



**DO EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES PROMOTE BETTER ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE AND HEIGHTENED SENSE OF SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS IN
COLLEGE ATHLETES**

By

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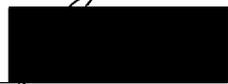
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ABSTRACT

Extracurricular activities allow students to express themselves in a non-academic manner but often times have a positive correlation to academic performance. Extracurricular activities can also provide the students with an added incentive to be in school and enjoy the school experience. This research study was conducted on 18 students between the ages of 18 and 22 from a small liberal arts institution in western New York. The 18 participants are all members of the universities swimming and diving program. Grade point averages were compared from the Spring 2015 semester (when the participants were not highly involved in extracurricular activities) to the Fall 2015 semester (when the participants were highly involved in extracurricular activities). A questionnaire was also administered using both a Likert scale and open ended questions. The results of the study showed a 0.22 increase on average for the participants' GPA from the Spring to the Fall semesters. This information along with the data from the questionnaires showed that students performed better during the semester that they were heavily involved in extracurricular activities. Also, as a result the participants felt more connected to the university through their participation in extracurricular activities.

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Abstract:

Extracurricular activities allow students to express themselves in a non-academic manner but often times have a positive correlation to academic performance. Extracurricular activities can also provide the students with an added incentive to be in school and enjoy the school experience. This research study was conducted on 18 students between the ages of 18 and 22 from a small liberal arts institution in western New York. The 18 participants are all members of the universities swimming and diving program. Grade point averages were compared from the Spring 2015 semester (when the participants were not highly involved in extracurricular activities) to the Fall 2015 semester (when the participants were highly involved in extracurricular activities). A questionnaire was also administered using both a Likert scale and open ended questions. The results of the study showed a 0.22 increase on average for the participants' GPA from the Spring to the Fall semesters. This information along with the data from the questionnaires showed that students performed better during the semester that they were heavily involved in extracurricular activities. Also, as a result the participants felt more connected to the university though their participation in extracurricular activities.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

All too often students are discouraged from participating in any activities that do not directly impact academics, and this stress on high academic performance often comes at the expense of the student. *The Washington Post* recently ran an article that found that, “83% of teens said that school was ‘a somewhat or significant source of stress’” (Shapiro, 2014, p. 1). The focus on grade point average as a means of acquiring and maintaining scholarships or successful graduation within a 4-year period has deterred students from participating in athletics, clubs, and other non-academic programs. In the following chapter, I will explore the issues and problems related to extracurricular activities and discuss the rationale for conducting research on said topic.

With the constant need to motivate students to reach their full academic potentials and adhere to social norms and behaviors, there has been less emphasis on participation in extracurricular activities. Whether these activities are school related or not, participation in clubs, sports, or after school programs teaches children to manage time as well as to develop further their social skills. According to Metsapelto and Pulkkinen (2012), students who participated in extracurricular activities for a long duration of time (over a year) experienced higher attainment and stronger social skills than those who did not. Although there was variation in attainment and social skills based on the respective activity, the researchers concluded that, “participation in extracurricular activities may make a difference in promoting socioemotional behavior and school achievement” (p. 180). It is important to note that this study was done in Scandinavia; however, it is still of value due to its findings that associate student performance with extracurricular activities.

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Another aspect to be discussed is the degree with which students feel connected to their school community. According to an Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) report, school connectedness can be defined as “an academic environment in which students believe that adults in the school care about their learning and about them as individuals” (A Case for School Connectedness, 2005, p. 1). School connectedness is an important factor in how a student views the school, their participation in the school, and the impact the school has on their happiness.

One element of stress on students in today’s classroom is the push to attend college upon a successful graduation from high school. Researchers have begun to highlight the correlation between extra-curricular activities and college attendance (Kronholz, 2012). Margo Gardner, a research scientist from Columbia University’s National Center for Children and Families conducted a study, which concluded that, “the odds of attending college were 97% higher for youngsters who took part in school-sponsored activities for two years than for those who didn’t do any school activities” (Gardner, cited in Kronholz, 2012, p. 10). Another compelling point was addressed in the Kronholz article by means of an interview with Temple University psychologist Laurence Steinberg. Steinberg stated:

“extracurriculars also make school more palatable for a whole lot of kids who otherwise would find it bleak or unsatisfying,” ... “grades improve not because of what kids are learning in the video club, but because the video club is making them enjoy school more, so they show up more often, find a circle of like-minded friends, and become more engaged in school.” (Steinberg, cited in Kronholz, 2012, p.11)

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Kronholz shows readers how important it is to look into what motivates students to do well in school. While achieving high grades may promote a sense of motivation for students, others need other outside stimulation such as sports or after school clubs (Kronholz, 2012).

Another in-depth study was conducted on the relationship between extra-curricular activities and their effect on school and academic outcomes. This study, done by Knifsend and Graham (2012) was conducted with students in 11th and 12th grades who came from many ethnic backgrounds. These students were of African American, Asian, Hispanic and Caucasian descent and all attended a “Title I School,” which receives money from the federal government because many of the students are from low-income family backgrounds (Knifsend and Graham, 2012). The study was focused on four groups: academic/leadership groups, art activities, clubs, and sports with regards to sense of belonging at school, academic engagement, and grade point averages. This study concluded that, “participating in a moderate number of different types of activities may be most optimal for helping adolescents to feel connected to their school and to do well academically” (Knifsend & Graham, p. 388). This study also discussed the need for students to explore different types of activities as they may promote better adjustment depending on the amount of involvement the activities may take (Knifsend & Graham). It is important for students not to wear themselves thin but it is also important that students feel a sense of belonging in school.

Another interesting aspect of the research comes from an article regarding the impact of collegiate activities on academic performance. Richards and Aries (1999) produced another piece of relevant research that associates extracurricular activities with academic performance. While this study was conducted 16 years ago, it still provides the basis of further research to test if its conclusions still hold true. This research involved a group of 219 students at a small college in a

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northeastern liberal arts school and showed that student-athletes' grades as well as participation in other campus activities did not negatively impact their grade point averages (Richards & Aries). Conclusions that were drawn from this article state that, "involvement in college athletics may not be problematic in some college settings" (Richards & Aries, 1999, p. 6). This article can help formulate evidence that students who participate in one or multiple extracurricular activities have a better chance of growing mentally and socially as well as performing well academically.

One of the most recent articles that I have reviewed was conducted on 123 students from five rural schools in New York who participated in soccer programs while attending school (Silliker & Quirk, 1997). This study included a data analysis of grade point averages (GPAs) during the semester in which the students played the sport and compared them to their GPAs while out of season. This research study is similar to my own, but differs in the sense that the study looked to seek a difference in school attendance rates while the students were participating in their respective sports. Both grade point averages and attendance rates were higher in the semester that the athletes participated, although the numbers were not significant (Silliker & Quirk, 1997).

Thus far in my research I have come across many articles that show extracurricular activities providing students with a sense of purpose and also higher social skills. The studies I have viewed ranged from childhood, middle school, young adolescence, and college aged students. Each study has brought up a new point that I had not previously thought of and provided me with a strong inclination that I will be able to defend my thesis after doing the appropriate research. This has also driven my desire to ask my participants about school connectedness and see if they feel a stronger desire to be in the classroom or whether sports or clubs gave them an outlet to be able to manage work.

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The main purpose of my project is to defend student participation in extracurricular activities and to show a positive correlation between participation and a higher academic average. I am also investigating whether participation in extra-curricular activities promotes a higher level of school connectedness. According to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD, 2005), school connectedness can be defined as “an academic environment in which students believe that adults in the school care about their learning and about them as individuals” (ASCD, 2005, p.1).

I am questioning if participation on a sports team, club, or group will allow a student to feel more in tune with the school and the teachers which would then correlate with the desire to be in school. It is anticipated that participants will have higher grade point averages (GPA) during the semester that they are involved with extracurricular activities. It is also anticipated that students will agree that participation in said activities allows them to feel a connection/pride with the school that they attend. Alan S. Goodman is cited in the Kronholz article as saying, “kids who are involved in clubs and sports spend an extra couple of hours a week with an adult, usually a role model like a drama director or coach (Goodman, as cited in Kronholz, 2012, p. 11).” Spending this extra time with a coach or mentor can work wonders on attentiveness, and desire to work hard as a way to please their mentor.

