



Commentary

Extracurricular Sports and Non-Sport Activities Privilege Students Educational Future

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DESCRIPTION

This study presents empirical evidence that extracurricular engagement, both directly and indirectly, interacts favorably and significantly with future education. However, which form of extracurricular activity, sports or non-sport activities, is preferable for those pursuing higher education? The current study, which is based on social capital theory, examines which types of participation provide the highest capability for acquiring social capital, which is linked to gains in higher education. With a representative, longitudinal sample of 5,239 ninth through twelfth students, structural equation modeling was applied. Mixed participation (at least one sport and one non-sport activity) is associated with the highest future educational levels, according to total effects. This study will substantially assist educational administrators in making judgments about extracurricular programmers, funding, and experiential context in order to improve students' life chances.

It's possible that the mission of the American public school system is disputed. Initially, the purpose of public education was to strengthen and perpetuate democracy by educating citizens to be informed voters. However, in recent years, public education in the United States has come to be seen as an institution that prepares students for higher education. Education has a huge impact on people's lives, with educational achievements affecting earning potential, good health, and social inclusion.

However, as college enrolment numbers rise, so do college dropout rates. Logically, students' prior school experiences improve their knowledge of future educational levels. Within American society, public schools are an immensely prevalent social institution. The matrix of decision-making in the public school framework includes parents, teachers, coaches, sponsors, and school officials. The intention to better pupils' life chances is at the centre of this decision-making. In this study, the impact of high school extracurricular activities is assessed. School budgets have recently been strained, resulting in the implementation of pay-to-play initiatives. Because participation has implications for adult achievement, the possible absence of access to activities through such programmers is an essential societal concern. The current study improves knowledge quality.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study's theoretical foundation is based on social capital theory. The term "social capital" refers to a resource that is accumulated through social relationships. Social networks trust and reciprocity, and a sense of belonging are all examples of youth social capital (Schaefer-McDaniel, 2004). In the entire model utilized in this study, social capital is viewed as the mechanism that explains the impact of extracurricular engagement on future educational levels. Because adolescents spend so much of their time at school, school-related elements make up a large part of their social capital. In this context, social capital might be characterized as investments made by students and

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schools. Those expenditures can pay off in the form of improved educational achievements. As a result, school surroundings can either empower or alienate students, implying that the school is essentially a student's neighborhood. As children progress through puberty, classroom relationships become increasingly crucial. As institutional agents, school authorities take on the role of a non-familial adult, exposing students to additional social capital. Schools can contribute to the accumulation of social capital through socialization. Schools, for example, have become one of the most important conduits for transmitting teaching standards and values. The general academic climate, safety, and tolerance are all school-related variables that contribute to the building of accumulative social capital.

A lack of these components, on the other hand, may result in schools that deny social capital and perpetuate inequities. Social capital isn't necessarily a good thing because it might breed exclusion. Vertical ties are also facilitated by social capital in schools. Vertical relationships, also known as linking social capital, are those that exist between people of various power levels. When it comes to influencing outcomes like educational achievement, linking capital can be very effective. One way that linking social capital leads to beneficial outcomes is by teaching students how to navigate education-based institutional influences. Adults in schools have first-hand experience with educational attainment, as well as specialized and practical information. In addition, institutional agents in schools transfer resources that are clearly linked to educational success, such as high school course recommendations or the college application process. As a result, school authorities may be able to "counter stratify," connecting students with no traditional ties to higher education to valuable resources through intentional social capital contact. Extracurricular activities supported by the school logically provide additional access and opportunities for such interactions. As a result,

activities outside of the home and throughout the school day are crucial for the study of youth social capital. More sociological theory has to be incorporated into outcome research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Not all students participate in extracurricular activities; for example, not all students participate in sports. Previous research has typically looked at participation as a whole or solely looked at sports as a category. Sports are now the most popular school-sponsored activity in the United States, with more than half of high school students participating in one. Sport's popularity and general structure attract a big number of individuals, implying that it has a higher probability of expanding social networks. Barron et al. (2000) looked at sports' impact on future educational attainment and found a favorable association. Sports' special potential to improve skills needed for educational success was explained by mechanisms of productivity and industriousness.

The study also looked at athletics and found a link between participation in sports and college enrolment; however, the study did not look at academic achievement. The effects of individual and team sports on high school grades and graduation were compared and found to be beneficial, with team sports showing a larger correlation. These previous research' favorable impacts do not involve a comparison to other forms of activity. "It is critical to examine participation in a variety of activities at the same time in order to isolate the effects of engagement in specific activities," says the study. Sport participation had a stronger effect on risk of dropping out of school and trust levels than non-sport participation in those limited studies that compared sports, fine arts, academic, and vocational clubs, resulting in sports as the only type of participation that significantly reduced the risk of dropping out. When compared to other community organizations, community sports were found to be a stronger predictor of trust levels.