the potential impact of the school context was examined. It was found that schools with a higher percentage of minority students as well as parents with less than a college education had systematically higher crime hazards. After accounting for individual student characteristics, treatment conditions, and other school context indicators, there was a substantive effect of neighborhood poverty on juvenile crime. The results in Model 4 indicate that although the average effect of LA's BEST on students who attended sporadically (low engagement) was zero, this effect was moderated by neighborhood poverty. Consistent with expectations, the results imply that survival probabilities were lower in high poverty neighborhoods; yet the results also imply that poverty had an inverse relationship with the estimated effect of the afterschool treatment for the low engagement group. This effect can be seen in Figure 5. The difference in survival probabilities between the low poverty, low engagement treatment, and control groups was minimal. However, the difference in survival probabilities between the high poverty, low engagement treatment, and control groups was substantively large – approximately 12 percentage points. This finding indicates that control group students in high poverty neighborhoods were substantially less likely to survive without committing a crime than those students that received afterschool treatment.

Figure 5. *Effect of neighborhood poverty and low treatment engagement on survival probability.*



To summarize, the results from the multilevel survival analyses indicated that LA's BEST positively impacted juvenile crime probabilities. More importantly, this was not the result of differential crime hazards between LA's BEST and non-LA's BEST schools, but it related directly to individual participation in the program. The students who were actively and intensely engaged benefited the most from LA's BEST, while those who were moderately engaged also benefited. In general, the students who only sporadically attended (low engagement of 4 to 9 days per month) did not benefit from the program unless mediating circumstances were considered. An important mediating factor was the percentage of households (per neighborhood population) living below the poverty threshold. The model shows that the treatment had positive potential of reduction in crime hazards in high poverty neighborhoods, which is arguably where LA's BEST focuses its attention.

6 Discussion and Conclusion

This study set out to evaluate the long-term effects of LA's BEST afterschool programming on resiliency against juvenile crime. The results from the multilevel survival analyses indicate that LA's BEST positively impacted juvenile crime survival probabilities. Moreover, the result of differential crime hazards was not found between LA's BEST and non-LA's BEST schools, but was directly related to individual student participation in the program. This indicates that it is highly unlikely that the afterschool program effects resulted from a selection process whereby LA's BEST

and juvenile crime hazards were jointly determined by some underlying process such as the selection of the “best performing” schools to place the programs.

More specifically, model results are consistent with expectations regarding student-level effects. For example, boys are estimated to be three times as likely to commit a crime as are girls. The results also demonstrate the importance of considering multiple characteristics simultaneously. For instance, African Americans do not have distinguishable crime rates in comparison to their classmates when student-level characteristics and parent level of education are controlled. It is also interesting to note that student classification bears some relationship to juvenile crime. For example, students with disabilities were estimated to have a crime rate that was 30% higher than for non-disabled students. The interplay of these factors combined warrants further study in its relationship with juvenile delinquency and crime.

The study also tested several potential interactions to identify effects of moderating student factors. For example, it was found that while parent education was significantly related to juvenile crime rate, it had no impact on program-level effects. The program benefits all students equally. Participating in the program reduces the hazard of committing crime for both students from homes of better-educated parents and students from less educated parents. This also implies that the program could not mitigate all existing differences in crime hazards.

Additionally, this study highlights that simple indicators of program participation are inadequate to capture program effects fully. Results indicate that exposure, intensity, and engagement all needed to be considered. When engagement and exposure were properly parameterized, the results were extremely robust across alternative specifications and modeling choices. The program effects remained consistent irrespective of other concomitant student factors or school and neighborhood context effects included in the model. The results were also consistent irrespective of whether the survival models were single level models, multilevel models, or multilevel frailty models. Results indicate that few benefits accrue to students who only sporadically attend (low engagement) but that benefits increase as engagement increases (although not linearly – rather, as a step function). In other words, students who are intensely engaged benefit most from LA’s BEST, while those who are moderately engaged also benefit.

When multilevel models were used to examine between-school differences in program effects, two key between-school effects emerged. First, controlling for individual student SES, school average SES played a significant role in moderated crime rates. That is, students who attended higher SES schools (whether or not the student was classified as low SES) demonstrated reduced crime hazards. Second, for students who sporadically attended, an important moderating factor was the percentage of households (per neighborhood population) living below the poverty threshold. The model results implied that even sporadic participation in the program lead to some reduction in crime hazards for students living in very poor neighborhoods. This provides further validation for LA’s BEST effects as these neighborhoods are a focus of the intervention.

