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EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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BY
LAURIE K. COLLINGS

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THE IMPACT OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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DECEMBER 2020

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I would like to thank my family, especially my husband for complete support during my journey on this thesis project. Also thank you to my children who helped inspire my topic. It took time for me to accept the different journeys each one faces, but my faith helped on this journey to discovery and I am thankful for having it.

Abstract

Extracurricular activities have become very common in the day-to-day life of high school students, however, the reason for participating as well as the impacts may be different for each student. The purpose of this literature review is to understand the impacts of extracurricular activities on high school students and how participation in extracurricular activities impacts high school students' academic performance and social-emotional learning. In addition, the literature review examines if the breadth and intensity of extracurricular activity participation can change those impacts for high school students. The research explores five main categories of activities and the impacts participating in the particular activities has on high school students. The examination of the research indicates that students who participate in extracurricular activities find positive attributes, academically and in social-emotional development, that help them both in high school and in their future.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Walk into any American high school after the final bell has sounded for the day and you are sure to find many students off to an activity. Maybe they are heading to the gym for basketball practice, to the cafeteria to find space to dance, the science room to work on science Olympiad, or maybe getting together in the media center for Dungeons and Dragons club. For many students that final bell of the school day is not the signal to the end of their day but rather the signal that they are off to their group, their team, or their friends to spend the next hour or two doing something they enjoy, excel at, or simply want to learn.

Extracurricular activities are near and dear to my heart. I competed in three sports during my high school years and ultimately continued one of them for two years in college. Some of my fondest memories from high school relate to these activities. I met some of my best friends, had some success, some failures, and learned some important lessons. While I can vividly remember my time on the volleyball court, basketball court, and the track, the time away from those arenas are what I remember the most. It was on the bus to competitions, in the locker room, and eating dinner with my team that I remember. To me, that time along with the practices and competitions was priceless as it truly helped make me into the person I am today. The lessons and additional responsibilities truly helped me grow and shape me. I was also involved in numerous school-related clubs, many of which I had to step out of my comfort zone to join as many of my friends were not going to be involved. These clubs pushed me to work with other individuals I wouldn't normally have and to further explore strengths and skills I was not yet aware of.

It was my memories and lessons I learned that led me to introduce my children to extracurricular activities. At the same time as a new high school teacher, I listened to school administrators encourage the incoming freshman to get involved with their school. Each

trimester I listen to them in my classroom talk to my students. It is each of these three items that have led me to this research. These personal memories and lessons, seeing my children participate, and working in a high school that promotes extracurricular participation. While I have always firmly believed that extracurricular activities are a positive force, as a mother and a teacher I want to fully understand the research that has been put forth on this topic. I want to know the path I am allowing my kids to be on and I want to provide proper guidance to my students and their families.

Importance of Researching Impacts of Extracurricular Activities

In high school, the objective of extracurricular activities might simply be for students to get involved with their classmates, school, and community by providing different opportunities to fit their personal interests. As Mahoney and Vest (2012) state, the reasons most youth participate in activities are purely for intrinsic reasons like excitement, enjoyment, to get better at their activity, and to be with peers. These activities can include sports, theater, music, art, academic teams, and numerous clubs. There are dozens of extracurricular activities high school students can choose to participate in. While many students see extracurricular activities as time spent with their friends, an opportunity to play their favorite sport, or getting to act in the upcoming play, the benefits of their participation can be so much more. Overall, participation in extracurricular activities can produce a wide range of positive outcomes like higher grades and test scores, decreased dropout rates, and higher educational attainment (Martinez, Coker, McMahan, Cohen, & Thapa, 2016).

Extracurricular activities can also fill in gaps found in educational settings, like teamwork, initiative, and social responsibility (Larson, Hansen, & Moneta, 2006). Participation can link students with supportive adults and like-minded peers who can assist them in direction

and support (Fredricks, 2012). Overall they are providing not only academic but non-academic skills in addition to building relationships (Stearns & Glennie, 2010). Business leaders tend to agree that social-emotional learning is just as important as academic skills (Ready Nation, 2017). The effects extracurricular activities have on students are those needed to become productive and successful adults as well as increase self-esteem, build relationships, and work on goals (Massoni, 2011).

History of High School Extracurricular Participation

Before diving into the benefits of participation in extracurricular activities let's review the history of extracurricular activities and how many students are participating. Extracurricular activities were introduced in the 19th century and were usually practical or vocational in nature like literacy and debate clubs (Massoni, 2011). As the number and variation of activities increased over the years, students have been able to choose activities that fit their interests and talents. The most recent U.S. Census Bureau (2014), reports 57% of children between the ages of 6 and 17 years old participate in at least one after-school extracurricular activity. This means that nearly six out of ten children are participating in at least one extracurricular activity and are reported to be more highly engaged in school. A poll by Education Weekly in 2019 found that nearly 50% of US secondary students were participating in sports and 40% in other clubs or arts (Sparks, 2019). The Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) reports that more than 240,000 students are active in athletics, and when combining all the various fine arts activities the numbers are over 320,000. This places Minnesota at 10th for participation in the country, and this does not include clubs outside of the MSHSL jurisdiction.

As Christy Lleras (2008) points out, "early opportunities and experiences often shape later life chances and successes" (p.899). Further research suggests that organized activities

encourage healthy development and provide more developmental support and opportunities than other common after-school pursuits such as hanging out with friends or watching television. Furthermore, these healthy outcomes have been described in five categories: academic, confidence, community connectedness, character, and compassion (Gardner, Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2008). Ultimately the participation can allow a student to demonstrate a wider range of skills and interests than is available to them in the classroom alone (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006).

