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Factors Influencing Transfer of Responsibility-Based Physical Activity Program Goals into Classrooms

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate what influences the transfer of responsibility-based physical activity program goals into classrooms. Participants were the two boys and three girls (age range 9-11) who had participated in the program one to three semesters, with at least an 80% attendance rate. Data were collected from individual interviews with the participants, the participants' classroom teachers, and the physical activity program leader. In addition, the researcher observed the program sessions and the participants' school life for eight weeks. Findings revealed the following three themes: (a) the effect of program structures and atmospheres, (b) youth as critical transfer agents, and (c) school climates as bridges and walls to transference. These findings reveal that transferring responsibility-based program values can be influenced by a complex interplay among individuals, the school, and program-related factors.

Given the rising number of youth being exposed to social problems, interest has grown in youth development programs as a viable context for fostering positive life skills and preventing problematic behaviors in young people. Earlier stages of youth programs have focused on preventing single-problem behavior. Recently, however, the focus has shifted toward promoting social,

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emotional, cognitive, and behavioral competencies (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004). As a way to promote positive youth development, many programs have adopted art, music, drama, and sports not only as important life skills but also as a means to build up those competencies. Among these, sports and physical activity have been widely used in life skill development (Danish, Forneris, & Wallace, 2005), in helping disaffected youth (Sandford, Armour, & Warmington, 2006), and in teaching citizenship (Eley & Kirk, 2002).

Don Hellison's (2003) Personal and Social Responsibility Model (PSRM) is one of the approaches focusing on cultivating personal and social well-being through participation in sports and physical activity. PSRM is characterized by four themes: integration, empowerment, relationship, and transfer. First, the model focuses on integrating the values of personal responsibility (i.e., effort, self-direction) and social responsibility (i.e., respecting and helping others) into physical activity programs. Second, the model is unique because of its emphasis on empowering participants to experience the value of responsibility constructively, allowing them to make choices and have a voice in the program's operation. Third, the model's foundation of pedagogy is based on developing trusting and respectful relationships among the participants and staff. The fourth theme represents the ultimate goal of the program, which is that lessons learned there should not be confined within the boundary of the gymnasium. The true impact of the program should be determined by how well participants can transform their lives by applying—or transferring—the program lessons to everyday life.

The issue of transfer has been studied in terms of program participants' changes in grades, office referrals, graduation rates, or levels of violence. For example, Cummings (1998) compared grades and graduation rates and found that program participants had more improved school-related outcomes than non-participants. Martinek, McLaughlin, and Schilling (1999) also supported findings of improvement in grades and behavior through anecdotal data. In addition to school-related outcomes, Wright (1998) demonstrated that program participation has contributed to the prevention of violence. Specifically, the use of conflict resolution skills by participants who had a higher rate of program attendance was significantly greater than for those with a lower attendance rate.

Although transfer is a critical feature of the model, research on it is still relatively new. Initial findings appear to support the

notion that PSRM-based programs promote the transfer of certain program values. However, a specific exploration of what factors are facilitating or impeding such transfer requires further research (Cummings, 1998; Martinek, Schilling, & Johnson, 2001). Transfer assumes that the skills and values learned in responsibility-based physical activity programs are applied in different contexts, so it is important to consider the programs and transfer contexts together.

In summary, overcoming the limitations of previous studies on transfer require a more comprehensive understanding of responsibility-based physical activity programming and the context in which transfer is expected to occur. It is also important to include program participants in the research process and carefully listen to what they have to say. In light of these needs, the purpose of this study is to investigate factors influencing the transfer of a youth program's goals into the classroom through observations of the program and classroom settings, plus interviews with the program leader, the participants, and the classroom teachers.

Methods

Setting

The setting for this study is an after-school sports program called Project Effort, provided by a university in the southeastern United States, and based on the Personal and Social Responsibility Model (Hellison, 2003). Project Effort is a multiyear program whose participants are referred to it by classroom teachers who recognize the students' lack of social skills and frequent behavioral problems. The participants come from the same public elementary school, Hope Academy (pseudonym), which is located in a lower socioeconomic neighborhood. The majority of the participants are African-American, and more than 90% of them receive reduced lunches. Their academic performance is lower than both district and state levels, so the school places a strong emphasis on closing the achievement gap and meeting adequate yearly progress goals.

