

Beyond the Classroom: Exploring the Relationship Between Extracurriculars, Social Capital, and Academic Achievement

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Abstract

This research examines the relationship between extracurriculars, social capital and academic achievement. Sports, music, theaters, clubs, and volunteer work are a few examples of extracurricular activities that take place outside of the traditional academic curriculum and the classroom. Academic achievement is measured in terms of performance in school, whereas social capital refers to the resources and support that individuals can access through their social networks. The considerable amount of literature on the subject has explored the relationship between extracurricular activities, social capital, and academic achievement in many studies. This study reviews and synthesizes the results of previous investigations in order to shed light on the mechanisms and modifiers of this association. The findings suggest that participation in extracurricular activities may have positive effects on social capital and academic achievement, but this relationship is complex and varied and may be modified by a variety of personal and contextual factors. The research concludes with recommendations on how to support higher student outcomes through extracurricular activities for parents, lawmakers, and educators.

Keywords: Extracurricular activities, social capital, academic achievement, student development

DOI: 10.7176/JEP/14-15-10

Publication date: May 31st 2023

1. Introduction

Extracurricular activities have evolved into a crucial component of students' lives because they allow them a space to explore their interests, learn new skills, and form social relationships outside of the classroom. Therefore, the goal of this essay is to explore the relationship between extracurricular activities and social capital and academic achievement.

Extracurricular activities are those that take place outside of the traditional academic curriculum and the classroom. These can be run by the school or the neighborhood association and include a range of activities like music, clubs, sports, and volunteer work. Extracurricular activities have been shown to have a favorable effect on students' social, emotional, and cognitive development. They offer students the chance to pursue their interests and hone their abilities in a friendly and stimulating environment.

Social capital refers to the assistance and resources that people have access to thanks to their social networks. It includes both bridging social capital and bonding social capital, or, more specifically, relationships with people outside of one's social network and close connections within that network. People are more likely to succeed in a range of areas, including school and the workforce, if they have access to resources like knowledge, emotional support and employment opportunities.

Test scores, grades and graduation rates are just a few of the metrics used to measure the significance of academic achievement in students' educational experiences. Academic achievement is essential since it correlates with future success, such as getting into a higher institution and having better employment opportunities. Also, it has several advantageous implications on students' lives, such as improved social mobility and psychological wellbeing.

Studies on the connection between extracurricular activities, social capital, and academic success are extensive. Several research have looked at the relationship between extracurricular activities and these two outcomes. While some studies have found positive impacts of extracurricular activities on social capital and academic achievement, others have found negative effects or no effect at all. The complex and varied relationship between extracurricular activities, social capital, and academic achievement might vary depending on the activity, the student's background, and the cultural context.

This paper will assess and synthesize the literature on the relationship between extracurricular activities, social capital, and academic accomplishment. With a review of the numerous research that have been done and an analysis of their results, we hope to better understand the processes and variables of this association. Researcher also hope to offer some ideas on how parents, policymakers, and teachers might assist students' success in extracurricular activities.

2. Extracurricular Activities

A student's growth is greatly influenced by their participation in extracurricular activities, which have been linked to improved emotional, social, and cognitive development. Extracurricular involvement was connected

with higher levels of academic achievement, psychological well-being, and social aptitude (Sakiz. Aftab, 2018).

It has been discovered that participating in extracurricular activities has a beneficial effect on the development of a variety of skills and talents, which can be helpful for future success. Recent research has demonstrated that participating in such activities might enhance cognitive and social-emotional growth. For instance, Hallam's study from 2020 indicated that involvement in musical activities was positively correlated with improved creativity and problem-solving abilities. Similar findings were made Fransen, et al. (2020), who discovered that playing sports was linked to enhanced teamwork, physical fitness and leadership abilities. Last but not least, a study by Dionigi, et al (2020) discovered that volunteering was linked to improved prosocial conduct and empathy, both of which are beneficial for interpersonal relationships.

Previous studies show that extracurricular activities are good for students' social, emotional, and cognitive growth. Activities that take place outside of the classroom and the standard academic curriculum are referred to as extracurricular activities. For instance, Eccles and Barber (1999) found that involvement in extracurricular activities was linked to improved social skills, academic success, and favorable school attitudes. Also, a 2006 study by Fredricks and Eccles found a correlation between participation in extracurricular activities and a lower risk of dropping out of school and easier access to higher education.