Purpose and Guiding Questions

Extracurricular activities have become wide-ranging and very popular in high schools. Through research, it has been found that participation in these activities outside of school has positively impacted the development of its participants (Gardner, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2008). The purpose of this literature review is to understand more about both the positive and negative impacts of extracurricular activities at the secondary level by researching these guiding questions: 1) How does participation in extracurricular activities impact high school students' academic performance and social-emotional learning? and 2) Does the breadth and intensity of extracurricular participation change the impacts for high school students?

Definition of Terms

For this thesis, the following terms have been defined.

Activity: According to Merriam-Webster, the definition of activity is “something that is done for pleasure that usually involves a group of people” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Extracurricular: According to Merriam-Webster, the definition of extracurricular is “not falling within the scope of a regular curriculum” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Non-cognitive skills: As reported by the John Hopkins Institute for Education Policy, non-cognitive skills can be broadly defined as personality traits or patterns of thought, feeling,

and behaviors. Psychologists classify these into five categories of openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. In an academic setting, they are further defined as academic behaviors, perseverance, and mindsets as well as learning strategies, and social skills (Bjorklund-Young, 2016).

Social-Emotional Learning: The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines social and emotional learning as “the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (CASEL, n.d.).

Chapter Summary

First as a high school student and now as a teacher, understanding the impacts of extracurricular activities is important so that I can provide guidance and advocacy to students. Chapter II of this literature review will focus on participation in extracurricular activities and the impact participation in extracurricular activities has on high school students’ academic performance as well as social-emotional learning. In addition, it will review if the breadth and intensity of extracurricular participation have any change on the impacts of students.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this research is to review the impacts of extracurricular activities on high school students. This chapter will review various research studies and literature reviews that analyze how participation in extracurricular activities impact high school students' academic performance and social-emotional learning as well as if the breadth and intensity of extracurricular participation change the impacts for high school students.

To locate the literature, searches of Educational Journals, ERIC, EBSCO, and Google Scholar were conducted for articles between 1985 and 2020. Articles were narrowed by only reviewing peer-reviewed journals that focused on extracurricular activities in high school students that addressed the guiding questions. The keywords that were used included extracurricular activities and high school. Additional keywords utilized to further narrow those searches down were breadth of activity, mental health, and test scores.

This chapter will be organized in the following manner. First, literature will be reviewed by the type of extracurricular activities, specifically by five main categories of prosocial activities, performance activities, team sports, school involvement activities, and academic clubs. Then, literature will be reviewed on the topics of educational outcomes of extracurricular activities, social-emotional learning impacts of extracurricular activities, impacts of specific groups, and finally the breadth and intensity of activities.

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities are typically school-based activities that occur outside of the normal curriculum. However, some activities are also community-based and outside of school. Mahoney and Cairns (1997) further describe that these activities “differ from standard courses in school because they are optional, ungraded, and are usually conducted outside the school day in

school facilities” (p.241). These are structured and organized activities that focus on skill-building as well as social and behavioral goals (Covey & Carbonaro, 2010). This thesis will follow Eccles, Barber, Stone, and Hunt’s (2003) grouping of activities into five categories: prosocial activities, performance activities, team sports, school involvement, and academic clubs. There is evidence from various studies that shows participation in constructive activities both at the school and within the community can enable school engagement, academic achievement, and social-emotional learning that continue into their early adulthood. There are, however, different opinions on the impacts within each category.

Prosocial Activities

Prosocial activities can be described as activities that involve religion and/or community service or volunteer-type activities (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). While these activities are not specifically associated with schools, these are activities that many students choose to participate in. Larson, Hansen, and Moneta (2006) found that these types of activities led students to have high rates of experiences that relate to leadership, prosocial norms, and to develop a link to their community. Some of these activities include Christian associations, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and 4H. It must be highlighted that while these activities may take place in the school building they are not sponsored by the school.

The Michigan Study of Adolescent Life Transitions (MSALT) followed a cohort of students from sixth grade through age 26 (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). This study was composed of 10 school districts from primarily working and middle-class families. It included 1,800 individuals that were followed from 1983 to 1997. During their high school careers, Eccles, Barber, Stone, and Hunt (2003) reported that youth who were involved in prosocial activities reported less involvement in activities that were deemed risky, as in drinking, drug use,

and driving while impaired. It was also reported that these students had a greater enjoyment for school, a higher GPA, and a greater likelihood of attending and graduating from college. Another report on this study reviewed the impacts six years after high school and reported that students who participated in prosocial activities predicted lower substance abuse as well as higher self-esteem (Barber, Eccles, & Stone, 2001).

Another study, the Youth Experiences Survey (YES), reviewed a sample of eleventh-grade students from 19 different Illinois high schools (Larson, Hansen, & Moneta, 2006). This study included over 2,000 eleventh grade students that represented numerous economic levels, ethnicities, and both rural and urban communities. Individuals participating in three prosocial activities reported the largest gains in interpersonal development which consisted of teamwork, positive relationships, and connecting with adult networks. Students reported the activities pushed them to consider who they were and left them with feelings of being able to change their school and community for the better. Overall, this study reported that students who were involved in faith-based activities were those that stood out most from other activities in terms of positive experiences in both personal and social growth. In fact, 66% of students stated that their faith-based activity had them thinking about who they were versus 33% in other activities.