In order to fully implement relationship and empowerment features of Project Effort, the sports club is relatively small, with about fifteen or sixteen members. The staff comprises university faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate assistants. Children are transported to the university once a week. The format of the program follows the order of relational time, awareness talk, a small group physical activity lesson, and reflection.

Participants

The research procedure was approved by the Institutional Review Board, and parental consent/participant assent, teacher and program leader consent were obtained. The selection of informants was determined by how well they could provide detailed information on both settings. Three selection criteria were applied: (a) length of participation in Project Effort, (b) attendance rate, and (c) ability to articulate thoughts and feelings in the interviews. Five participants were selected—three girls and two boys—who had enough program participation history and attendance rates to serve as a rich source of information. The biographic information of the participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Participants

Name	Grade	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Length	Attendance
Shawntell	4th	9	F	A-A	3 semesters	100%
Shanice	4th	10	F	A-A	1 semester	80%
DJ	4th	10	M	A-A	3 semesters	90%
TJ	5th	11	M	A-A	1 semester	90%
Star	5th	10	F	A-A	3 semesters	100%

A-A: African-American

Data Sources and Collection

A qualitative case study approach was adopted to provide in-depth and situation-specific descriptions and interpretations of participants' perceptions of Hope Academy and Project Effort. Data were collected from interviews as well as observations of Project Effort sessions and the participants' classroom behavior. Data were collected by the first author who was an ex-staff member of Project Effort. The researcher's familiarity with Project Effort provided an insider's view and facilitated understanding of data within the context of program setting. In order to minimize the researcher's

potential bias coming from the past experience at Project Effort, another external investigator who was not involved in program implementation served as an external auditor. The external auditor looked over accuracy of transcription, relevance of interpretation of data, and raised questions to check the rigor of findings.

Individual interviews with participants. The purpose of interviewing the program participants was to obtain information about Project Effort experiences, classroom life experiences, and factors influencing the transfer of program values to the classroom setting. Participants were asked to describe the following: (a) a typical Project Effort session and their typical school day experiences; (b) what values and norms they learned in both settings; (c) how they behaved in both settings; (d) how they applied the goals of Project Effort to the school setting; and (e) what factors may have influenced their application of the goals to the school setting. Each interview lasted 45-60 minutes.

Interviews with teachers and the program leader. Corroborating evidence was elicited from both the Project Effort program leader and the participants' classroom teachers. The teachers were asked about the following: (a) the strengths and weaknesses of each participant in the class; (b) observed behavior changes of the participants through the course of the year; (c) the specific benefits of Project Effort; (d) how participants described Project Effort experiences to them; (e) whether any Project Effort values were addressed in their classes; (f) their expectations of students; and (g) the general class climate. The interview with the program leader also addressed the issues of strengths and weaknesses, behavior change over the course of participation, the benefits of participating, reported school life experiences, the leader's expectations for the participants, and the general climate of Project Effort. Following the interviews, a member check interview was conducted to establish credibility by sharing the data and interpretations with the participants in order to check the accuracy of the transcription and the initial interpretation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Non-participant observation. For the purpose of obtaining specific behavioral information in both the sports club and the classrooms, the first author observed the program participants' behaviors for eight weeks. The observations included a description of a typical school day and a Project Effort session, as well as a contextual description of the physical surroundings of both settings. Considering that the focus of the study was to examine the transfer

of value-based youth program goals, the researchers specifically focused on how the Project Effort values of respect, effort, self-direction, and helping others were interpreted and communicated in both settings.

Data Analysis

All hand-written observations were transformed into computer data files. Interviews were recorded on audiotapes and transcribed verbatim. As advocated by Tesch (1990), the researchers first read and re-read each individual's interview data and field notes repeatedly and took marginal notes to grasp the whole picture before coding and analyzing the data. The data were then reduced by developing codes, which were grouped into categories according to similarity. The researchers examined the consistent patterns among the participants and developed themes to explain factors influencing transfer.