This research study addresses the following questions: What are the effects of the amount of involvement in extracurricular activities on the academic performance of Division III athletes at a small liberal arts college in Western New York? With ancillary questions being: how much involvement in extracurricular activities does it take to see a negative impact on academic performance? Is there a difference in the grade point averages for the semester in which the

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season takes place versus the semester where they are not participating? And, does involvement in an extracurricular activity such as a sports team promote a sense of school connectedness?

The reason I am researching this topic comes from the current academic blunders about test scores, grades, and fixing student motivation. I have participated in sports since age 7 and quite frankly, I would not have been as motivated to do well in school had I not found my niche in swimming. I still remember the day when my mom told me I was unable to swim until I pulled my grades up and from that point on I quickly learned to balance school and sports. The work ethic I derived from participation in sports (and other non-academic activities) helped me to maintain a Dean's list accolade for 75% of my college career. I knew that each day I had to set aside extra time for schoolwork and balance that with 3-5 hours of practice per day. Because of this experience, seeing schools cutting programs and not providing an outlet to students is quite disheartening to me, as it can provide a purpose to students who otherwise would not have motivation to be in school.

The research study that will be described in the following chapters investigates the impact that extracurricular activities has on academic performance and school connectedness. This study is conducted on collegiate athletes who spend at least one full semester in participation of the extracurricular activity, and a semester with little involvement in the same activity.

Chapter 2 – Review of the Literature

A review of the literature revealed a good deal of interest in the subject of extracurricular activities and its impact on academic performance and school connectedness. Research has stated that there is some form of direct impact on academics when a student participates in an activity outside of the school day. This impact can be seen through socialization skills, academics (be is positive or negative), increased attendance rates, and feeling more accepted by the school environment. In the following chapter the relevant literature regarding extracurricular activities and their impact on academics and school connectedness will be discussed. This chapter will also disclose holes in the literature and elude to a plan of action for further research.

Extracurricular Activities

The term “extracurricular activities” has been around for quite some time, its connotation being that of fun and free activity that allows one to explore their own interests. Goldberg (1946) described extracurricular activities as something that “should afford the successful participant a final overplus of enduring satisfaction and joy for its own sake (Goldberg).” While extracurricular activities have come under debate in the years that followed this article, many new articles have been published that seek to defend their place in many schools and organizations.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) (2002) defended extracurricular activities in high schools, reviewing the literature and concluding that extracurricular activities “instill a sense of pride in school and community, teach lifelong lessons and skills of teamwork and self-discipline and facilitate the physical and emotional development of the nation’s youth” (NFHS, p. 1). It is for this reason, and many others, that the literature that follows in this paper will highlight the research already conducted with respect to extracurricular

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activities and help assist to defend the thesis that extracurricular activities promote higher academic attainment from students and a stronger feeling of school connectedness.

Extracurricular Activities and the Impact on Academics

One of the major factors that is regarded in the literature is the impact of extracurricular activities on a student's academic performance. A majority of the articles sought to investigate the efficacy of participation in clubs and sports in improving a student's academics whether it be with grades or incentive to do well in school. Several studies explored the academic impact of participating in extracurricular activities. Richards and Aries (1999), for example, conducted a study on athletes at a Division III university with respect how their participation effected their academic achievement, campus involvement, and overall growth. This study included a broad spectrum of athletes all 219 being seniors (making up 54% of the senior class) at a northeastern residential liberal arts college (p. 214). Of the 219 students to receive the survey in their dormitories after the conclusion of their first semester of senior year, 73 of them were athletes who played at least one varsity sport (p. 214). The questionnaire addressed issues like, time, grades, life satisfaction, and time spent doing extracurricular activities.

The results of this study showed that athletes devoted significantly more time to extracurricular activities that non-athletes spending on average 19.26 hours on extracurricular activities while non-athletes devoted 10.15 hours a week to extracurricular activities (p. 216). The study also found that "were able to overcome these difficulties and to make time for their multiple commitments. (p. 216)." With this information in hand, the study also concluded that there was very little difference in academic achievement between athletes and non-athletes. The GPA of non-athletes was slightly higher at 3.47 while athletes had a GPA of 3.39. The

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importance of this study is that while athletes devote more time to extracurricular activities, their academic performance does not suffer (Richards & Aries, 1999).

Stephens' (2003) research looked at the impact of interscholastic sports participation on academic achievement of middle school students. 136 students in 8th grade were separated into two groups: those who participated in at least one sport (73 students) and those who did not participate in sports (63 students) (Stephens, p. 37). The students who participated in interscholastic sports had a mean grade point average (GPA) of 3.151 while their non-athlete counterparts had a mean GPA of 2.400 (Stephens, p. 38). The results of the data show that even at a young age, extracurricular activities can be beneficial to both work ethic and academic success. These results are discussed to say that, "Participation in athletics can help students build discipline, set goals, organize time, and develop self-confidence" (p. 41).

Another related study also showed that students who participated in extracurricular activities were three times as many students achieved 3.0 grade point averages (or higher) than those who did not engage in extracurricular activities (Kronholz, 2012).

The support for the increase in academic achievement in relationship with extracurricular activities such as sports comes from many articles that relate the data based on academic achievement and standardized test scores. Specific articles have even separated the types of extracurricular activities that students have participated in and compare them to their non-involved counterparts. An important article was published that detailed the effects of playing after school sports or being involved in music to academic performance (Zwart, 2006). This study limited its participant pool to 10th grade students during the 2005-2006 school year at a high school in California. Within the study twenty-five students made up the control group of students who were not involved in any extracurricular activity while two groups of twenty-five

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students were represented as either athletes or music students (Zwart, 2006, p. 2). Grade point averages were compared through t-test statistics and in both situations there was a “statistically significant difference between both athletes and non-athletes and music students and non-music students in terms of cumulative GPA, math standardized testing, and English/Language Arts standardized testing” (p. 4). This article is of importance to the research because it highlights the positive impact that extracurricular activities can have on academic performance in other aspects like standardized testing.

Many studies in the past have shown that there is not a dramatic increase or decrease in students' GPAs based on involvement with extracurricular activities. Stegman (2000) studied participants into two categories: low participants and high participants. “Low participants” were defined as students who participated in sports for little to no time during their high school experience. “High participants” included any student who participated consistently in at least one sport in each year of school (p. 37). These two categories were compared with “respect to GPA, class rank, and math GPA (p. 37).” This study concluded that high participants (regardless of gender) out performed the low participants in all three categories although male high participants did not out perform their counter parts by much. Bakoban and Alijarallah (2015) found similar, stating that “the median of GPA of those who participated in ECA (extracurricular activities) is higher than those of non-participants (p. 2742).” This research study also noted findings that were consistent with two articles, both of which are discussed in this literature review (Richard & Aries, 1999; Sillicker & Quirk, 1997).

Howard and Ziomeck-Daigle (2009) conducted an interesting study that used a group of uninvolved students of African American descent who were asked for voluntary participation in Saturday workshops. Eleven high school students volunteered to partake in this study (8 females

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and 3 males) with a mean age of 17.45 years and had been previously classified as “uninvolved” in extracurricular activities (p. 41). While one of the aspects of the study was designed to discuss school bonding, the results showed little difference when the students involved themselves in the Saturday workshops. The results did show significant improvement in the course grades of the students: at the 6 week mark the $M=69.075$, at the 9 week mark the $M=73.136$, and at the 12 week mark the $M=77.182$ (p. 42). This increase in academic success shows that involvement in organized workshops or extracurricular activities can positively impact school and warrants further research.

Studies Regarding Extracurricular Activities and the Impact on Attendance Rates

In addition to the academic impact, one of the issues addressed in the literature was the impact of attendance rates for students who participate in extracurricular activities. Silliker and Quirk (1997) showed an increase in attendance rates while student athletes were participating in interscholastic soccer. In the study conducted a study on 123 high school students from rural western New York who participated in the soccer program for one semester but also had one semester where they did not participate. Attendance rates for females (64 of the participants) went from 1.2 absences while they were involved in soccer to 1.5 when they were “out of season” (p. 232). Attendance rates for males (59 of the participants) went from 1.6 absences while in season to 1.8 absences while the students were out of season (Silliker & Quirk, 1997). Samuelson (2011) found similar evidence in a study conducted in a middle school setting. He reported: “students involved in interscholastic sports missed fewer days of school than students who were not involved in athletics (p. 2).” The data in the article showed non athletes were absent a total of 11.50 times while athletes were only absent 8.93 times (p. 51). The main idea

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taken from this research study is that students who participate in extracurricular activities (such as sports) are less likely to skip school than their non-involved counterparts.