The Maryland Adolescent Development in Context Study (MADICS) (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006) stated that participating in prosocial activities reported higher educational expectations than nonparticipants. Furthermore, when combined with high school clubs it predicted engagement in civic activities, such as political activism and charitable issues two years after completing high school but did not find any other significant links with prosocial activities. This study included 1,500 families from 23 schools that were randomly selected within

one county. These students, who were roughly half male and half female, were followed from 1991 to 1999.

Performance Activities

Performance activities comprise a significant part of the high school activity participation. These activities can be described as the school band, drama, and/or dance (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). Many also describe this group as the arts category which includes art clubs as well as the fine arts (Larson, Hansen, & Moneta, 2006). Some significant examples in this group are the school's marching band, the fall musical group, as well as the dance line team. With the wider acceptance of clubs, this also can include many art-related clubs such as ceramics, photography, and painting.

In a study of just over 15,000 high school students from 28 high schools across 11 states, an examination was concluded of those who participated in extracurricular activities (Martinez, Coker, McMahon, Cohen, & Thapa, 2016). Students were split fairly evenly for males and females and while the majority of students identified as white all ethnicities were represented. Approximately a quarter of the respondents were not involved in any extracurricular activity and nearly all respondents were from public schools. Students who participated in the arts reported more school connectedness and attachment. Through this participation students also were provided opportunities to develop friendships with like-minded peers. However, on the negative side, students who participated reported being teased by their peer group outside of their activity.

Two outcomes of the MSALT study are that participation in performing arts was related to greater enjoyment of school during their high school years as well as a higher GPA. In addition, participants were more likely to both attend and graduate from college (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). Furthermore, it is also reported that those who participated in the

performing arts predicted an increase in alcohol consumption in their post-high school years as well as higher rates of suicide attempts and psychologist visits by the time the students reached the age of 24 (Barber, Eccles, & Stone, 2001). It should be noted that this was not reported in other studies and therefore may be unique to this specific study.

Another finding, this time from the Youth Experiences Survey (Larson, Hansen, & Moneta, 2006), found that those students who participated in performing arts activities reported significantly higher rates of initiative experiences. These experiences included goal setting, exertion effort, problem-solving, and time management. It was also found that individuals in this category had lower rates of teamwork, overall positive relationships, as well as adult network experiences, meaning participants had lower rates of facilitating relationships with adults in the family and the activity. Specifically, when it came to learning about helping others art participants were at 35% compared to 51% for those in all other extracurricular activities.

Team Sports

Sports or athletic teams are among the most popular extracurricular activities in many high schools. Team sports can be described as participating in a school-based team (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). These can include swimming, baseball, football, tennis, in addition to numerous other athletic activities. In the Youth Experience Survey research study 62.1% of the Illinois high school students who responded reported participating in sports (Larson, Hansen, & Moneta, 2006) which was a consistent statistic across many literature reports.

Participation in sports by high school students has revealed numerous positive impacts. The MSALT study reported that participants in sports liked school more along with having a higher GPA and more years of higher education (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). The

MADICS study also confirmed that participants had higher GPAs and overall education expectations. Eccles, Barber, Stone, and Hunt (2003) further reported that sports participants had lower levels of depression and psychological adjustment and higher levels of self-esteem than nonathletes (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). Other findings included students who reported higher levels of initiative, regulation of emotions, and teamwork experiences. These students stated they learned to push themselves as well as understand that their emotions impacted how they performed; sports participants felt this way 61% compared with 36% in other activities (Larson, Hansen, & Moneta, 2006). One additional positive note is that participation in athletics served as a great deterrent to dropping out, even with those students who had multiple academic risk factors involved (Neely & Vaquera, 2017).

While many positive results were discovered, there were differing opinions on risky behaviors. It was found that both male and female athletes both drank alcohol and got drunk more than those who did not participate in the MSALT study (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). In contrast, the MADICS study found that those in sports reported lower alcohol use and lower marijuana use for boys but no difference for girls (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). Additionally, it was reported that athletes were conveying lower levels of individual identity work, positive relationships, and adult connection experiences than those who participated in other activities. Some participants also experienced more stress in athletic endeavors (Larson, Hansen, & Moneta, 2006).

School Involvement Activities and Academic Clubs

School involvement activities and academic clubs are very similar and therefore much of the research combines them into one category. School involvement activities include activities like student government, pep clubs, and/or cheerleading while academic clubs are activities like

debate, foreign language, math, science, and tutoring in academic subjects (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). Often these are consolidated into school clubs while cheerleading is often now included in the sports category.

According to Fredricks and Eccles (2006) participation in school clubs has been connected to academic adjustment as well as to higher GPAs and educational experiences in their junior year. In addition, participation in these types of school clubs also projected involvement in political activities as well as social and charitable involvement. Lastly, students were also more likely to attend further education beyond high school. On the other side when looking at more developmental experiences it was found that students who participated in school involvement activities compared with other extracurricular activities scored lower. The largest variation occurred for emotional regulation experiences where 19% of students in academic-related activities reported learning to control their temper versus 34% of students across all other activities (Larson, Hansen Moneta, 2006).