In order to enhance the trustworthiness of data, three strategies were used (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). First, the data were analyzed with an external investigator who had previously worked as a staff member at Project Effort. Second, multiple sources of data were obtained from interviews with participants, classroom teachers, and the program leader, along with observations of both settings, in order to provide confirming or disconfirming evidence that data interpretation was consistently recorded. Third, the researchers used a member check with participants to ensure the accuracy of transcriptions and interpretations.

Findings

Three themes emerged from the analysis of the interview and observation data in this study. The first theme addresses the characteristics of the program as they relate to the issue of transfer; the second theme involves the role of individual participants in the transfer process; and the third is related to school climate.

Theme 1: Effects of Program Atmosphere and Structure

Findings of this study revealed that program-related factors also influenced participants' goal transfer. First of all, participants reported that the program leader's role-modeling behaviors facilitated their application of program values. For example, Shawntell, a fourth grade girl, reported that the program staff demonstrated and practiced

values in the program setting. When asked if there were any changes in her behavior since joining Project Effort, Shawntell replied:

> Yes. I was a class clown, and I had gotten, like, nine dots [warnings] and I could see everybody had only, like, a few or one or two … Dora and all other college students there, they showed me how to be respectful and how not to be smarty-pants. So, I learned at Project Effort how to be respectful and that's the thing they showed me. And I was saying, 'I gotta stop being a class clown, it ain't getting me nowhere but to Ms. Clara's office or Ms. Hampton's office.…' If I wouldn't go there [Project Effort], I would still be a class clown.

Program staff also demonstrated high, clear expectations that also played a positive role in facilitating transfer. TJ, a fifth grade boy, felt that program staff expected him to do his best at Project Effort and in school. He said, "I learned effort from grown-ups. They [program staff] keep saying never give up and they tell you to keep trying when we play basketball or jump rope. They want us to do our best and work hard to reach our goals."

Participants also reported that the program structure was flexible enough to offer them alternative ideas to develop a sense of responsibility. Although Shawntell did not like sports activity, she stayed at the program because she was allowed to take responsibility such as checking attendance or preparing snacks. Program leader Dora also addressed this issue:

> There are so many different reasons that kids come to Project Effort. But if Shawntell doesn't like basketball—because it might not be her thing—I can find other ways to get her connected and keep her connected with the club, whether it be with checking attendance or setting up snacks.…Shawntell is definitely a born leader. She will figure out ways to stay connected and is very creative.

Unlike the school atmosphere, which limited socializing with peers, participants reported that they had many opportunities to socialize with peers and program staff. A fourth grade girl, Shanice also said that she was attracted to the structure of the program because it helped her establish relationships with friends and staff. She said, "What makes me feel good about Project Effort is hanging

around with my friends.…You get to do everything there! You get to make friends, you get to make friends with grown-ups also."

Finally, participants had ample opportunities to apply program values while participating in physical activities. Either program staff or participants selected one of the values at the beginning of each session. Participants then "experienced" the value by engaging in a specific physical activity. After each activity, they reflected on the values they learned in the program and exploring the possibility of applying them in their daily lives was one of the factors that facilitated transfer.

In sum, program-related factors such as program leaders' role modeling behaviors, flexible program structure reflecting the needs of individual participants, and the structured opportunity to learn and experience the values in various contexts facilitated participants' application of the program values to the school context.

Theme 2: Youth as Critical Agents of Transfer

Findings from the study supported the premise that participants' perceptions of the program, their aspirations to use its goals, and their confidence levels played a critical role in the transfer process and influenced their willingness to transfer those goals. For example, when asked if he practiced what he learned at Project Effort in school, TJ replied as follows:

> Absolutely! Because some things they [program staff] talk about in Project Effort can help us at our school, too. When they say, take it outside the gym, they could be talking about showing respect during the school bus ride or showing best effort in math classes. So, if everyone could go [to Project Effort], it would be the easiest school because you know what you're doing, you know what you're talking about, and you hardly need help and you can go on and on and on with it.

Another participant, Shanice, also valued program-related goals and the application of them in her daily life. When she was asked to describe Project Effort, she said:

> I would say, I go to Project Effort to learn goals: respect one another, doing your best, self-direction, always give

> people encouragement, and never be getting such a stinking attitude, talking about 'whatever' and stuff like that…. And this is a lesson that I need to teach my little sister.… And that's how best friends or true friends will do. This is what we need to be good friends—to be nice to each other and respect one another.