Columbia University's National Center for Children and Families (NSCF) (2012) addressed attendance rates as a factor for supporting extracurricular activities. This article cited another study done by the looked at longitudinal data that found "high-school seniors who were involved in school activities were less likely to cut class and play hooky than kids who weren't involved" (Kronholz, 2012, p. 11). This adds some merit to the discussion of extracurricular activities having a positive impact on school as many programs require students to remain in good academic standing as well as have a minimal number of school absences.

Extracurricular Activities and the Impact on Socialization Skills and School Connectedness

Another issue that is addressed in the literature is the impact that extracurricular activities have on socialization skills. Metsapelto and Pulkkinen (2012) conducted a three-year study on 215 students regarding multiple issues surrounding extracurricular activities. Children's socioemotional behavior was assessed in the first and third year of the study and was done so using a "Multidimensional Peer Nomination Inventory, Teacher Rating Form (TR-MPNI)." Using the TR-MPNI the teachers were asked to respond to the statements using a four-point scale: 0 = does not apply, 1 = applies sometimes, 2 = certainly applies, but not in a pronounced way, and 3 = applies in a pronounced way. The results showed that students who participated in clubs outside of school had "higher academic attainments and lower internalizing problems compared to non-participation (p. 174)."

According to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD, 2005), school connectedness can be defined as "an academic environment in which students believe that adults in the school care about their learning and about them as individuals" (p. 1).

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School connectedness is addressed in much of the literature that surrounds extra curricular activities. Temple University psychologist Laurence Steinberg stated:

“(g)rades improve not because of what kids are learning in the video club, but because the video club is making them enjoy school more, so they show up more often, find a circle of like-minded friends, and become more engaged in school.” (Steinberg, cited in Kronholz, 2012, p.11)

It was this article that further inspired the question of what makes students care about school?

From this question more literature was exposed to support extracurricular activities impacting a student’s connection with their peers and school.

Further research has been conducted to highlight how extracurricular activities can impact other facets of education specifically socialization skill development in students.

Knifsend and Graham (2012) did an in-depth study on the relationship between extracurricular activities and their effect on school and academic outcomes. This study was conducted with students in 11th and 12th grade who came from many ethnic backgrounds. The study was focused on four groups: academic/leadership groups, art activities, clubs, and sports with regards to sense of belonging at school, academic engagement, and grade point averages. This study concluded that, “participating in a moderate number of different types of activities may be most optimal for helping adolescents to feel connected to their school and to do well academically (p. 388).” This study also discussed the need for students to explore different types of activities as they may promote better adjustment depending on the amount of involvement the activities may take. It is important for students to not wear themselves thin but it is also important that students feel a sense of belonging in school.

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The transition to middle school can be difficult for some students, studies have shown that involvement in extracurricular activities such as sports can facilitate an easy transition while allowing students to achieve higher grade point averages as well as a feeling of belonging to the school setting. Through the use of a School Transition Questionnaire (STQ) administered to middle school students, the researchers of another study were able to conclude that “students' feelings of connectedness and perceptions of positive aspects following a transition into middle school were also moderately related to participation in extracurricular activities (p. 4).” This article, and many others, showed that students who participate in extracurricular activities, regardless of age, gender, or race, are likely to see positive effects in many aspects of their lives.

In conclusion, this literature review suggests that extracurricular activities do not hinder academic performance and often have a positive impact on students. From social emotional benefits, a feeling of connectedness to school, to heightened time management skills and academic success, extracurricular activities are pivotal to a school setting. This literature review focused on academic implications for participation in extracurricular activities such as sports and spanned from middle school to college students. All but one study highlighted in this review saw a positive difference in academic performance based on participation in extracurricular activities. The one study that showed a different result, saw non-athletes with a slightly higher GPA but showed athletes not far behind proving that extracurricular activities do not hinder academic performance (Richards, 1999). Much of the research has been done on high school athletes who participate in team centered sports while little research has been done on collegiate athletes who play more individually based sports (such as swimming and diving). The next chapter of this study will discuss the methodology of the research design that was examined in chapter one.

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Information regarding the participants of the research study, the sampling that was completed, and the methods used to analyze data will be highlighted.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

Introduction

Many academic studies have looked at the relationship between academic performance and involvement in extracurricular activities. According to research studies in the past, students were being shielded away from involvement in extracurricular activities so that they can maintain high grade point averages and obtain more scholarships for post-secondary education (Wright & Clark, 1961). In today's world it is apparent that students need more than a high GPA to obtain college or post-secondary education. Extracurricular activities provide more than an additional spot on a student's resume, according to the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) after school activities instill values and work ethic in our nation's youth. The association website states "It is in these vital programs – sports, music, speech, theatre, debate – where young people learn lifelong lessons that complement the academic lessons taught in the classroom" (NFHS, 2002, p. 1). In the following chapter, I will detail the methods that were employed in my research study.

This study is based on a service-learning project in the Curriculum and Instruction (Inclusive Education) methods course that will be offered in the College of Education at a small public university in the Western portion of New York State. This research study investigates the implementation of extracurricular activities (specifically, sports) in schools from elementary age to university age. The impact that extracurricular activities have on academic performance is explored through surveys with research participants as well as data analysis of their grade point averages (GPAs) at two different points during the academic year. These two points were the fall semester while they are participating in sports and the spring semester where they are not fully participating. Participants involved in a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) sports

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swimming and diving team at a small liberal arts college in Western New York State had the opportunity to discuss in season and out of season grades as well as overall experience on the team.

Research Frameworks

In order to investigate the research questions detailed in the literature review in Chapter 2, I developed a research plan based on the framework of mixed methods that leans slightly more towards quantitative methodology. As defined by Johnson and Christensen (2012), mixed research “involves the mixing of quantitative and qualitative methods with other paradigm characteristics” (p. 429). The strengths of taking a mixed method approach is that it can test and validate “already constructed theories about how and why phenomena occur” and still produces “precise, quantitative, numerical data” (p. 429). Quantitative data such as GPAs can provide a researcher with an answer of whether or not an athlete does better while they are in season or out of season.

For the purposes of this study, I collected data that compare the participants’ GPAs with their own perceptions of the impact that extracurricular activities has on their schooling. In some cases, the participants’ grades do not prove what the hypothesis is projecting which would seem troubling from a quantitative standpoint. Yet through mixed methods I am able to use surveys and questionnaires in order to get an explanation from the participants and to use the quantitative data to show a direct comparison between one semester and the next. The decision to work with mixed methods came after careful consideration and the benefits of mixing statistical data with participant testimonials to support the research questions. This combination will provide the best evidence to support the positive impact of extracurricular activities on academic achievement and school connectedness.

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Subjects and Settings

This study was conducted at a rural university located in Western New York State with a student population of about 5,200. It took place at a natatorium on the college's campus that is home to 28 athletes on the men's and women's swimming and diving team. The athletes who participated in this study spend on average 20 to 25 hours a week at practice and manage a full-time student status at a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester. The swimming and diving season begins in early September and is completed in late February with the possibility of qualifying for the national meet which occurs in March. Out of the 15 weeks of the fall semester, the athletes practice and compete for 12 weeks, with no practices occurring during Thanksgiving break or final exam week. Out of the 15 weeks of the spring semester, the athletes only compete for 4.5 weeks, unless they qualify for the national meet. During the second semester, the athletes have considerably more free time and less stringent requirements to be at practice or meets.

The participants were approached about participation via email (see Appendix C) as well as individual meetings before their scheduled practice time to explain the process of the research study and obtain consent. After obtaining consent from the participants a survey was passed out and the participants were asked to complete the survey to the best of their ability. The participants were reminded that their answers will not be associated with their name but rather a randomized name or letter. The participants were given until the end of the season (early March) to return the surveys to the researcher's office, which is located right outside of the natatorium. For security and confidentiality reasons, the researcher's office door remains locked at all times unless the researcher is present. Out of the 27 athletes on the team, 21 (7F, 14M) were chosen to participate in the study due to their status as at least second year students at the university. This was a requirement so that students would have a GPA issued by the college for the spring

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semester of 2015. 20 of the athletes identified as Caucasian and one of them identified as Hispanic. The athletes ranged between 18-21 years of age and only three of the athletes had transferred from another institution.