The majority of research focused primarily on academic-related success as the primary benefit of school involvement and academic clubs; there were a few additional benefits. The YES survey reported participants learned to control their temper through participation in academic-related activities (Larson, Hansen, & Moneta, 2006). It was also found that participation in these activities neither increased nor decreased the frequency of use of drinking alcohol, drugs, or skipping school. In one additional case participation in both school clubs and spirit activities were only related to positive academic success (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003).

Educational Outcomes of Extracurricular Activities

The impact of participation in extracurricular activities on a student's overall education is an area of concern for students, parents, and educators. Some students do not participate for fear of taking away from their educational outcomes while others participate in numerous activities, sometimes too many, as they are positive it will help them. Others participate in extracurricular activities as a way to help their chances to get into their perfect college. There is research that shows participation has positive impacts on test scores, grade point average, and college attendance.

Test Scores

For many high school students that need to take the ACT or SAT is one that generates a great deal of stress. These are both standardized tests that could help them get into that perfect college, as the tests are often utilized by colleges and universities for admission and scholarships. Whatever their motivation, for the class of 2019 a reported 2.2 million individuals took the SAT and 1.8 million took the ACT across the country. It is important to understand it is not known how many students took both tests, but it is common to do so (Moody, 2020). Each student's approach to the test differs, but what they might not be aware of is that participating in extracurricular activities has an impact. Everson and Millsap (2004) conducted a study using structural equation models and analyzed data from a national sample of high school students who were college-bound and represented approximately 41% of all high school seniors in 1995. Each student had a mean of 504 and 506 in verbal and math respectively. The purpose was to examine the effects of a high school student's participation in various extracurricular activities had on the SAT and was based on a lengthy questionnaire that students completed by the College Board. Overall participation in extracurricular activities provided all students, including disadvantaged

and minorities, a “measurable and meaningful gain in their college admission scores” (Everson & Millsap, 2004, p.7). More pointedly it states that the reasoning abilities measured by the SAT are developed both in and out of the classroom.

The Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS) began when students were in tenth grade and concluded upon graduation (Morris, 2016). The sample size was just over 12,000 from over 748 schools. One drawback of the study is that most students were white and came from an educated family. Morris (2016) particularly reviewed the math achievement of the selected group. In this review, it was found that the overall time spent in extracurricular activities, as well as participating in academic activities and school clubs, all had positive impacts on participants' math scores. On the other side, it was found that sports had a negative effect on math achievement. In another review, Morris (2015) stated that students who spent time participating in extracurricular activities had gains in their math scores, however, in this review it was found to be most beneficial in disadvantaged students.

GPA

A high school student's grade point average (GPA) is another important aspect of their high school career. It is the all-important number that represents how students have performed in their high school courses. There are many objectives of the GPA; some students have a goal number to achieve by the time they finish high school while for others it is a guide for acceptance into post-secondary institutions.

Eccles, Barber, Stone, and Hunt's (2003) research found that by participating in each of the five areas of extracurricular activities, students had a higher than expected GPA in their senior year. Similarly, Fredricks & Eccles (2006) found that students participating in school clubs and sports had higher GPAs in their junior year than their counterparts who were not

involved. It must be pointed out that it was not found to be the same for prosocial activities and that the completed review was conducted only in the three categories of school clubs, organized sports, and prosocial activities. Massoni (2011) found that students who participated in extracurricular activities were three times more likely, over those who did not participate, to have a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Gibbs, Erickson, Dufur, and Miles (2015) report that the mean of GPAs for students participating in at least one extracurricular activity was 2.78, as reported by the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, as well as 78% of those participants planned to enroll in college.

Haensly, Lupkowski, and Edlind (1985) reported on a study conducted in Texas from three high schools that represented small, medium, and large districts. Through questionnaires, 508 seniors were included in the statistical analysis, excluded from this group were individuals that were failing. In this review, it was found that there was a small to moderate increase in grades with participation in fine arts, student government, honor society, and out of school activities like church youth groups and 4-H. The relationship with sports and grades was ever so slight but noted not a negative impact. Overall while extracurricular participation was slight, it was a consistent upward trend.

College Attendance

After graduation, there are many paths that students choose to take. One of those paths is attending college, a path many students start plotting as soon as they start high school. Students put a specific focus on making sure they have what it takes to get into the college of their dream. The impact of extracurricular activities on college attendance is one that many individuals have included in their research.

As part of the MSALT longitudinal study Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt (2003) found that participation in each of the five categories of extracurricular activities resulted in a larger probability of attending college as well as graduating college than their peers who were not involved. Beyond that participating in prosocial activities, team sports, and school involvement activities resulted in more years of further education by the ages of 25 to 26. In another review of the MSALT study, it was found that while all activities had a positive impact on completing more years of education, in particular participation in sports and performing arts showed a significant difference in years of college completion versus those who did not participate. Those who participated in all activities also had a higher rate of college graduation than nonparticipants: prosocial activities (46%); team sports (39%); performing arts (40%); and school involvement activities (47%) (Barber, Eccles & Stone, 2001).

Additional research provides similar results, although some debate if it is the same across all activities. Fredricks and Eccles (2006) found that participation in both school sports, as well as school clubs, forecasted educational status two years beyond high school. Lleras (2008) also reported that participation in sports and academic activities, excluding the fine arts, was linked to educational attainment and future earnings. Another study found that participation in those activities that are more academic provides the most advantages for a four-year degree as the association with high-achieving peers and the specific academic work provides the additional confidence for college attendance (Gibbs, Erickson, Dufur, & Miles, 2015).