Unlike TJ and Shanice, Star expressed a personal aspiration to use and apply the program goals in her future life. She told of her desire to return to Project Effort in the future as a staff member and to help and teach future members what she had learned in the program. When asked about the most important thing she learned at Project Effort, Star, a fifth grade girl, replied:

> The most important thing I learned through Project Effort is to have pride and effort in yourself, and then you can do it. It's important because when I get older I want to help you—I want to come to this university and help you with it; if ya'll still have it [Project Effort] then, I would like to help. I know a lot of things, like how to get it straight, and what to do if they need help or something like that. Because I've learned goals that I can reach, like respect, effort, and helping others.

Participants' personal aspirations were driven by the perceived importance of program values and the expected benefits coming from the application of those values in their future lives. The personal desire to transfer can also be interpreted as an outcome of program participation. For example, Star reported that her improved sense of confidence and knowledge obtained from the program gave her the personal desire to apply program goals as a future Project Effort leader.

Participants' self-confidence also turned out to be a facilitating factor in the transfer of program goals. For example, when Star was asked how she applied the program goals, she said, "Like, in math tests, I know I can do it. By looking at the mirror at myself, and thinking, I know I can do it. I will do it." Star's classroom teacher, Ms. Dee, confirmed that Star improved her scores and made the honor roll at the end of the year.

In sum, individuals' opinions of the importance of the youth program goals along with their self-confidence and future aspirations

seemed to influence the transfer of program goals. Thus, gaining a sense of personal worth appeared to be a major factor in the process.

Theme 3: School Climate as Bridges and Walls to Transfer

School climate emerged as a double-sided factor that either facilitated or impeded the transfer of Project Effort values to the classroom setting. The teachers' interest in the responsibility-based physical activity program, structured opportunities to apply program goals in the classroom, and the congruent value system between the two settings were all instrumental in facilitating transfer. Meanwhile, a combative peer culture, distortion of values, and lack of empowerment by teachers in the school setting turned out to be walls to transfer, impeding the application of program values in the school.

Bridges to transfer

First of all, participants reported that the teachers' support helped them apply Project Effort goals to the classroom setting. For example, when teachers expressed an interest in Project Effort by asking questions about it or talking about its goals, participants felt it was easy to work on those goals in the school. When asked if she tried Project Effort goals at school, Shawntell replied:

> Yes. I tried effort and respect. 'Cause like yesterday, Ms. Lorie asked, 'What did you learn there?' I said, 'Ms. Lorie, it was about effort and respect.' And I told her what we did here.… She said, 'It's good to have a program for kids when they want to be jumpy and all that.' So yesterday, 'cause Ms. Lorie asked us about Project Effort, so I tried what they [program staff] said.

While Shawntell's comment does not necessarily indicate that respect and effort were evident in the classroom, it does show that the awareness of these values was present. According to Hellison (2003), self-awareness of these values is an important "first step" in their eventual application outside the gym.

It appears that the teachers' interest in Project Effort played an important role in encouraging participants' connection between the two settings. Classroom teacher Ms. Dee reported that participation in a teacher workshop provided by Project Effort helped her understand the program, and also to build a consensus on its importance for

underserved youth. When asked what she knew about Project Effort, Ms. Dee described its value as follows:

> I went to the workshop that they had at the University last year and I was impressed because I always feel that students with the type of background that we have here at Hope [Academy] they can get away from the regular setting. I also think it's good for our kids to be able to go on a college campus, to work with college students, and to see the kinds of things that are available to them. It allows them to maybe begin to think in the back of their mind, these are some of the kinds of things that I want to do. I want these kids to realize there is another world out there, and it's out there waiting for them.