Music, sport clubs, and volunteer work are just a few examples of extracurricular activities. These activities give students the chance to follow their hobbies and interests, hone their talents, and interact with their peers outside of the classroom. Sports, for instance, can encourage leadership, teamwork, and physical fitness (Pate et al., 2000). Activities including music and theater can improve one's emotional intelligence, self-expression, and creativity (Moreno et al, 2011). Volunteering and joining clubs can promote a sense of community and civic participation (Hart et al., 2007).

Children can acquire and practice important life skills like communication, time management, and problem-solving through extracurricular activities. These skills may contribute to their academic performance and cognitive development. For instance, a 2003 study by Mahoney et al. found that participation in extracurricular activities was associated with better academic performance, and that this link was partially mediated by the development of skills like self-control, goal-setting, and time management.

Finally, extracurricular activities are beneficial for students' social, emotional, and cognitive development. Participation in extracurricular activities is associated with enhanced social abilities, academic performance, decreased dropout rates, and simpler entry into postsecondary education. These opportunities allow students to pursue their interests and hobbies, develop their skills, and socialize with their peers outside of the classroom. These activities also allow kids the chance to acquire and practice important life skills like problem-solving, time management, and communication, which can aid in their cognitive development and academic success.

3. Social Capital

Social capital refers to the networks, social relationships, and cultural norms that people have inside their society. It is the advantage that individuals and groups experience as a result of interaction. People have access to opportunities, resources, and knowledge that they might not otherwise have, which makes social capital important. Moreover, it promotes teamwork, trust, and social reciprocity. How to define and evaluate social capital has been discussed in the literature because it is a complex subject. Lin (2008) claims that social capital is created through social networks and can be thought of as the benefits that people and groups receive from their social ties. These resources can be physical (such informational access, financial resources, and employment prospects) or intangible (like trust, social support, and shared values). The relationship between social capital and many outcomes, including health, education, and economic development, has been the subject of numerous research (Kawachi et al., 2004; Putnam, 2000; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000).

The rules, norms, and precepts that influence social interactions and social constructs like trust, reciprocity, and social cohesion are referred to as the cognitive component of social capital. The structural and cognitive aspects of social capital can also distinguish individuals from one another. The size, density, and diversity of social networks are a few examples of social capital. Social capital has been demonstrated to have both positive and negative effects on a variety of consequences. For instance, Kawachi et al. (2004) discovered that social capital, as measured by trust and civic participation, was positively associated with self-rated health after controlling for individual-level characteristics. Similarly, Woolcock and Narayan (2000) showed that, after accounting for institutional and macroeconomic factors, social capital—as assessed by social networks and reciprocity norms—was positively associated with economic development. According to these research, social capital can have a positive impact on a variety of aspects of life. Accordingly it is a significant resource for both individuals and communities.

4. Academic Achievement

Academic accomplishment is a crucial part of students' educational experiences, serving as a measure of their

success in their academic endeavors. This achievement is typically measured using a variety of factors, such as grades, test scores, and graduation rates. According to research, academic performance is a crucial predictor of future success, including access to further education and more job opportunities. (Reynolds et al., 2014). Furthermore, a number of beneficial effects in students' life have been connected to academic success. For instance, a study by Freeman et al. (2014) discovered a favorable correlation between improved adolescent mental health outcomes and academic achievement. Similar to this, Diemer et al (2013) discovered that academic success was linked to higher psychological well-being and lower levels of stress in college students.

Rumberger and Palardy (2005) examine the impact of student diversity on the academic success of high school pupils. Their research highlights the enduring significance of segregation by demonstrating the positive effects of diverse student groups on academic outcomes. The findings demonstrate the need for legislation that promotes diversity and reduces segregation in order to enhance academic achievement. Moreover, it has been found that academic performance is related with higher levels of social mobility. According to a study by Bedi and Edwards (2002), students who perform better academically are more likely to experience upward social mobility, which is the change from a lower to a higher social class. This demonstrates how breaking the cycle of poverty and boosting social mobility may both be accomplished through academic excellence. On the other hand, Yigit (2018) states that level of desire for academic achievement decreases over time among the students who have high social capital having education in private colleges.

