

Extracurricular activities and academic success



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This research proposal is designed to determine if there is a correlation between extracurricular activities and academic success in college. It is hypothesized that there is a very strong positive correlation between involvement in extracurricular activities and academic success. School districts are worried that they are budgeting too much money for programs that do not directly influence academics. This study is important so that school districts will know where to adequately put money within their schools so that all people will benefit to the best of their ability.

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Is there a Correlation Between Extracurricular Activities and Academic Success in College?

The purpose of this study is to measure the correlation between a college student's involvement in extracurricular activities (i. e. sports, band, drama, cheerleading, and so on) and their grades compared to students who are not involved in any extracurricular activities. The main debate this association carries is whether extracurricular activities are actually beneficial or if they just force students to keep their academics up because of eligibility. Rachel Hollrah did a study in which she determined that extracurricular activities “ help students to receive better grades by teaching them character building lessons, teaching them lifelong skills, saving some at risk students who would possibly drop out of school, and helping students develop social skills.” (Hollrah) All of these things are very vital to a human beings life and being able to function in the real world. One must have an education to be able to get a good job and make the money that is needed to support oneself

or even a family. But as important as education, one also needs social skills and a very strong sense of character, morals, and ethics. Without these things, one can very quickly and easily lose sense of them and become someone they never were or wanted to be.

One main thing that has been associated with success in general is self-esteem. When an individual succeeds, they usually automatically begin to feel

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better about their endeavors and about themselves as a person. Diana Grafford from the Department of Psychology at Missouri Western State University feels

strongly about self-esteem associated with one's success. " Self-esteem is affected by one's performance on the stage, on the football field, or by playing a musical instrument. A person's confidence in their ability to compete, perform, or satisfactorily complete a task can have a positive or negative effect, depending on the interpretation of success." (Grafford) Most individuals will begin to see themselves in a better light when they succeed and their self-esteem will begin to increase. This, then, will start to carry over into more parts of their life and help them to succeed in many other things rather than just one section. Some individuals, in contrast, view success in different ways and may not feel better about themselves but actually begin to feel worse. Some feel like they have to be at the top in everything they do or they are not successful at all. It all just depends on the particular person.

Kimiko Fujita conducted a study in which he measured the correlation between academic success and extracurricular activities. “ Total extracurricular activity participation (TEAP), or participation in extracurricular activities in general, is associated with an improved grade point average, higher educational aspirations, increased college attendance, and reduced absenteeism.” (Fujita) He also discovered that “ participation in some activities improves achievement,

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while participation in others diminishes achievement.” (Fujita) The reason for the positive or negative change is different with each individual and it all just depends on each person’s goals, character, determination, and willing to work as hard as they can to be successful.

One important debate is whether colleges look at more than just grades and GPA when considering accepting someone into school. A lot of people think that a student’s involvement in extracurricular activities should also be considered when accepting students and handing out scholarships. “ Rank in class (RIC) in a study done by George Mason University (Podhajasky, 1997), was determined to be a strong predictor of success in college, but student environment was found to play a part in the eventual retention to graduation. It was found that students who became involved in extracurricular activities while in college enhanced their college experience and increased their future success.” (Neal).

Most research that I did had no emphasis on the difference between the involvement and the academic success between black students and white students. One study was done where they tested to see if there was any difference at all. " The relationship between participation in extracurricular activities and academic achievement was examined. Black eighth graders and white eighth graders completed achievement tests and described school and nonschool activities. Amount of participation was positively related to academic

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achievement. The relationship was stronger for white students overall, and for school-related activities for both groups." (Gerber)

One study showed that not only did extracurricular activities help students stay focused on academics but it also helped them to develop time management skills that were very crucial for later on in life. This study showed that the student is learns early how to juggle multiple tasks on a daily basis will be more prepared for adult life. " These time management skills that are acquired keep the students organized and more able to get everything done within given time constraints. This ability, to organize time, is also very useful later in life. When students are done with school, they will be expected to juggle a job, a family, and many other things that require successful time management skills. Therefore, being involved with activities not only brings better grades, but it also promotes an easier transition into adult life." (Solinger)

In most of the research I conducted, there was a clear consensus that there is a positive correlation between extracurricular activities and academic success. Usually students who stay involved and active have more motivation to hold their academics to a high standard for many reasons. Some of these reasons include eligibility, more time to devote to extracurricular activities, and both high academics and extracurricular activities look good when trying to get a job. There were a couple sources that showed no correlation between extracurricular activities and academic success but none that showed a negative

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correlation. The research that I conducted, for the most part, seemed to follow my assumptions. I have always believe that being involved and active definitely

does help with academic success and helps students strive to do the best they can do when it comes to academics.

Does one's participation in extracurricular activities (i. e. band, athletics, cheerleading, drama, and so on) have any effect on the student's academic success? What would happen if a student who had been involved in extracurricular activities all of a sudden were not? Would more time devoted to schoolwork because of no extracurricular activities be a good thing for a student's academics? In this study, the independent variable will be one's participation in extracurricular activities. The dependent variable we will name

as a student's academic success. It is hypothesized that there will be a very strong and positive correlation between extracurricular activities and academic success.

Method

The researcher plans to measure the correlation between extracurricular activities and academic success by using a questionnaire. The questionnaire will be handed out to an equal number of individuals involved in band, cheerleading, football, baseball, basketball, greek organizations, and drama. The questionnaire will also be given to the same amount of students who are not involved in anything other than classes.

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Analysis

The researcher will use the correlation equation to analyze the data taken from the questionnaire.