Coupled with teachers' interest in Project Effort, the second bridge was the structured opportunity to apply program goals in the school setting. For example, Star applied the goal-setting skills learned at Project Effort to her school life when the guidance counselor gave her a chance to set goals at the beginning of the school year. At the back of her classroom, Star's goal was posted on the wall. It read:

> My goal for this year is to pass the EOG [End of Grade] test and to get an A/B Honor Roll award. How I'm going to pass the EOG and get an award is by working hard, listening to the teacher, classmates, counselor, and the principal. (Field notes)

Star's classroom teacher, Ms. Dee, explained that Star worked on goal-setting with her school counselor and eventually achieved her goal. When participants were given the opportunity to take responsibility in the school, they actively used it to practice responsibility. DJ's classroom teacher, Ms. Lorie, reported that DJ volunteered to take care of the fish in the classroom, and that he demonstrated a high level of responsibility:

> DJ takes care of the fish. That's his job, and he makes sure they're fed each day; he turns the light on, makes sure they're fed. The first thing he did today, he was out yesterday sick, and he came in and he said, uh, 'Who took care of the fish?'

> And I said, 'Somebody did.' He said, 'Well, did somebody feed them?' 'Was the light turned on?' So he takes it seriously. So he took care of them today.

Finally, a congruency of the value system between the two settings turned out to be another bridge to transfer. The value of effort and trying hard was consistently emphasized both at Project Effort and at school, through the school ceremony and in the school rules and expectations (i.e., a hallway poster stating "I will try to do my best in everything I do."). The value of "trying your best" was also confirmed through the interview data. When asked what she learned at school, Star said, "The most important thing I learned in Hope is that you just keep on trying and trying and you will get it." Star's classroom teacher, Ms. Dee, confirmed that Star's comments were aligned with her expectations of students. Ms. Dee said, "I expect them to put forth the best effort, I don't allow the students to use the words 'I can't' in my room. They have to show me that they are putting forth an effort to do something."

The remaining participants also reported that the school emphasized effort. For example, Shanice mentioned that her classroom teacher and all the school staff emphasized the idea of "never give up" in her school life. The congruency in the value helped Shanice to do her best in the school setting. During the observation, Shanice actively participated in classroom activities by raising her hand to the teacher's questions and seeking help when she needed it to solve problems. For her high level of effort, the classroom teacher gave her a blue ribbon, which read "Best Effort in Hope Academy," and Shanice accepted this award with great pride.

Of course, the extent to which either context served as a causal factor in behavior change remains unclear. An important point to be made here is that having these "messages" at school helped to reinforce the values of the Project Effort and vice versa. Perhaps that is why "bridges" serve as perfect metaphors for connecting the two contexts; that is, values transfer can cross-over in either direction.

Walls to transfer

Findings also revealed three school-related factors that impeded the transfer of Project Effort goals to the classroom: peer culture differences, distortion of certain program values, and lack of empowerment in school. Participants reported that peer culture

differences between Project Effort and Hope Academy made it difficult for them to transfer program goals. For example, Star addressed the influence of peer culture differences as follows:

> In Project Effort I show lots of respect because I have lots of friends there and they will cheer me up. But in school it's kind of hard sometimes.… Like they get all up in my face and say, 'I don't like you' and that's what makes it so difficult to show respect.

In addition to an unfriendly peer culture in school, peer pressure made it difficult for participants to apply program goals in the school setting. For example, when DJ, a fourth grade boy, was reprimanded by his teacher for inappropriate behavior, he responded by banging the wall. During a follow-up informal interview, DJ explained that the reason for his outburst was a way to get attention and acceptance by his peers. He felt that being a well-behaved boy meant risking his status within his peer group and being teased by his peers:

> Because I want to get attention. Like, it will make kids laugh and make fun. And I think it's funny. And they say, You're cool and you are popular.' Because we think doing bad things is popular, like laughing, saying stuff behind teacher's back, things like that. They will think I'm funny 'cause I'm doing those things. If you behave well, they will start picking on you. They will say, 'You know what? That boy is well-behaved so we can pick on him.' And they will call your name or call you, like, 'crack head.'

The school's lack of empowerment to allow students voice their feelings and thoughts was yet another factor that impeded participants' ability to transfer program values. This feature was represented in school activities such as silent lunch, quiet snack, and silent speedball. Snack time was listed as "quiet snack" in the class schedule. One of the Fun Friday activities, "silent speedball," also stressed the importance of being quiet by playing a game without talking. In a way, it seems contradictory to ask students to be silent at snack, lunch, and recess times, because these are the times that give them a chance to socialize with peers and practice social skills.