Sampling

The criteria for participation in this study were:

1. Research participants are actively involved with the swimming and diving program
2. Are classified as full time students by the University (minimum of 12 credit hours per semester)
3. Subjects are both male and female between the ages of 18-22
4. Subjects have completed a full season on the team (September-February/March)

Data Collection Procedures

In order to collect the data for the first portion of the research study, I gained permission to look at the participant's academic transcripts for the Spring 2015 semester and the Fall 2015 semester. In the initial stage of the study, I reviewed participants' transcripts. These transcripts showed the participants' GPAs for the given semester (Spring or Fall) and from this data, I compiled a chart to compare in-season GPAs with out-of-season GPAs.

The next portion of the research study involved collecting the participant surveys that were administered before the swimming and diving season concluded in February (with the exception of 3 athletes who qualified to compete at the NCAA division III championship meet March 14-19th). The use of participant surveys in the research allowed for predetermined questions to be administered to a larger group of participants (Research and Planning Group, 2011, p. 1). For this research study I am to see the overall responses from participants and their views on extracurricular activities and its impact on academics. To alleviate issues with response, return rate these surveys were administered in person to the participants and responses

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were required to be returned by a specific date (Research and Planning Group, 2011, p. 2). The method of administering the surveys to the participants in person but allowing them to complete in private allows the participants to be more forthright and honest with their responses (Research and Planning Group, 2011, p. 2).

Participants were asked to fill out questionnaires regarding their experiences on a sports team and how they feel their participation on said sports team has impacted their academics. The first part of the questionnaire (see Appendix D) has six questions that follow the Likert rating scale, which follows a more quantitative approach to the data. The decision to use a Likert scale occurred because it allows the respondents the ability to choose from a range of options from “strongly disagree” to “neutral” to “strongly agree (McLeod, 2008, p. 1).” The information gained from these responses are displayed in a bar chart in Chapter 4, which allows the researcher to pick out what responses are the most common to sense a trend.

The second half of the questionnaire given to the participants (see Appendix D) involves open ended questions geared at getting the participants to explain the answers they gave on the first portion of the questionnaire. The use of questionnaires in this research study will provide information about “thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, personality, and behavioral intentions of research participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 162). While the Likert scale and GPA analysis will provide quantitative information using questionnaires will allow the researcher to see why the participants are doing better in one semester over the other. Questionnaires provide a way to see if the participants feel that extracurricular activities connect them to their school environment in a positive manner. Research states that using questionnaires also provides anonymity for the participants which is “important if you are gathering sensitive information (Centers for Disease Control, 2008, p. 1). The questions posed in the research

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methods (See Appendix D) require the participants to give answers regarding their opinions of being involved in extracurricular activities and maintain. The method that is used to analyze this data is thematic analysis as it provides the researcher with a way to broaden the information received from the survey/questionnaire. As described by Harvard University, thematic analysis is “a data analytic strategy, it helps researchers move their analysis from a broad reading of the data towards discovering patterns and developing themes” (2008, p. 1).

Data Analysis Procedures

There are 18 surveys that were analyzed in this section, which makes it ever more crucial to find two or three reoccurring themes in the research. Originally, 21 athletes were given surveys but 3 failed to return the surveys by the required date. All of the participants Grade Point Averages (GPA) will be averaged together for each semester (Spring 2015 and Fall 2015) and split between gender. The split between genders will be highlighted to see if the trend is greater or less between the two. The first 6 questions on the questionnaire (See Appendix D) involve the participants selecting an answer from the options given and these results will be displayed in graph form in the results portion of the research. These graphs will allow the researcher to look at the percentages of participants who select each answer and will give insight to their opinions of extracurricular activities and school connectedness.

With regards to the open ended questions presented in the questionnaire, thematic analysis will be used to establish a trend, or multiple trends in the research. As Boyatzis (1998) described the process, I am “encoding qualitative information” (p. vii) to identify related factors such and will be looking for key trends such as extracurricular activities helped me become a more organized student, or because of extracurricular activities I find that I do not have enough time to focus on school. The idea of establishing a theme is that it “captures something

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important about the data in relation to the research question” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 10).”

This is a very flexible way to interpret the data that allows the researcher to be able to connect meaning with the quantitative data.

Conclusions

Through the use of the different data collection and analysis strategies described above, which are directly associated with both quantitative and qualitative research, I have set up the best possible situation in order to analyze the data retrieved by the participants. Through this research study I have come to new conclusions about the effects that extracurricular activities have on academic performance and defend student participation in them. The next chapter of the research will discuss the results of both the GPA comparisons between the Spring and Fall semesters as well as the analysis of the questionnaires.

Chapter 4 – Results

In the previous chapter, I discussed the framework for a research study with regards to how data was to be extracted as well as how the data would be analyzed to find meaning. In this chapter I will describe the results with regards to changes in grade point averages and participants' feelings and impact towards participation in extracurricular activities. The data that emerged from this study of division three athletes at a small liberal arts college in Western New York State spoke powerfully to the positive impact that participation in extracurricular activities has on academic performance and school connectedness.

Grade Point Averages

The first item of discussion is the data analysis of grade point averages and that will be followed by the thematic analysis of the questionnaire administered to the participants. Table 1 displays the GPA variance by semester (Spring 2015/Fall 2015) with regards to each individual participant, the change in GPA of each participant, and then a percentage change is calculated.

Table 1: GPA Variance by Semester

Participant	Spring 2015 GPA	Fall 2015 GPA	Change in GPA	Percent Change in GPA
1	2.12	3.14	1.02	48.11%
2	3.60	3.60	0.00	0.00%
3	3.15	3.31	0.16	5.08%
4	2.70	3.25	0.55	20.37%
5	3.50	3.28	-0.22	-6.29%
6	3.16	2.97	-0.19	-6.01%
7	2.97	2.40	-0.57	-19.19%
8	1.68	2.70	1.02	60.71%
9	2.74	3.26	0.52	18.98%
10	2.69	2.43	-0.26	-9.67%
11	2.42	2.37	-0.05	-2.07%
12	3.46	3.60	0.14	4.05%
13	2.35	3.28	0.93	39.57%
14	3.86	3.50	-0.36	-9.33%
15	3.28	3.74	0.46	14.02%
16	3.34	3.79	0.45	13.47%

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17	3.75	4.00	0.25	6.67%
18	3.88	4.00	0.12	3.09%
Total	Average	Average	Average	Average
18	3.04	3.26	0.22	10.09%

21 students were selected for participation in this research study which involved submitting a questionnaire and providing permission to access grade point averages (GPA) for the semesters identified in the study by April 1, 2016. As of April 1, 2016 only 18 participants returned the questionnaires which led to the elimination of three participants from the study.

The first element in the research process consisted of comparing the participants' GPAs out-of-season (Spring 2015) with their GPAs in-season (Fall 2015) with the difference in GPA recorded in Table 1. Through the use of Microsoft Excel, the change in GPA was calculated and converted into a percentage through the formula of Fall 2015 GPA minus Spring 2015 GPA. Table 1 provides the GPA change for each individual participant as well as the average of each data set noted at the bottom of the table. Out of the 18 participants, 12 participants had higher GPAs during the semester where they were heavily involved in the extracurricular activity. On average the participant group as a whole increased their GPAs 0.22 (10.09%) during the semester that they were heavily engaged in the extracurricular activity. Once the data was recorded a T-Test was performed to determine the statistical significance of the results. The T-Test yielded a p value of 0.032 which allows for rejection of the null hypothesis at a significance value of $p < 0.05$ (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 501-3).

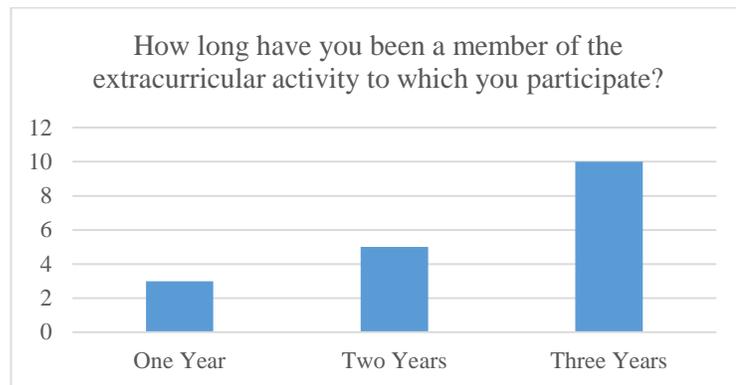
Qualitative Themes

The first six questions on the questionnaire required participants to select an answer from the options provided. The responses to questions one and two are noted in Graph 1 and 2.