In summary, academic achievement is an important component of students' educational experiences and is influenced by a variety of factors, such as test scores, grades and graduation rates. Future prosperity is closely correlated with the capacity to pursue higher education and acquire better employment opportunities. Also linked to bettering kids' psychological and mental wellness are success in the classroom. Last but not least, it has been found to be linked to better levels of social mobility, indicating that academic accomplishment can significantly improve people's lives as well as the lives of the communities in which they live.

5. Impact of Extracurricular Activities on Social Capital

Extracurricular activities have been shown to increase pupils' social capital. These activities provide a platform for students to meet new people, create social networks, and make new friends. Improvements in social skills, an increase in social support, and higher levels of civic engagement have all been linked to extracurricular activity involvement. It has been found that students who participate in extracurricular activities have higher amounts of social capital than their non-participating peers. The growth of social capital was found to be positively correlated with extracurricular activity involvement in a study by Mahoney, et al (2003). In comparison to non-participating kids, the study indicated that students who engaged in extracurricular activities had better levels of social integration, social support, and civic involvement. The study also discovered that children from low-income homes benefited from extracurricular activities on social capital more than other pupils.

Pidgeon and Smith (2008) found that social capital has positively correlated with extracurricular activity in rural communities. According to the study, extracurricular activity participants had better levels of social support, social trust, and civic involvement compared to non-participants. In their 2003 study, Metz, McLellan, and Youniss examined the effects of several kinds of volunteer work on young people's civic development, emphasizing the value of diverse community service opportunities for promoting civic duty and civic-mindedness in young people. According to O'Brien and Rollefson (1995), participating in these activities fosters a sense of belonging, motivation, and commitment to study, which eventually enhances the overall school experience.

6. Impact of Extracurricular Activities on Academic Achievement

The academic success of students has also been demonstrated to be positively impacted by extracurricular activities. These exercises provide students a chance to practice skills including time management, teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving. These abilities can be used in the classroom and have been associated with improved academic performance.

Marsh and Kleitman (2002) found a positive correlation between extracurricular activity participation and academic accomplishment. The study found that students who participated in extracurricular activities had higher levels of academic self-concept and motivation compared to non-participating students. The study also found that children from low-income parents were more aware of the advantages of extracurricular activities with respect to academic performance. Fredricks and Eccles (2006) also came to a similar conclusion after discovering that involvement in extracurricular activities was positively associated with academic achievement. Their study found that children who participated in extracurricular activities outperformed compared to non-participant student with respect to grades and test scores. The study also found that students who participated in organized activities, such sports teams or volunteer works, were better able to understand how extracurricular activities benefited their academic performance. Another study by Fredricks and

Simpkins (2012) investigated how extracurricular activities affect teenagers' social capital. According to the study, extracurricular activity involvement was positively correlated with social capital, which includes, civic engagement, social networks and social integration. The degree of involvement and activity quality were revealed to be moderators of the link between extracurricular activities and social capital.

In comparison to students who engaged in poor-quality activities and had low participation, students who participated in high-quality activities and had high levels of involvement had higher levels of social capital. The authors suggest that schools should promote students to become more involved and focus high-quality extracurricular activities. In a different investigation, Regmi, et al. (2010) examined the impact of extracurricular activities on the social capital of young immigrants. According to the study's findings, participation in extracurricular activities and social capital, which comprises social networks, social trust, and civic engagement, are positively correlated. The study also found that extracurricular activities were crucial for the social integration and identity formation of immigrant kids. The authors suggest that schools provide a selection of extracurricular activities that are accessible to all students and considerate of cultural variations in order to foster the development of social capital among young immigrants. Further, the importance of socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic differences in influencing parents' engagement and support in their children's academic endeavors is highlighted by Park and Holloway (2013) in their investigation of factors that predict parental involvement in adolescents' education across a diverse population. The effect of extracurricular activities on favorable teenage outcomes was examined by Zaff et al. in 2003. According to the study, taking part in such activities led to better social skills, stronger self-esteem, and better academic performance. The study also emphasizes how crucial it is to give young people a variety of interaction options in order to support their development and general well-being.

Also connected to academic performance is the idea of social capital, especially for kids from underprivileged families. Students who have access to social capital, including social networks and support, are more likely to experience favorable educational outcomes, like higher academic achievement, fewer dropout rates, and more access to higher education (Putnam, 2000). The transfer of cultural and social values that are crucial for academic performance, such as the value of education and the significance of community involvement, can also be facilitated by social capital (Kao & Tienda, 1995). According to McNeal (1995), involvement in extracurricular activities lowers the proportion of high school dropouts while also encouraging academic success and involvement in the learning process. On the other side, Rosenfeld, Richman, and Bowen (2000) investigate the link between social support networks and academic success. According to their research, creating these networks is essential for fostering bonds that are solid and encouraging, which support students' success in the classroom and overall wellbeing.