Star reported that the quiet norms were impeding her applicability of program values in school. For example, she stated that the norms of being quiet made it difficult for her to help other people in her classroom. She stated, "Like if teacher tells us to be quiet, we can't help each other 'cause we have to be quiet. That's not right because sometimes the teacher don't help the students and they still need help."

Another source of disempowerment was a lack of emphasis on the value of helping others. For example, school expectations were posted on a hallway wall proclaiming the value of cooperation. It read, "I will cooperate with others," or "I will be helpful, not hurtful." Yet actual classroom tasks were centered on doing highly individualized tasks, such as working on standardized test preparation, computerized testing, or filling out worksheets. Engaging in cooperative tasks was seldom, if ever, encouraged. A lack of social interaction and the de-emphasis on the value of helping others were more than likely due to the focus on raising test scores—a byproduct of the No Child Left Behind law. For example, when a student in Ms. Dee's class was trying to help a peer clean up, Ms. Dee actually discouraged his behavior.

> After finishing snacks, Demante had gone back to the classroom and brought a broom to help his peers clean the floor. But Ms. Dee said: 'Now, everybody sit down and take out your textbooks. Demante, you don't have to broom right now. That broom doesn't help you to pass the EOG [End of Grade] test…. You need to do well on the EOG test and raise your scores. That's what everybody wants.' (Field notes)

Finally, the difference in communicating values between the two settings also turned out to be a barrier to value transfer. For example, one of the Project Effort values, respect, was interpreted as being able to conform to authority figures rather than respecting all people. Shanice described the image of a good student as being one who observes the value of respect. Her interpretation of respect, however, was centered on unconditional obedience of an adult's authority. Shanice described the image of a good student in the school this way:

> Good students do respect, you know, they follow the teacher's directions, and that's what everybody should do. Not only just teachers' direction, but their parents. You know, we should respect grown-ups.…Sometimes I feel like, 'I can do whatever I want to do, because she's not my teacher or my momma.' But you know, I still got to respect her or him, no matter what.

This definition appeared to be shaped by her school's expectations, which stressed the importance of showing politeness and niceness to others. In addition, the classroom rule of "Don't talk back to the teacher" also influenced her interpretation of respect as conforming to an authority figure. This refracted definition shaped behavioral standards in the school in a way that indicated they needed only to respect adults rather than to show respect to others.

Another value, responsibility, was also distorted in the school setting. Although this value was reflected in the school's "responsible discipline plan," the school pledge, and school expectations, its definition was limited to accepting the consequences of one's behavior rather than experiencing choice and having a voice in the school. For example, the Hope Academy Expectations specified that "We must accept that my behavior is my choice" and "I am responsible for my actions." The definition was interpreted as conforming to the rules and expectations without causing any trouble; it made participants internalize a top-down discipline approach. The following comments from Shanice showed that responsibility had more to do with suffering the consequences:

> They [kids who do not follow rules] will get in trouble. If I was the teacher, I would have called them! First of all, I would have taken them to the office and then I would have called their mothers. And then they would have suffered the consequences and then they would have been grounded for a whole week. That's how I feel about. If they don't listen to me, they are gonna have to suffer the consequences.

Discussion

In examining influential factors in young people's transfer of responsibility-based physical activity program values to a school

setting, this study found that such transfer is influenced by program structure and atmosphere, individuals' personal characteristics, and school climate. First, the structure and atmosphere of the program played a critical role in influencing the transfer of its values to the school setting. Program staff were keys in getting students to internalize program values (McLaughlin, 2000). Study findings reveal that the staff's role model behaviors helped participants apply program values in school. Moreover, the delivery of the program was flexible enough to cater to an individual's source of attachment to the program (Petipas et al., 2005). Although physical activity can be a great hook for young participants (Hartmann, 2003), some are attracted to a physical activity-based youth program for varied reasons such as making friends, relationships with staff and mentors, and taking responsibility in an alternative environment (Schilling 2001; Schilling, Martinek, & Carson, 2007). Therefore, program leaders should always be aware of participants' reasons for coming to their programs.