In the Carolina Longitudinal Study (Mahoney, Cairns, & Farmer, 2003) which included 695 students from the southeastern United States, interviews were conducted from the fourth grade through the twelfth grade. It included eight public schools from five different communities and represented the full range of socioeconomic status. It was found that having consistently

participated in extracurricular activities during their adolescence resulted in educational status, this is the educational attainment level, as a young adult. In particular, it was found that participating allowed the students to build interpersonal skills and construct positive plans for their future which ultimately resulted in high educational aspirations and further educational attainment by the age of 20. Gardner, Roth, and Brooks-Gunn (2008) further supported the consistent participation approach. They stated that those who participated for a minimum of two years in all types of extracurricular activities had higher attainment for education as well as occupational outcomes. Morris (2016) offers an explanation that participation in extracurricular activities positively impacts college attendance because it exposes participants to new academic possibilities as well as boosts their standards and expectations for grades and goals. He states that this importance on success in school and degree aspirations helps with effort, engagement, goal setting, as well as knowledge for navigating the educational system. He further reports that there was a positive impact on those who moved from nonparticipation to participation and the expectation of college attendance.

Social and Emotional Learning Impacts of Extracurricular Activities

While the educational impacts are what most students think of, there are many other attributes and impacts youth gain from their participation. There are many items that extracurricular activities highlight for those who participate such as a sense of belonging, peer and adult connections, non-cognitive skills, and positive impacts on mental health. Each of these items assist students with their social-emotional learning by managing emotions, establishing and maintaining relationships as well as achieving their goals. According to the Institute of Education Sciences (2012), the overall social-emotional learning of students includes students' capacities and characteristics but also includes the equally important aspects of a sense of school climate,

sense of belonging, and adult connections. A review of extracurricular activities on a sense of belonging, mental health, peer and adult connectedness, non-cognitive skills, and school factors will be included.

Sense of Belonging

While students join extracurricular activities for many reasons, being part of a group/team/organization is a strong reason that students participate. It is a way to be with friends or perhaps even make new ones. When students are new to a school it can also be a way for them to meet new people. A sense of belonging is key for a student's social-emotional well-being and is linked to better academic, psychological, and health outcomes for students (IES, 2012).

Knifsend and Graham (2011) described a sense of belonging as feelings of inclusion and acceptance as well as support within the school context. Further, it stated that when students have a greater sense of belonging at their school, it promotes their academic motivation, engagement, and achievement as well as overall connectedness. They found through their research that a sense of belonging and relating to those at school was the greatest when students were involved in at least two activities. Mahoney and Cairns (1997) also reviewed a sense of belonging and pointed out for those whose prior commitment to their school was borderline, participation in extracurricular activities provided them the opportunity to create both a positive sense of belonging as well as an overall voluntary connection to their school.

Another study (Martinez, Coker, McMahon, Cohen & Thapa, 2016), which included just over 15,000 students from 11 states, looked at school climate. School climate was defined similarly by focusing on the quality and character of school life. School climate has been reviewed with four aspects of safety, interpersonal relationships, the teaching, and the overall environment. It is through these four aspects a student feels connected to their school and has

that sense of belonging. Students who participated in extracurricular activities reported higher connectedness and attachment to their school than their counterparts who did not participate. Martinez, Coker, McMahon, Cohen, and Thapa (2016) did further research into the combination of participation in sports, clubs, and the arts. Overall, it was found that there was not a stacked effect which requires a combination of the various activities to feel more connected to the school.

Mental Health

Mental health has consistently been a big concern for our youth and it has become more prevalent over the last several years. There are many ways that extracurricular activities can impact students, and how it impacts the whole student is where more research is currently being addressed. That research includes items such as psychological adjustment, lower levels of stress, high self-esteem, and the impact of physical activity. In addition, due to the pandemic in 2020, it is possible that research may shift to include how the pandemic impacted students, but a search of the literature could not find literature on this topic.

One of these ways is a psychological adjustment, which one study (Barber, Eccles & Stone, 2001) showed was positive for those involved in sports. It was stated that the favorable mental health of athletes in their junior year was likely due to greater public recognition and the status that many high school athletes were provided (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). Another study further revealed that participation in sports showed lower levels of social isolation. When participants were surveyed in their early twenties it was found that those who consistently participated in sports reported lower depressive moods, lower stress levels, and an overall higher self-rated mental health when compared to individuals who were never involved in sports (Jewett, et al., 2014).

While sports appear to provide a greater view of positive mental health factors, participation in other activities also shows positive aspects. In fact, prosocial activities produced higher self-esteem up to eight years after participation. However, this study also found that participation in performing arts had higher rates of psychologist visits by the age of 24 (Barber, Eccles & Stone, 2001).

One report in particular reviewed extracurricular activities from a school psychologist's perspective (Gilman, Meyers, & Perez, 2004). Overall, their perspective is that all extracurricular activities have the potential to promote the positive mental health of the youth which include higher self-esteem, life satisfaction, and social competence. They stress that this is most positive when they are under the influence of positive social networks as well as competent adults. Another important factor is youth finding something they are willing to participate in, more so that they might find a perceived social status in participating and a truly genuine interest in. Mandating a student to participate in an activity or choosing that activity for them could ultimately prove to have the opposite result and our students will not have a positive experience.