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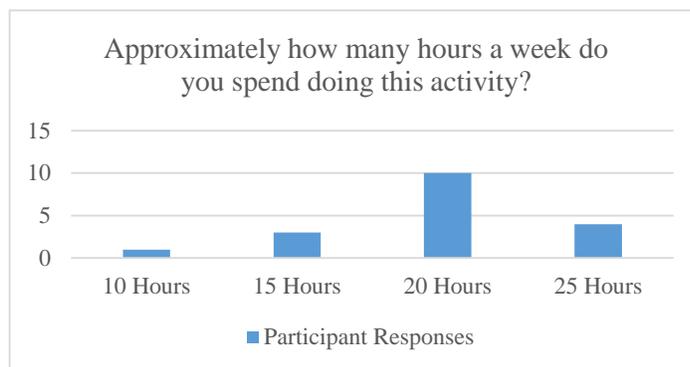
The first question asked about the length of participation and out of the 18 participants, three stated “one year,” five stated “two years,” and 10 stated three years of participation in the extracurricular activity.

Graph 1



The second question asked about the duration of time the participant is involved in the extracurricular activity each week: one stated “ten hours,” three stated “15 hours,” ten stated “20 hours,” and four stated “25 hours” each week.

Graph 2

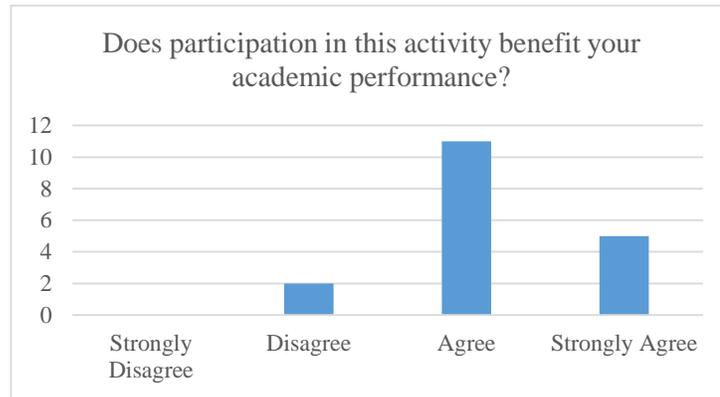


The next four questions administered on the questionnaire were done so on a Likert scale where the participants were able to select from four options: “Strongly Disagree,” “Disagree,” “Agree,” and “Strongly Agree.” The first question (Graph 3) asked the participants if participation in the activity benefits their academic performance and the results are as follows:

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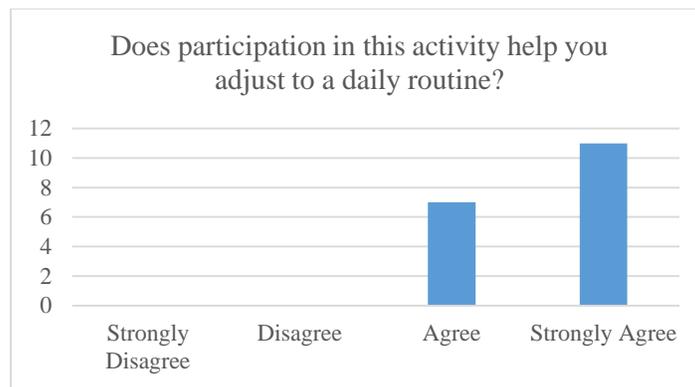
none of the participants selected “Strongly Disagree,” two participants selected “Disagree,” eleven selected “Agree,” and five selected “Strongly Agree.”

Graph 3



The next question (Graph 4) asked participants if participation in the activity helped them adjust to a daily routine: none of the participants selected “Strongly Disagree” or “Disagree,” seven selected “Agree” and eleven selected “Strongly Agree.”

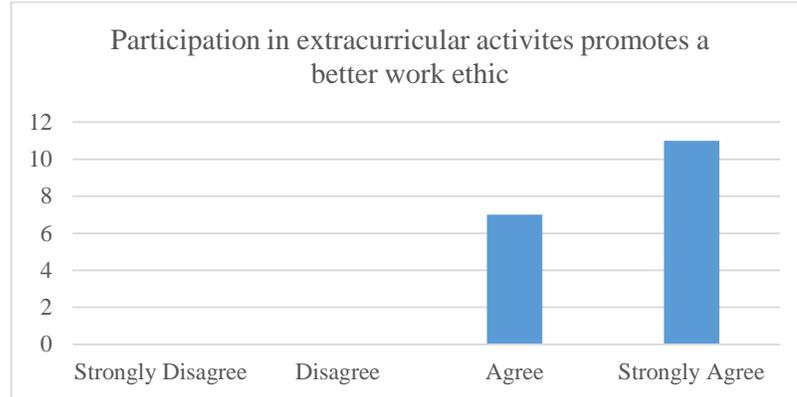
Graph 4



The third question (Graph 5) asked if participation in extracurricular activities promotes a better work ethic: none of the participants selected “Strongly Disagree” or “Disagree,” 7 selected “Agree” and 11 selected “Strongly Agree.”

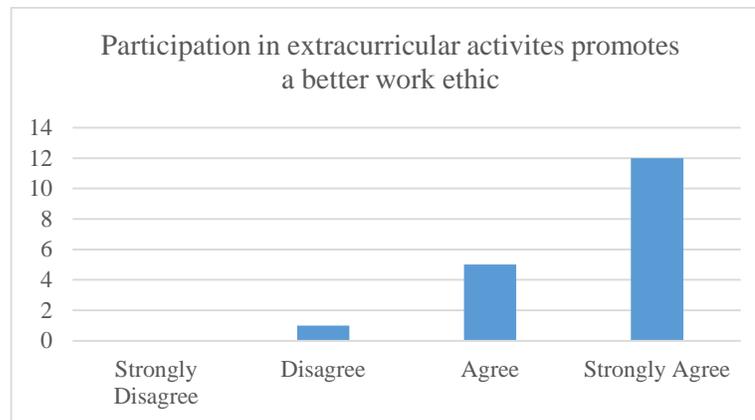
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Graph 5



The final Likert scale question (Graph 6) asked if participation in extracurricular activities promoted a better work ethic: none of the participants selected “Strongly Disagree,” one selected “Disagree,” five selected “Agree” and 12 selected “Strongly Agree.”

Graph 6



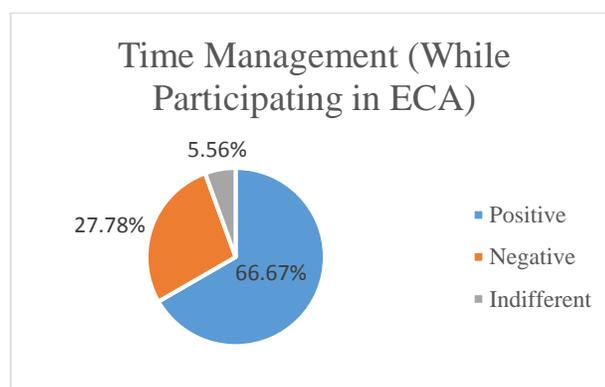
Thematic analysis from the questionnaires brought forth five major themes: time management, motivation, professor accommodations, support, and pride in the school to which they attend. Each of the four themes were either regarded in a positive (participation in extra

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curricular activities helped), negative (participation in extra curricular activities hurt), or neutral manner.

The first theme that emerged from the analysis was that of “Time Management” with 66.67% of participants mentioning aspects relating to time management in a positive manner, 27.78% of participation mentioning aspects relating to time management in a negative manner, and 5.56% responding indifferently or not mentioning an impact on time management (Graph 7). Participants who regarded extracurricular activities as a positive impact on things related to time management used a wide variety of phrases such as “knowing I have practice and have to get it done now” or “being on the team forces me to better manage my time and stay organized.” Those who regarded participation in extracurricular activities as having a negative impact towards aspects of time management as mentioned that “[out of season] I have more time to get work done at a relaxed pace.” Graph 7 (see below) provides the exact amount of positive, negative, or indifferent responses regarding time management using a pie chart distribution strategy.