Second, findings indicate that those who valued the worth of the program and had a strong desire to apply it in their current and future lives appeared to have a high level of self-confidence for transfer. Findings of studies have also indicated that individuals who lack self-confidence tend to avoid making choices for fear of failure and find it difficult to take responsibility outside program settings (Martinek & Hellison, 1998; Walsh, 2008). Participants in Project Effort valued the program because it enhanced their level of confidence through improvement in grades and behavior at school.

Third, this study seemed to find that certain aspects of school climate can be a bridge to transfer. When participants had a structured opportunity to transfer values in school, they were willing to apply Project Effort goals to the school setting. The role of the teacher was found to be instrumental in the process. By providing support and structured opportunities to apply the skills learned at Project Effort, the application of values in the classroom became more tenable. Petipas et al. (2005) suggest that youth program participants need support and guidance if transfer is to occur. This is particularly expected when youth lack the confidence to make the application. In order to provide appropriate support, teachers should be informed about the program goals and content. Classroom teachers in this study were given information about the program through a teacher workshop, which turned out to be a powerful medium connecting

the professionals from two different settings, similar to findings of Heath and McLaughlin (1994).

Fourth, lack of empowerment in school was an impeding factor to the transfer of program goals. The spatial arrangement of the classrooms was sociofugal, characterized by separated rows of desks and chairs, and did not allow much social interaction and cooperation among students (McLaren, 1999). It appeared to be strengthened with the enactment of the No Child Left Behind law, thus requiring students to continuously work on their practice test packets at their desks. As described by Sitton (1980), teachers often organize their classes to focus on academic content rather than peer-to-peer relationships. Therefore, students do not have much chance to apply the value of cooperation in a school setting. Under the pressure of standardized testing, it appears that teachers are replacing humanistic concerns or issues related to character enhancement with accountability in academic achievement (Brimi, 2009; Goldstein, 2004).

Finally, findings revealed that there was congruence as well as incongruence in the communication of values between the two settings in the study. Both Project Effort and Hope Academy were very consistent in emphasizing a high level of effort and work ethic. Compared with other values, such as respect, self-direction, and helping others, the value of effort was the most consistent between the two settings.

The values of respect and responsibility, however, were interpreted by students as being able to avoid conflicts with others and conform to authority figures in the school. Brint, Contreras, and Matthews (2001) argue that the values of respect and responsibility are commonly "refracted through the prism of the school's underlying organizational interests" (p. 169), such as maintaining order and controlling student behavior. Such distortion of values made Project Effort participants internalize a top-down discipline approach rather than viewing the values learned in the program.

Implications

The findings of this study indicate that the transfer of responsibility-based physical activity program values is influenced by a complex interplay among individuals, school, and program-related factors. Based on these findings, the following implications

can be offered for youth development programming and future research.

First, it is critical in the designing of responsibility-based youth programs to establish clear strategies for making transfer of values possible. Knowing what and how to implement these strategies is therefore essential and should include a variety of individual and group learning experiences. Therefore, ample opportunities to practice and apply program values need to be present and sustained over time. And, self reflection must also be a part of the learning experience. Without reflection personal meaning of any learning experience will be lost. As supported by this study, participants value program participation when they have a clear understanding of what they are learning and the impact it can have on their lives. In the end, practice, application, and reflection all become important allies in broadening participants' views of how program values (goals) intersect with their own life experiences.

Second, it is critical to create the "right context" for ensuring successful transfer. Participants should be provided social support that encourages them to apply the skills learned in the program, as well as many structured opportunities to apply the skills and values at the transfer site. The support from transfer sites must be based on an understanding of the program's philosophy and goals. In order to promote mutual understanding of the contexts, youth programs should have diverse channels for communicating well among family, school, and community (Heath & McLaughlin, 1994).

Finally, this study suggests that Project Effort has a unique culture that leads to successful implementation of its goals and values. Without detailed descriptions of the specific culture of a program, the transmission of a program model with a set of goals and several strategies may not be sufficient to disseminate the program (Altman & Malarkey, 1993). Further studies are needed for the examination of successful program cultures, including staff characteristics, program atmosphere, program structure, and flexible program delivery features.

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