Physical activity provides many benefits for high school students, including improvements in several psychological and social factors. Specifically, student-athletes reported higher levels of self-esteem than those who were not involved in athletics primarily due to their healthier lifestyle. Furthermore, these student-athletes reported higher scores on mental and emotional health than nonathletes and suggested they experienced feelings related to peace, happiness, and calm more regularly. In addition, student-athletes scored higher than nonathletes on the social functioning scale. This scale measures the ability of students to perform social activities without the influence of either physical or emotional problems. The one drawback reported for athletes when compared to nonathletes was the risk of injury (Snyder, et al., 2010).

The coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19, was officially declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020 by the World Health Organization (Ducharme, 2020). This pandemic ultimately led to school closures and movement to online learning in addition to the cancellation of extracurricular activities during the spring of 2020 across the United States. While there has yet to be extensive research completed due to the pandemic being currently active, reports are being published that are providing a view of the first few months. According to Viner et al. (2020) school closures have created not only impacts on learning but also reductions in physical activity as well as a range of impacts on mental health and well-being due to social isolation and a reduction in social support. Phelps and Sperry (2020) further state that while academic instruction has continued, even emphasized, mental health is being viewed as secondary. Gilic et al. (2020) conducted a report of Canadian high school students and found that the pandemic and social distancing measures being imposed have created significant declines in physical activity levels. Their study highlights the importance of promoting the benefits of physical activity and suggested that health and sports programs continue to promote and offer solutions.

Peer and Adult Connections

While one of the aspects of participating in extracurricular activities is doing so with peers, each activity also has an interaction with one or more adults. In terms of peers, many researchers have found that participation in any organized activity can predict a student's friendships (Simpkins, Eccles, Becnel, 2008). In particular, the more time students spend in any one activity the more likely they are to create connections and form friendships (Martinez, Coker, McMahon, Cohen, & Thapa, 2016). Involvement in extracurricular activities can link students with a set of similar peers who can provide shared experiences and goals which

ultimately can reinforce those friendships made. Therefore, participation can contribute to a student's identity and their feelings of being a valued member of the school community (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003).

With school-related activities, a positive link has been found between peers and academic results. In particular, administrators can use these activities as ways to promote meaningful relationships with academically strong students. Additionally, in school-related activities, high-achieving environments can be achieved and peers can play important roles with each other as models and promote new norms and college achieving paths (Gibbs, Erickson, Dufur, & Miles, 2015). Fredricks (2012) further states that overall participation in any organized activity has the ability to link youth with academically-minded peers that have social capital and can serve as an encouragement to comply with school norms and values. Another study agrees that while participation in all activities does link participants to positive peer relationships, it is only sports that offer the social and emotional security of the peers (Martinez, Coker, McMahon, Cohen, & Thapa, 2016).

In the MADICS (Simpkins, Eccles, Becnel, 2008) study, it was found that having strong adult supervision and structure played a critical role in the program and helped students form positive peer relationships. The MSALT also found that those who participated in extracurricular activities had more adults to talk with and engage with at school versus those who were uninvolved. This often led to more educational and occupational advice from teachers and counselors (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003).

Gould and Carson (2010) researched the impacts of coaching behaviors on high school sports participation. Their research included approximately 190 first-year college students who participated in at least one varsity sport during their high school career. These participants

reported the coaching behaviors that provided them the most positive experiences included teaching competitive strategies, mental preparation, goal setting, modeling good sportsmanship, motivation for working hard, and emphasizing how lessons relate to life. These experiences included preparing the students to face the competition, provide advice on staying confident, as well as emotional regulation. The athletes reported the most positive outcomes were due to the positive rapport developed with the coach.

A student connecting to a caring adult is cited as a positive aspect of their development. In one research study, students who participated in both sports and clubs were linked to high levels of adult social support. Moreover, participation in clubs due to fewer sports practices and competitions did offer more meaningful adult support (Martinez, Coker, McMahon, Cohen, & Thapa, 2016). Bean, Harlow, and Forneris (2017) examined program leaders, specifically how they influenced the quality and psychological needs of youth participants by replacing the leader halfway through the program. They found that by changing a leader it hindered the nurturing of basic needs because the positive adult relationship was disrupted. It was found that the participants felt psychological safety and needs were supported when the leader was viewed as trustworthy, respectful, and interested in the youth beyond the activity.

Another strong adult connection can be found with other parents. It has been found that through participation in extracurricular activities there is also a strong connection that occurs amongst parents. This can provide additional positive adult relationships for students as well as the sharing of social circles, information, and building of a shared value system for educational success (Morris, 2016).

It also must be said that not all experiences with peers and adults are positive. While overall it was found that students were forming positive relationships, some still had risky peers,

but participants did report fewer. Also, while the right adult can have numerous positive impacts, the wrong one can have adverse effects on a student's mental health (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003).

Non-cognitive Skills

Numerous benefits can be gained through participation in extracurricular activities, and one that is often overlooked is the non-cognitive skills that students obtain. Morris (2016) explains that participation in extracurricular activities provides students a way to learn skills like promptness, organization, delayed gratification, self-control, as well as attention to detail. These behaviors are learned regardless of a student's family background and provide this practice for all students from all walks of life. Lleras (2008) suggested that the non-cognitive skills that are learned by students, both in class and in extracurricular activities, are perhaps even more important than the cognitive skills that are learned when looking at students' educational and occupational successes. In another review, they agree that students benefit from the ability to practice and develop these non-cognitive skills to help them in their later learning and employment outcomes. The study stated that extracurricular activities are a great place for students to both practice and develop their skills (Covay & Carbonaro, 2010).