Graph 7

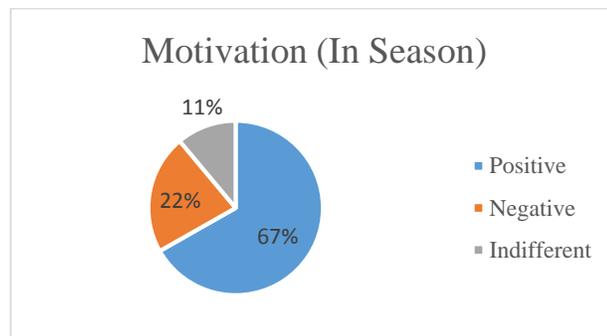


The second theme that emerged from the analysis of the open ended questions was in regard to aspects of motivation to do school work/other daily skills while participating in extracurricular activities. Sixty-seven percent of the participants mentioned aspects of

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extracurricular activities playing a positive role in motivation, 22% of participants mentioned aspects of extracurricular activities as playing a negative role with motivation, and 11% were indifferent or did not make mention of motivation as a factor (see Graph 8 below). Those who regarded it in a positive manner mentioned “lazier when not doing EC” “I usually don’t do as well when I’m not swimming” “when not engaged I feel a lack of structure and motivation” “[out of season] performance becomes lazy, no drive to perform in class or get any studying/homework done” “[in-season] putting in maximum effort into not only athletics but academic success” “[when not heavily engaged] less motivated to get work done in a timely manner.” The participants who did not see extracurricular activities as motivation for academics “harder to do school work when involved in swimming” “makes keeping on top of school work hard because of the long hours of practices and meets” “it is not easy to accomplish a high GPA while participating in EC.” Graph 8 (see below) provides the exact amount of positive, negative, or indifferent responses regarding motivation using a pie chart distribution strategy.

Graph 8

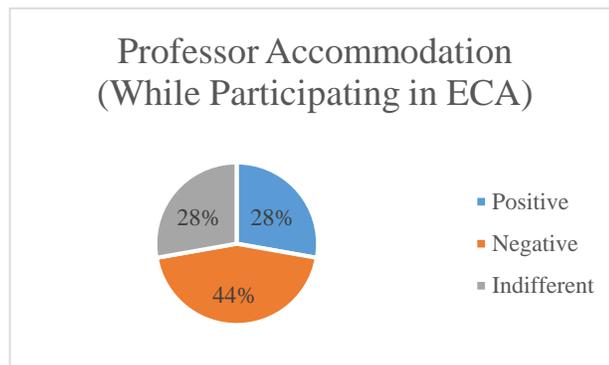


The third theme that emerged from the questionnaire responses was professor accommodations for those who participate in extracurricular activities. Twenty eight percent of the participants stated in some form that professors are helpful and accommodating due to their

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participation in extracurricular activities, 44% stated in some form that professors were not helpful or accommodating with regards to their participation in extracurricular activities and 28% were indifferent or took no side in the matter (Graph 9). Those who regarded professor accommodations in a positive manner mentioned “most professors understand” or “I have only had one professor give me a hard time.” Other participants stated, “I have yet to meet a professor who wasn’t helpful” and “I have easily rescheduled my exams with no problems.” Those who regarded professors as being unaccommodating stated “they know each athlete is a student first and an athlete second.” Other participants said, “We have to do everything everyone else has to do” or “they believe it is our choice what we decide to do.” Participants also regarded “professors just teach their classes and are unconcerned with anything outside of class.” Graph 9 (see below) provides the exact amount of positive, negative, or indifferent responses regarding professor accommodation using a pie chart distribution strategy.

Graph 9

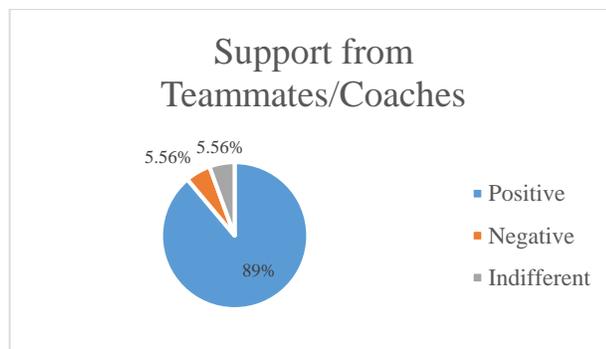


The fourth theme that emerged in the analysis of the questionnaire responses refers to the support that participants receive through taking part in extracurricular activities. Eighty nine percent of the participants regarded the support they receive from their team as a positive matter in some form, 5.5% of the participants regarded the support from their team in a negative or non-beneficial manner, and 5.5% did not comment on a difference in support (Graph 10). Those who

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regarded it in a positive manner noted the following in their responses “always have their teammates and coaches for support, regular students don’t have that” or “older members of the team will naturally act as mentors on how to balance school, work, socializing, and your activity.” Other participants stated that they were “associated and connected with various influential persons” and “upperclassmen also encourage certain classes and professors that will help.” Those who regarded it as negative or took a neutral stance regarded support from their teammates/coaches said “I don’t think people in sports have a better support system but rather a different support system.” Another participant stated that “no, if you want a support system you will have one.” Graph 10 (see below) provides the exact amount of positive, negative, or indifferent responses regarding support from teammates and coaches using a pie chart distribution strategy.

Graph 10

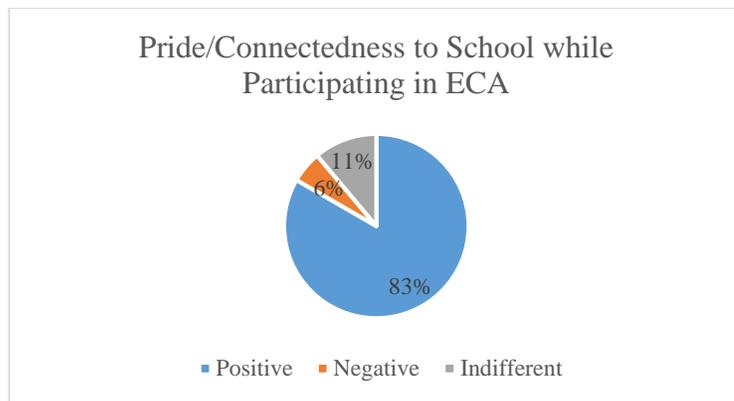


The fifth theme that emerged in the analysis of the questionnaire responses refers to the pride and attachment that the participants feel due to associations with school sponsored activities. Eighty-three percent of the participants regarded the theme of pride and attachment in some form in a positive manner, 6% referred to pride and attachment in a negative manner, and 11% referred to pride and attachment as indifferent or neutral (Graph 11). Those who regarded

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pride/attachment in a positive manner stated that they: “would like school a lot less without extracurricular activities.” Others responded with “I feel proud that I came here” or “its fun to see your name on things, travel places, and be a part of something bigger than yourself” and “I feel more attached to the school as a part of a team here.” Those who regarded it in a negative or neutral manner stated: “this is not a tem I am proud to say I am apart of” and “impacted my experience here however it has made me completely unattached to the school.” Graph 11 (see below) provides the exact amount of positive, negative, or indifferent responses regarding pride and connectedness to school while participating in ECA using a pie chart distribution strategy.

Graph 11



Conclusions:

The results from the research study have shown that 67.67% of the participants saw better time management from participation in extracurricular activities, 67% felt more motivated while participating, 89% saw a heightened sense of support as part of an extracurricular activity, and 83% regarded participation in extracurricular activities as a way to gain more support from teammates and coaches. The study also yielded that 67% of the participants achieved better grade point averages while heavily involved in extracurricular activities. The conclusions and discussion of the results described above will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 – Discussion

In the previous chapter, I reported the results of this research study on the influence of extracurricular activities on academic success. Data were presented with regard to participant Grade Point Averages (GPAs) for the Spring 2015 semester (the semester when they are not heavily involved with extracurricular activities) and the Fall 2015 semester (the semester when they are heavily involved in extracurricular activities). The results from the questionnaire that I administered to the participants to seek their opinions on how extracurricular activities impact their academic performance and connectedness to the school were also described. In this final chapter, the results that were compiled in that previous chapter will be discussed to find trends and assist in addressing the research question.

The hypothesis that drove this research study was that student participation in extracurricular activities promotes higher academic averages as well as a higher level of school connectedness. For the purposes of the following discussion, the research will be discussed in two categories: academic performance implications and school connectedness.