Finally, previous literature has stated that afterschool programs are beneficial to student resiliency and to the prevention of juvenile delinquency (Huang et al., 2005; U.S. Department of Education, 2000). The model results of this study further imply that even sporadic participation in LA’s BEST leads to some reduction in crime hazards for students living in very poor neighborhoods. This finding affirms that while

adverse or punitive environments in the community and neighborhood (e.g., poverty, community disorganization, and exposure to drugs, criminal adults, violence, and racial prejudice) all contribute to antisocial behaviors (Hawkins et al., 2000), protective buffers (i.e. providing a safe place to go to after school and receiving mentorship and encouragement from adults) are especially important for these students in dissuading them from delinquent involvement.

In conclusion, analyses in this study highlight the importance of proper identification and categorization of the treatment and control conditions. In recognizing that participation in a program is more than a binary supposition, the findings clearly suggest that a sporadic level of participation is insufficient to reap program benefits. Future studies need to consider selection, program implementation, program quality, and participation very carefully. The study also reveals several implications for the implementation of afterschool programs so that participating students can reap maximum benefits. First, the traditional use of participation as a key measure of attendance (treatment) may be weak; instead, the results clearly demonstrate that the programs need to engage students and that this is accomplished with consistent attendance. Thus, programs need to focus on engaging students, and ensuring a minimum of 10 days of attendance per month in order for students to benefit. Having afterschool staff simply fill out student rosters year after year will not benefit students unless they are consistent and engaged participants.

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Appendix

The level 2 model allows the study to examine whether there is significant variation among schools in the hazard function. The final parameterized model includes both student and school-level covariates, and has been specified as follows:

LEVEL 1 MODEL

$$\text{Prob}(\text{CRIME3} = 1|\beta) = \varphi$$

$$\text{Log}[\varphi/(1 - \varphi)] = \eta$$

$$\eta = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{YEAR}) + \beta_2(\text{YEARSQR}) + \beta_3(\text{TREATMEN}) + \beta_4(\text{LABATMED}) + \beta_5(\text{LABATHI}) + \beta_6(\text{FEMALE}) + \beta_7(\text{HISPANIC}) + \beta_8(\text{BLACK}) + \beta_9(\text{ASIAN}) + \beta_{10}(\text{EVERDSP}) + \beta_{11}(\text{PEDUHI}) + \beta_{12}(\text{DURAT2}) + \beta_{13}(\text{LEP_SUM})$$

LEVEL 2 MODEL

$$\beta_0 = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\text{BLACK_PG}) + \gamma_{02}(\text{PEDUHI_P}) + \gamma_{03}(\text{LABEST_F}) + \gamma_{04}(\text{LATERLB}) + \gamma_{05}(\text{POVERTYP})$$

$$\beta_1 = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}(\text{BLACK_PG}) + \gamma_{12}(\text{PEDUHI_P}) + \gamma_{13}(\text{LATERLB}) + \gamma_{14}(\text{POVERTYP}) + u_1$$

$$\beta_2 = \gamma_{20}$$

$$\beta_3 = \gamma_{30}$$

$$\beta_4 = \gamma_{40}$$

$$\beta_5 = \gamma_{50}$$

$$\beta_6 = \gamma_{60}$$

$$\beta_7 = \gamma_{70}$$

$$\beta_8 = \gamma_{80}$$

$$\beta_9 = \gamma_{90}$$

$$b_{10} = \gamma_{100}$$

$$b_{11} = \gamma_{110}$$

$$b_{12} = \gamma_{120}$$

$$b_{13} = \gamma_{130}$$

Learning at Not-School: A Review of Study, Theory, and Advocacy for Education in Non-Formal Settings

Julian Sefton-Green. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2013

Reviewed by Joanna Bennett (Giessen University, Germany)

Most of the comparative literature concerning extended education deals, primarily, with various elements of its settings, political and social relevance, and general organization. However, very few researchers focus on the forms of learning that take place in these settings. Julian Sefton-Green aims to rectify this. Though his review of the material is by no means comprehensive, a fact he readily concedes (thus calling it “a ‘curated’ thematic analysis”), Julian Sefton-Green’s report not only covers key literature from various vantage points, making clear the different perspectives (and in some cases agendas) that are usually assumed when discussing extended education, but also aims to bring them together for as full a consideration as possible of learning in extended education.

