

# The junior reserve officers training corps

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The Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) program was founded in 1916 to build a strategic pool of reserve manpower for the US Army and later to motivate young people to be better Americans. While some teachers have rated that “ JROTC is a valuable addition to any student’s educational program”(Perusse, 1997, p. 79), others have a more ambivalent view.

There is a widespread perception that the JROTC program has not achieved its objectives and that “ Questions are raised whether other youth development programs are as good, or better than JROTC in promoting youth development”( Walls, 2003, P. 2). However, the official website of the US Army Cadet Command states that “ JROTC has an enormously positive effect on our youth, helping young people from across the socio-economic spectrum” (2008).

To understand the complexities of perceptions, it is necessary to study social theories of child development as articulated by Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg, John Dewey and Daniel Goleman. Their works as analyzed by Cleary (2008) would form the backdrop of this study.

The advantages of military way of life by (Price, 2007), would be examined. RAND Corporation studies on the efficacy of the JROTC in developing career of students (Elliot et al., 2001) and ( Hanser & Robyn, 2000) will also be examined. Perceptions of School principals on the JROTC (Logan, 2000) would provide academic input.

The views of the 'nay sayers' such as Block (2006) who states that the JROTC discriminates against homosexuals, certain immigrant populations and children with disability (131) would also be reviewed.

The main purpose of the research is to examine the perceptions of teachers and parents concerning the efficacy of JROTC program. The research will also attempt to find out what tangible benefits have accrued to those students who have undergone JROTC training.

“ There is some evidence that JROTC cadets demonstrate slightly better academic performance than their contemporaries in the general school population” ( Price, 2007, P. 16). If the findings of the research are positive, the study would then recommend steps required to be taken to reinforce proactive involvement of parents, teachers and student’s to lend further impetus to the program.

The research shall use Qualitative approach such as direct interviews and questionnaires as well as quantitative approach of analyzing socio-economic statistics obtained from US government sites or sites of renowned academic institutions. Extensive use of previously submitted thesis associated with the subject and online findings of professional journals will also be used.

The study will comprise of five chapters. The first chapter, Introduction, will give a short history of the JROTC program, its associated difficulties, research question and limitations of the study. Chapter Two will cover the review of literature, explaining the various social theories of child development and the benefits of military training.

Chapter three will focus on the methodology of the study, the research design, participants, instrumentation, data collection and analyses. Chapter four will give the study report in descriptive as well as tabular terms. Chapter

five will discuss the conclusions and the possible ways for implementation of the study.

Since the JROTC program is widely dispersed all over United States it would not be

possible to cover the entire spectrum of population affected by the JROTC program. The study will concentrate on one high school having JROTC program and the other without the program. In both these schools the teachers, parents, ex- students and present students would be interviewed and be given a questionnaire.

The population set will cover the high and the low income groups as well as the minorities. The school chosen for with JROTC program will be an inner city school to get the right perspective.

The research data collated as recordings and transcription of interviews of the population set as also questionnaires for qualitative analysis will be used. Quantitative data derived from government websites on Education, Justice, School Crime, Defense Manpower Data, US Census Bureau and the National Youth Development Information Center will be used.

In this competitive world, parents have less time for their children resulting in diminished parental control. A culture of 'instant gratification' is leading the youth to crime for which education is the only solution. " JROTC is presented by its proponents as being part of the solution to the crisis of public education in minority" (AFSC. org, P. 6).

JROTC has also encouraged other programs as Hughes, Bailey & Mechur, report " research so far has found generally positive results — the school-to

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work strategy does benefit students, teachers, and employers” ( 2001, P. 9). Thus positive social change due to JROTC program is a possibility.

This dissertation is designed to have a fresh look at the JROTC program and its efficacy in addressing the problems besetting the American youth especially amongst the economically disadvantaged groups and the minority community. The qualitative aspects of the research will make use of weighted matrix method to determine the validity of a result.

The quantitative aspects look at intensive data mining of government sites to derive the right conclusions on the positive or negative effects of the JROTC program in ameliorating the socio-economic conditions of the disadvantaged sections of the society. The study will look at the entire problem of perceptions holistically and recommend ways and means to transform this perception to add further impetus to the JROTC program and bring about an alignment in the views of the teachers and parents alike.

## References

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