Academic Performance

The present findings of the research study yielded that the participants on average did 0.22% better academically in the semester that they were heavily involved in extracurricular activities (Fall 2015). When the participants were not involved in extracurricular activities, the average GPA for the research pool was 3.04%, while the semester they were involved the number jumped up to 3.26%. These results indicated that students are capable of attaining high GPAs that are often better in the semester when they are busy working on other activities. These results are consistent with the findings in the research of Stephens (2003), Howard and Ziomeck-Daigle (2009), Kronholz (2012), Metsapelto and Pulkkinen (2012), and Bakoban and Alijarallah

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(2015). The results of this study also showed that even in situations in which participants performed better when not participating in extracurricular activities, extracurricular activities were not detrimental to their GPAs. These results are quite consistent with the findings of research conducted by Richards and Aries (1999), and Stegman (2000).

Current findings from the questionnaires also showed a relationship between extracurricular activities and their impact on academic performance. The questionnaires that were administered to the participants yielded positive results through the Likert scale questions (questions 3-6). The four questions involved asking the participants to respond with either “Strongly Disagree,” “Disagree,” “Agree,” or “Strongly Agree.” The responses to the first question supported the initial hypothesis that participation in extracurricular activities benefits academic performance. Of the 18 participants, 11 agreed and 5 strongly agreed with the statement that “participation in this activity benefits your academic performance.” Out of the 18 participants, all of the participants either agreed (7) or strongly agreed (11) with the statement that “participation in the activity helps you adjust to a daily routine.” Many of the participants responded through their opened ended questions to the statement that, “the commitment and dedication required [through sports] comes to other aspects of my college life” or the statement that, “I feel less lazy in season.”

Two of the major factors in impacting participant GPAs during the semester that they were heavily involved in extracurricular activities were time management and motivation. In the case of the research, the participants were all members of the university’s swimming and diving program. Many expressed the requirements of practice and meets as something that motivates them to get work done. Over sixty-six percent of the participants spoke in a positive manner when it came to discussing time management and motivation to get work done when in-season.

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When the participants are not in season and do not have to worry about making morning practice sessions or spending weekends traveling to meets, many have expressed that the extra time was actually a deterrent from working on schoolwork. The extra time gave many participants more time to relax and to assume that the work could be done at a later date. The consequences of not having a set schedule outside of the season allowed the participants to put off their workload and theoretically led to poor performance in comparison to when they are on a more regimented schedule. It is through these responses that a conclusion can be drawn that the presence of extracurricular activities has a positive impact on academic performance.

School Connectedness

Eighty-three percent of the participants referred to engagement in extracurricular activities as having a positive effect on their feelings of school connectedness. This question was addressed in the participant questionnaire as “do you feel pride in the fact that you represent your school in these extracurricular activities?” The positive responses such as “would like school a lot less without extracurricular activities” and “I feel more attached to the school as a part of a team here” allude to the notion about being involved in the school. This involvement to an extent allowed students to have a positive and lasting effect on the ways in which they view the school and their participation in school sponsored events.

Another impact that was discussed in the questionnaires was support from teammates and coaches. Many of the participants reported that participation in the extracurricular activity gave them an outlet to discuss frustrations with school or seek assistance from their fellow peers. When it came time for advising for semester schedules and classes, the participants were able to turn to teammates for suggestions of classes to take and professors who had a positive view of their participation in extracurricular activities. Having the ability to discuss frustrations with

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teammates, coaches, and other support systems allowed students to see school as a positive force in their lives and become more connected to the school itself. These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Akos (2006), Kronholz (2012), and Knifsend and Graham (2012).

Limitations

Although the findings of this research study were generally positive and supported the hypothesis that extracurricular activities have a positive impact on both academic achievement and school connectedness there are still important limitations to discuss. The first limitation is the participant size for the research study as only one group of athletes (N=18), from one university, who participated in the same extracurricular activity (the swimming and diving program). Another limitation to this research study is that only two semesters out of the normal eight were studied. It is not appropriate to conclude that, if this study were done on a multi-semester basis, that the results would yield the same increase from out of season to in season.

The results of this study are also limited because of the principal investigator multiple roles as the data collector as well as an assistant coach on the team under study. While steps were taken to minimize bias (e.g., anonymous responses to questionnaires) it is still a possibility that bias may have affected the results. In future research studies the course load that the participants are enrolled in should play a factor in determining if one semester of classes was more intense than the other as this could also impact results.

Future Research

Further research should be conducted to see the benefits that each type of after school activity (e.g., sports or music) has on a student's academic performance as well as how they view the school. For example, research could be conducted to see the academic implications for participation in arts related after school activities. Additionally, this research could look at the

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impact surrounding the amount of time a student spends participating in the extracurricular activity each day has on motivation to complete assignments and projects.

In order to further research, the impact of extracurricular activities on academic performance and school connectedness, researchers in the future should look at a multiple semester study to take more into consideration. This would account for variances such as difficulty of courses that a participant is enrolled in, or other factors such as student-teaching and internships. This could be taken even further to differentiate for gender, age and race to see the implications that extracurricular activities have on males and females and students of various ages.

Conclusion

Through this research, it has become clear that the association between extracurricular activities and academic performance can be positive and enriching for students. Also, being a part of an athletics team, music/art clubs, or other associated extracurricular activities can help students feel more a part of their school community. These students may have no connection to the school until they become involved with extracurricular activities and, after doing so, may become more involved and motivated to do well academically. Essentially this research supports the notion that being involved in an extracurricular activity can give meaning to school for some students and allows them to want to be involved. Extracurricular activities, when organized properly with regards to the student, can be extremely beneficial to a student's health and well being as well as how they perform academically. Aside from keeping students out of trouble it allows them to around individuals who can serve as a mentor or role model.

This research also gives insights to what colleges and universities could be doing to promote more involvement in extracurricular activities from their student body. Through this

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research it has shown that when students feel that the academic side of school can fit with the extracurricular side they are the happiest. Universities can take this data and implement more opportunities for students to do well in both aspects. Study halls, more accommodating office hours, and student tutoring options are just some of the many examples universities can take to make being involved in extracurricular activities feasible for their students. Not only will this positively impact their current student population, but will provide an excellent recruiting tool for prospective students. Small investments now can solve issues like enrollment decreases that are currently plaguing many institutions for the future and create a well rounded, career oriented student population driven by intrinsic motivators.

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APPENDIX A

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM) COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS REPORT*

* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

• **Name:** Kristen Champoux (ID: 4369434)
• **Email:** cham2712@fredonia.edu
• **Institution Affiliation:** SUNY - College at Fredonia (ID: 273)
• **Institution Unit:** Education
• **Phone:** 716-510-7164

• **Curriculum Group:** Human Research
• **Course Learner Group:** Group 1
• **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course

• **Report ID:** 13971426
• **Completion Date:** 09/09/2014
• **Expiration Date:** 09/08/2016
• **Minimum Passing:** 80
• **Reported Score*:** 94

REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY

DATE COMPLETED

Introduction (ID: 757)	09/09/14
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	09/09/14
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	09/09/14
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	09/09/14
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	09/09/14
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	09/09/14
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	09/09/14
Research with Prisoners - SBE (ID: 506)	09/09/14
Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)	09/09/14
Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE (ID: 508)	09/09/14
International Research - SBE (ID: 509)	09/09/14
Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)	09/09/14
Avoiding Group Harms - U.S. Research Perspectives (ID: 14080)	09/09/14
Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees (ID: 483)	09/09/14
Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects (ID: 488)	09/09/14
SUNY Fredonia State College (ID: 587)	09/09/14

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

CITI Program
Email: citisupport@miami.edu
Phone: 305-243-7570
Web: <https://www.citiprogram.org>

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COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM) COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT REPORT**

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- **Name:** Kristen Champoux (ID: 4369434)
- **Email:** cham2712@fredonia.edu
- **Institution Affiliation:** SUNY - College at Fredonia (ID: 273)
- **Institution Unit:** Education
- **Phone:** 716-510-7164

- **Curriculum Group:** Human Research
- **Course Learner Group:** Group 1
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course

- **Report ID:** 13971426
- **Report Date:** 09/26/2015
- **Current Score**:** 94

REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES

MOST RECENT

Introduction (ID: 757)	09/09/14
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	09/09/14
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	09/09/14
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	09/09/14
SUNY Fredonia State College (ID: 567)	09/09/14
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	09/09/14
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	09/09/14
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	09/09/14
Research with Prisoners - SBE (ID: 506)	09/09/14
Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)	09/09/14
Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE (ID: 508)	09/09/14
International Research - SBE (ID: 509)	09/09/14
Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)	09/09/14
Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees (ID: 483)	09/09/14
Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects (ID: 488)	09/09/14
Avoiding Group Harms - U.S. Research Perspectives (ID: 14060)	09/09/14

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

CITI Program

Email: citisupport@miami.edu

Phone: 305-243-7970

Web: <https://www.citi-program.org>

APPENDIX B

Proposal Abstract for Research Involving Human Subjects

Project Name –

Does Extracurricular Activities Promote Better Academic Performance and Heightened sense of School Connectedness in College Athletes

Requested Information

1. Principal Investigator – Kristen Champoux

- B.S Social Studies Adolescence Education (2014) (Stata University of New York at Fredonia)
- Graduate Assistant, Fredonia Swimming and Diving

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Robert L. Dahlgren

- Chair/Associate Professor - Social Studies Education (Curriculum & Instruction)
 - Ph.D. (2008) Social Studies Education (University of Florida)
 - M.A.T. (1997) Social Studies Education (Simmons College)
 - M.A. (1990) History (Boston University)
 - B.S. Journalism (1986) Minor in History (Boston University)
- (see attached cv)

2. Purpose of the study –

1. The investigator in this study proposes to research academic performance during the semester that athletes are involved in their sport compared to the semester that they are not involved in their sport. The investigator of this study plans to obtain semester grades as well as to distribute questionnaires to the group of athletes to gain insight on their feelings about involvement in extracurricular activities and see if it promotes higher academic achievement. The study is proposed around the research question:

What are the effects of the amount of involvement in extracurricular activities on

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academic performance in 21 Division III athletes at a small liberal arts school in Western New York? Ancillary questions will include: How much involvement in extracurricular activities does it take to see a negative impact on academic performance? Is there a difference in grade point averages for the semester in which the season takes place versus the semester where they are not participating? Does involvement in an extracurricular activity such as a sports team promote a sense of school connectedness?

3. Characteristics of the Study Participants –

- a. **Age Range-** Respondents will range in age from 18 to 22.
- b. **Sex-** The study will include both male and female respondents.
- c. **Number-** the study will include approximately 29 participants.
- d. **Inclusion Criteria-** All participants are full time students (taking at least 12 credits) who are athletes with the University Swimming & Diving program.
- e. **Exclusion Criteria** – First year college students will be excluded from the data as they do not have a semester GPA recorded for out of season academic performance.
- f. **Vulnerable Subjects** – None of the subjects participating in this study are characterized as vulnerable.

4. Instruments used to conduct study –

The instruments used to conduct this study includes a questionnaire that measures self-concept and attitude as well as copies of student academic transcripts. A questionnaire was chosen for this research due to the fact that it allows the participants to share their

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responses knowing that only the researcher will see the answers. The questions are designed to find out the impact that extracurricular activities have on student performance and seek answers to questions like “how much is too much?” The questionnaire will also provide qualitative data regarding how the participants feel being on a sports team has allowed them to adjust to school and if it raises their connection (attachment) to the school. The second instrument used to conduct this study will be academic transcripts from the Spring 2015 semester and the Fall 2015 semester. Participants academic performance will be measured based on the season they were not participating in sports (Spring 2015) and the semester in which they were participating (Fall 2015). Findings from the academic transcripts will be analyzed through open coding to determine similarities in the data.

5. Recruitment Procedures/Informed Consent –

Participants will be receiving the following email:

Transcript:

Dear Participant: I am a student in the Curriculum and Instruction Department at SUNY Fredonia. In preparation for my final thesis project, I am collecting data on the experiences of students who participate in extracurricular activities as well as how this impacts their academic performance during their time at the university. I would like to invite you to participate in a questionnaire that asks you to discuss your connection to the school and whether it has been strengthened by your participation in extracurricular activities. Additionally, I will need to view your academic transcripts for the spring 2015 semester as well as the fall 2015 semester. Your participation in this study is voluntary

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and you may withdraw from this project at any time. There is no form of compensation available. Your confidentiality during this project will be ensured.

6. Ethical Procedures

a. Potential risks to subjects

The potential risks to subjects in this study include allowing them to read the research and its findings at the conclusion of the study. Also the researcher is in a supervisory role (graduate assistant) with the participants in the study.

b. Provisions for medical or professional intervention

No provisions for medical or professional intervention are required as this research is based of data calculated by student's academic performance and questionnaires.

c. Maintenance of safety for subjects

The maintenance of safety for the subjects in this study will be ensured by the type of research being conducted. The participants will be made aware that they may withdraw from the study at any time and that the information collected will remain confidential with its only purpose to serve as research.

d. Potential benefits from the study

The research study will add to current research about the impact of extracurricular on academic performance. It is possible that the questionnaire can serve as a reflection for the participant and allow them to become more aware of the connection they have with the university. It can also serve as a confidence boost that they have acquired time management skills and realize that involvement in extracurricular activities may not hinder their academic performance.

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7. Precautions to Minimize Risk

Only questionnaire responses that are relevant to the research question will be used in final research paper. Any comments made about professors at the university, or fellow participants will not be used as part of the final paper. To minimize the risk of being in a supervisory role, the researcher will state that participation in this study is voluntary and choosing to not participate will have no effect on the participants place on the team.

8. Provisions for Maintaining Confidentiality

The researcher is dedicated to the ethical requirements in the field of educational and social research. This includes making sure that the names of those participants in this study are kept in confidentiality. Participants will not be referred to by name but rather a numerical system (example Participant 1 & Participant 2).

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent

Protocol Title: Do Extracurricular Activities Promote Better Academic Performance and Heightened sense of School Connectedness in College Athletes

Please read this consent document carefully before you decide to participate in this study.

Purpose of the research study:

To study the effect of extracurricular activities on academic performance for a group of participants who devote at least one semester of time to school sponsored activities outside of academics. This study will also seek to find out how participants feel their participation in extracurricular activities effects their connectedness to the school.

What you will be asked to do in the study:

To respond to a questionnaire that includes both scale style and open ended questions as well as grant permission for the researcher to compare your spring 2015 GPA to your Fall 2015 GPA.

Time Required:

Questionnaires will be collected three weeks after distribution.

Compensation:

There is no compensation for participating in the study.

Confidentiality:

Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by the law.

Voluntary participation:

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating.

Right to withdraw from the study:

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

Potential Benefits and Risks:

The potential risks to subjects in this study include allowing them to read the research and its findings at the conclusion of the study. Also the researcher is in a supervisory role

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(graduate assistant) with the participants in the study. The research study will add to current research about the impact of extracurricular on academic performance. It is possible that the questionnaire can serve as a reflection for the participant and allow them to become more aware of the connection they have with the university. It can also serve as a confidence boost that they have acquired time management skills and realize that involvement in extracurricular activities may not hinder their academic performance.

Whom to contact if you have questions about the study:

Kristen Champoux

Email: cham2712@fredonia.edu

Whom to contact about your rights as a research participant in the study:

Dr. Judith Horowitz

Associate Provost for Graduate Studies, Sponsored Research and Faculty Development

Maytum Hall 805

Judith.horowitz@fredonia.edu

(716) 673-4708

**I have read the procedure outlined above. I voluntarily agree to participate
in this study and have received a copy of this description.**

Participants signature

Date

Principal investigators signatures

Date

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APPENDIX D

Questionnaire:

Does Participation in Extracurricular Activities Promote Better Academic Performance and School Connectedness

Directions: Please circle your desired answer.

1 How long have you been a member of the extracurricular activity to which you participate?

One year Two years Three years

2. Approximately how many hours a week do you spend doing this activity?

10 15 20 25

3. Does participation in this activity benefit your academic performance?

Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree

4. Does participation in this activity help you adjust to a daily routine?

Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree

5. Participation in extracurricular activities promotes a better work ethic

Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree

6. Do you feel a stronger sense of pride in your school because of your participation in extracurricular activities?

Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree

Open Ended Questions

1. Do you notice a difference in your academic performance when you are not heavily engaged in extracurricular activities?

2. What do you think causes this difference in your academic performance?

