School discipline helps establish a safe and supportive environment for student learning and development. The Me, Others, Property (M.O.P.) and 4 As (Admit, Apologize, Accept, Amends) Civic Education School Discipline Program was developed over 20 years ago by Susan Nichter, a social worker, with the aim to improve school discipline practices by fostering students’ civic education skills.

However, its evidence-based properties had yet to be evaluated. This research used a 45 item survey administered to 70 second and third grade students in two elementary schools in Indiana, where the program began. The preliminary results show that all students scored high, 77% or higher, on the 10 key civic education properties of the model when surveyed in the years immediately following participation in the program. This provides preliminary evidence of effectiveness of the M.O.P Program and reasons for duplication in other schools from the students’ perspective.

To use a survey (M.O.P. Student Assessment), based on school discipline and civic education research, to assess the impact of the M.O.P. Rules Civic Education Program on ten factors of civic education in two elementary schools from the students’ perspective.

Improve practice outcomes of M.O.P. program through evaluation research.

Offer opportunities for duplication in other schools around the world to foster long-term impact in civic education and discipline.

Schools are obligated to structure student learning environments that foster success. Literature provides evidence this is done most effectively through the presence of classroom and school rules and procedures (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). However, research also indicates that schools appear to do the least to engage students who need the most in the area of effective school social bonding (Dryfoos, 1996; Meier, Stewart, & England, 1989). This failure to meet the needs of at-risk students jeopardizes their entire future and may lead to early involvement in negative activities (Dryfoos, 1990).

Further, the APA Presidential Task Force on Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) suggests that the use of EBP in schools can help boost students psychological wellbeing, and also create the grounds for productive learning outcomes (Evidence-Based Practice in Psychology, 2006). There is increasing appeal for interventions developed on the basis of data-informed practices (Kelly et al., 2010).

This research provides preliminary evidence that supports both the effectiveness of the M.O.P. program in relation to past research in the area of school discipline and civic education, as well as establishing the program as an emerging EBP.

References