School Factors

A student's involvement in extracurricular activities can certainly be impacted by the school itself. One of these is through a school's academic press which McNeal (1999) defines as how much emphasis is placed on academic achievement and attainment. The more emphasis that is placed on academic achievement by the school the less likely students are to participate in extracurricular activities. In contrast, a school's climate is defined as a sense of safety or security that is experienced by students or staff while at school (McNeal, 1999). Those schools with a

positive school climate see a larger involvement by the student body whereas those that have problems see less activity participation as the students do not feel safe doing so. Also, it has been found that larger schools can have less participation than smaller schools. Yet another aspect is a social milieu which is simply the social composition of the student body. While the school does not have a lot of input into the composition of a school, it does have an impact. In particular, those schools who are of lower economic levels have less involvement as well as those that are minority driven.

It also has been discussed by McNeal (1999) that the size and safety of the school have an impact on participation as well. In particular, in schools that are larger as well as problematic, where students do not feel safe, students tend to not participate in extracurricular activities. Schools that are smaller or that students find safe have been shown to be key for promoting increased participation. Regardless of the size, McNeal (1999) reported that a school's emphasis on academic achievement has had little impact on involvement in activities, as it neither increases nor decreases.

Impacts of Specific Groups

The participants of extracurricular activities are varied both within the school and between schools. As in the classroom both at-risk youth, as well as boys and girls, offer different perspectives as well as have different experiences, and this is also the case within activities. Moreover, a school itself, with its culture and the overall structure, has an impact on its students when it comes to participating or not participating in extracurriculars. Each of these items has an overall impact on a student.

At-Risk Youth

Another topic that comes up when discussing extracurricular activities is what is the impact on students who are at risk. Mahoney and Cairns (1997) described at-risk individuals as possessing an overall profile of negative characteristics across variables. It included aggression and students did not show any positive academic or behavioral competencies. Overall, students in this at-risk category had large reductions in dropping out of high school as their activity increased. This was particularly strong with extracurricular activity participation in their early high school years. Through participation, they were able to find opportunities to create positive connections to their school. They state that school dropout rates could be decreased through the development of activities that strengthen school connectedness.

Neely and Vaquera (2017) found that one of the largest reductions in the high school dropout rates related to students who participated in both athletic as well as academic and fine arts activities. Sports provided a slightly larger impact than academic and fine arts, even those with one or more academic risk factors but participated in athletics were significantly less likely to drop out. The structure and team focus provide more social bonding and instill more prosocial values. While sports do play an amazing role overall, all participation increased students staying in high school between their sophomore and senior years. With participation in a diverse mix between both athletic, fine arts, and academic activities tend to provide the most benefits for students to stay in school and reduce the dropout rates.

While many studies found that participating in extracurricular activities was a benefit for at-risk students, not all of them were in complete agreement. In a study of over a thousand urban youth, it was reported that boys' participation in sports increased the odds of delinquency and deviant behavior than those who participated in academic and fine arts activities. It is their

perspective that sports can promote aggressive and competitive behaviors. It should be pointed out that the delinquency was non-violent. Also, interestingly, the study did not find the same relations to girls (Gardner, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2009).

Girls vs. Boys

With the passing of Title IV, the education amendment ensuring no discrimination based on sex in educational programs that receive federal financial assistance, the opportunities are equal between boys and girls in terms of activities. However, many have wondered if both boys and girls have the same experiences. In the MSALT study, girls participated in more extracurricular activities and a wider range of particular activities than boys. Girls participated in more activities except for sports where boys participated more (Eccles, Barber, Stone & Hunt, 2003). The Carolina Longitudinal Study also confirmed that girls had more consistent participation than boys (Mahoney, Cairns, & Farmer, 2003). In addition, the MADICS study verified that girls reported participating in more activities than boys, as the mean scores for girls ($M = 2.81$) were higher than boys ($M = 2.37$). Their conclusion offered was that girls were more likely to be put into adult-supervised activities and boys were more likely to be allowed to spend time in unsupervised scenarios (Simpkins, Eccles, & Becnel, 2008).

In the Carolina Longitudinal Study, the links between participation and educational attainment as well as interpersonal competencies did not have a difference between boys and girls. There was a difference when it came to participation and their educational aspirations after high school which was more strongly associated with boys. However, overall they felt the differences were small and that both worked for educational status in their early adult years (Mahoney, Cairns, & Farmer, 2003).

Breadth and Intensity of Activities

More recently additional research has also included the fact that students are participating in multiple activities. They might participate in sports but also are involved in school clubs, prosocial, or academic clubs. Breadth can be viewed as the number or range of activities whereas intensity looks at the time dedicated to the activities (Neely & Vaquera, 2017).

Breadth

The MADICS (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006) study reviewed breadth, participation in more than one type of activity, at the eleventh-grade level. It was found that it was positively linked to both academic as well as psychological adjustment for participants. Specifically, it was found that breadth of participation in sports, school clubs as well as prosocial activities were shown to produce higher grades and overall education expectations along with additional years of schooling beyond high school. The advantages of breadth can be related to participants having more opportunities to experience more settings and different activities as well as develop additional physical and emotional competencies. Additionally, it is beneficial as it can help the students offset a negative experience in one particular activity. Knifsend and Graham (2012) also reviewed students in the eleventh and twelfth grade and found that an increased sense of belonging at school and an increase in grade point average were most beneficial for students participating in two activities and were lower for those participating in three or four activities.