As the book title already suggests, rather than defining which settings learning will be examined in, the report keeps this area as open and inclusive as possible by contrasting it against learning in a formal school setting, to allow for both an international analysis as well as a look at the development over time. Though there seems to be a conventional understanding of what school is, and delivers, the international implementation of extended education differs so greatly from this understanding and has also changed in the last decades, from none at all to firmly institutionalised, that this very open approach becomes necessary.

The report is divided into three subject areas, first attempting to map out different dimensions of informal and non-formal learning and looking at how learning in, as Julian Sefton-Green calls it, not-school has been outlined in the domains of context, the learner and knowledge. This analysis takes into special consideration the changes in attitude towards the merits of not-school learning, from focusing on the sociocultural effects to observing individuals as opposed to society as a whole, as well as the advantages not-school learning can have for them. The second area of the report focuses more directly on specific reports on, and analyses of, learning in the literature of extended education research and takes a look at creative media production as a way of furthering culture and an understanding of the individual’s own identity within that culture. Furthermore, the report takes a look at how and why meta-learning has been an integral part of not-school learning as a means to acquire the social capital of being able to structure and organise learning through learning to learn, especially for those who this has been denied to due to social and economic

inequality. The third section deals with the quite traditional area of in-formal, as opposed to non-formal, learning that takes place in the home, as well as how the interests sparked in this setting are, and can further be, picked up, utilised, and extended in not-school scenarios.

The concluding chapter offers a summary, as well as a brief comparison, of the different theories on learning in not-school settings that the report has offered up and formulates research questions in the interest of further investigation of this area of extended education, based upon these observations. In this conclusion Julian Sefton-Green also includes two cautions, probably both for researchers and policy-makers. He advises against succumbing to the impression that not-school could compensate for formal schooling, as he believes that some of the burden of aspiration that is put on formal education cannot be put on the non-formal sector, either. He, further, urges researchers to focus less on the specifics of the sector and do more to understand learning in the context of the lives of individuals and communities. Though focusing mostly on the area of learning, Julian Sefton-Green's report also offers a very well-structured and useful introduction to all things not-school and the research field surrounding it, without being too detailed to allow a convenient international comparison.

Blurring educational boundaries Young people's agency in learning practices

Barcelona, November 6th–7th, 2014

<http://som.esbrina.eu/blurring-educational-boundaries-symposium/>

The Symposium

Today the term learning reaches far beyond the classroom; the popular use of phrases such as lifelong learning or life-wide learning are a reflection of the ubiquitous status of the word in today's knowledge society. However, in educational discourse learning still remains closely linked to scholastic notions related to student assessment or curriculum objectives. Within this broad portrayal of learning, young people's agency is often ambiguous. On the one hand, the literature often paints a picture of a body of connected youth who use new technologies to engage in learning activities tailored to their personal interests. On the other hand, there is increasing criticism around the notion of lifelong learning as a key competence, as educational policies seem to respond more to new market demands than to a holistic approach once promoted by progressive educators.

Therefore a tension exists between research into learning experiences that contributes to the pedagogization of young people's lives, and the studies that attempt to articulate and recognize a more personal and social form of engagement that, for some young people, is allusive in a formal school context.

This conference aims to problematize and interrogate our understanding of the role of learning in young people's lives and will look critically at research objectives and methods. In order to transfer knowledge and generate new perspectives in the field, this conference encourages both scholars and PhD students to submit their research.

We specifically seek contributions that address the following issues:

1. The expanded notion of learning, and how it relates to how we understand and discuss the boundary between inside and outside school;
2. The relationship between learning and young people's use of digital technologies;
3. The methodological and ethical issues that arise when studying learning in informal and/or virtual contexts;
4. Doing research collaboratively (with young people); the advantages and limits of using 'with' as a methodological stance.

Submissions

Abstracts

Abstracts should be sent in a text document to: esbrina@ub.edu , together with contact details for the author(s) and a brief mention of the author(s) affiliation. Abstracts should not exceed 500 words (excluding references) and should clearly communicate the key points and conclusions of the paper, indicating the methodology, theoretical framework and the relationship to the call.

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