A narrative synthesis on the influences of social capital on academic success was done by Acar (2011). In order to promote successful educational results, the study underlined the value of social networks, trust, and established norms. The results showed that high levels of social capital had a favorable impact on students' academic achievement, motivation, and engagement. According to Acar's research, sustaining and creating social capital within educational contexts have to be given priority in order to improve students' overall academic achievement and wellbeing.

Several research have looked into the connection between students' social capital and academic success. For instance, a study conducted in 2013 by Zimmerman, et al. discovered that social capital, as determined by parental participation and social support, was positively correlated with academic achievement among African American high school students. In a similar vein, Kim and Schneider's study from 2005 discovered a favorable correlation between Latino college students' academic success and social capital, as determined by their social networks and sources of support.

Schools and communities can assist children in developing their social capital by providing opportunities for social interaction, community involvement, and parental involvement. These findings suggest that social capital may play a substantial role in promoting academic performance, particularly for children from disadvantaged families. By fostering the growth of social capital, schools and communities may create a welcoming environment that improves academic achievement and positive educational outcomes for all students.

7. Synthesis

Developing social networks through extracurricular activities can help students acquire access to crucial resources and supports like information, money, and job opportunities. Moreover, extracurricular activities can promote the development of social capital-essential interpersonal skills including communication, leadership, and teamwork (Mahoney, et al., 2003).

Studies have also shown that involvement in extracurricular activities may have a good impact on students' dropout rates, academic performance, and access to higher education (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Fredricks & Simpkins, 2012).

Many elements may operate as mediators in the relationship between extracurricular activities, social capital, and academic success. For instance, social capital may open doors to extracurricular activities for students, and these activities themselves may strengthen social capital (Helliwell & Putnam, 1999). Moreover, social capital and extracurricular activities may affect academic performance by having an effect on other elements including drive, self-worth, and a sense of belonging. (Fredricks & Simpkins, 2012; Regmi et al., 2010). Additionally, extracurricular activities can give children a chance to acquire and put their academic abilities, including, problem-solving, time management, and critical thinking, into practice. (Fredricks & Simpkins, 2012).

In conclusion, extracurricular activities can have a significant impact on the development of social capital and academic success. Extracurricular activities can assist children in developing social networks and competences that are important assets for success in school and beyond by offering chances for social interaction, skill development, and academic study. However, there are many different individual and contextual elements that might affect the complicated and nuanced relationship between extracurricular activities, social capital, and academic accomplishment. To better understand the processes and mediators of this link and to create efficient treatments that support successful outcomes for all students, more study is therefore required.

8. Conclusion

Last but not least, it has been demonstrated that involvement in extracurricular activities enhances both social capital and academic success. Students have the opportunity to develop social networks, improve their interpersonal skills, and gain access to tools and resources thanks to them. Along with other positive academic outcomes, participation in extracurricular activities can lead to improved grades, a lower dropout rate, and simpler access to higher education. It is crucial to keep in mind, though, that the connection between extracurricular activities, social capital, and academic success is intricate and diverse. The effects of extracurricular activities may vary depending on a variety of personal and social circumstances, including the nature of the activity, the student's upbringing, and the cultural setting. Although some studies have concluded that extracurricular activities have good effects, others have found negative effects or none at all.

It's also critical to remember that rigorous academic work and intellectual challenge shouldn't be substituted with extracurricular activities. Instead, extracurricular activities must be seen as an adjunct to academic study, providing students with opportunities to broaden and apply their skills in novel and significant ways.

In conclusion, extracurricular activities can have a significant impact on the development of social capital and academic success. The link between extracurricular activities, social capital, and academic success is complicated and influenced by a number of personal and environmental variables, though. To better understand the processes and mediators of this link and to create efficient treatments that support successful outcomes for all students, more study is therefore required.

Considering the possible hazards and advantages of extracurricular activities is crucial, as is developing solutions that maximize positive results while avoiding unfavorable ones. Extracurricular activities can assist children in developing social networks and competences that are important assets for success in school and beyond by offering chances for social interaction, skill development, and academic study.

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