Neely and Vaquera (2017) analyzed data from the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002-2004. This study was a multilevel longitudinal survey that was sponsored by the US Department of Education and included over 15,000 students from 752 high schools and concentrated on tenth graders. Their analysis further adjusted the sample to include only public school students as well as those who only completed the follow-up survey, so included over

9,700 students from 579 high schools. Through their review focusing on dropout rates, they found students who particularly participated in both sports and academic/fine arts activities had the largest reduction in dropout rates. Also, students were benefiting from the broad mix of peers and creating stronger bonds through participating in a larger breadth of activities. However, they also found that there were decreases in this gain with a greater number of activities. Fredricks' (2012) review of the same study further suggested that participating in a range of activities led to positive outcomes in math achievement and overall educational status and experience. It was reported that the best results were reported at the 4-6 activity level with significant decreases at eight activities and above.

Through various literature reviews, additional details can be found. One of those particular details is an increase in the breadth of involvement over time promotes positive developmental success and interpersonal functioning (Busseri, Rose-Krasor, Willoughby, & Chalmers, 2006). Mahoney, Harris, and Eccles (2006) suggest that greater amounts of participation also produce greater civic involvement, higher graduation rates, college attendance, and less antisocial behavior. Another interesting point was made that an increased breadth of activities during the start of high school helped with the transition into high school as well as with self and academic concepts. The broad array of extracurricular settings assisted in offsetting typical periods of decline in these areas at this age (Modecki, Blomfield Neira, and Barber, 2018).

Intensity

The Educational Longitudinal Study reported that the overall well-being, including math achievement, GPA, and overall educational status, of the tenth graders, increased as the number of hours they participated in extracurricular activities also increased (Fredricks, 2012). They did

find that over 14 hours this academic well-being began to decrease. It was proposed that at very high-intensity levels their identification levels with the activity may overtake that of school and therefore decrease their time spent on homework. However, those that participated frequently did report higher grades and overall educational expectations for themselves (Fredricks, 2012).

Neely and Vaquera's (2017) review of the study detailed a significant relationship to reduce drop rates and the time spent participating in activities. It was found though that when too much time is spent on extracurricular activities the participation becomes counterproductive. They agreed that the extra time on activities was taking too much time away from their academic pursuits. Overall both reported significant positive relations to participation in extracurricular activities but that there was a limit of hours to be spent.

Gardner, Roth, and Brooks-Gunn (2008) reviewed a national longitudinal study that began in 1988 of over 24,000 eighth graders. Their review focused on the follow-up responses when the students were in both tenth and twelfth grades. For intensity, they focused on the duration of years of intense participation. Those who participated for two years in school and community activities intensely reported more positive educational outcomes beyond high school; in fact, they were 54% more likely to attend a postsecondary institution (Gardner, Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2008). It was offered that these positive relationships with intense participation were related to more exposure to developmental supports. Further to this most participants that had periods of high intensity, where some decrease in academic performance was seen, were for limited times and not for their sustained academic careers (Mahoney, Harris, & Eccles, 2006).

CHAPTER III: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this literature review was to understand the impacts of extracurricular activities on high school students. This research focused on two guiding questions. The first was how participation in extracurricular activities impacts high school students' academic performance as well as social-emotional learning. The second was if the breadth and intensity of extracurricular participation change the impacts of high school students. Chapter III will include a summary of the literature, professional application, limitations of the research, and implications for future research.

Summary of Literature

Extracurricular activities are typically school-based activities that occur outside of the normal curriculum. While the majority of activities do occur in the school students do participate in community-based activities as well. Mahoney and Cairns (1997) further describe these activities as optional and ungraded as they are conducted outside of the school day. In addition, these are structured and organized activities that focus on skill-building as well as social and behavioral goals (Covey & Carbonaro, 2010).

This thesis followed Eccles, Barber, Stone, and Hunt's (2003) grouping of activities into five categories: prosocial activities, performance activities, team sports, school involvement, and academic clubs. Each of which reported numerous positive outcomes. Eccles, Barber, Stone, and Hunt (2003) reported that youth who were involved in prosocial activities reported less involvement in activities that were deemed risky, as in drinking, drug use, and driving while impaired. It was also reported that these students had a greater enjoyment for school, a higher GPA, and a greater likelihood of attending and graduating from college. Two outcomes of the MSALT study are that participation in performing arts was related to greater enjoyment of

school during their high school years as well as a higher GPA. In addition, participants were more likely to both attend and graduate from college (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). Participation in sports by high school students has revealed numerous positive impacts as well. The MSALT study reported that participants in sports liked school more in addition to having a higher GPA and more years of higher education (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). The MADICS study also confirmed that participants had higher GPAs and overall education expectations. According to Fredricks and Eccles (2006) participation in school clubs has been connected to academic adjustment as well as to higher GPAs and educational experiences in their junior year. In addition, participation in these types of school clubs also projected involvement in political activities as well as social and charitable involvement.

The research suggested that participation in extracurricular activities produced positive impacts on students' educational outcomes. Overall participation in extracurricular activities provided all students, including disadvantaged and minorities, with an increase in their college admission scores (Everson & Millsap, 2004). Massoni (2011) found that students who participated in extracurricular activities were three times more likely, over those who did not participate, to have a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt (2003) found that participation in each of the five categories of extracurricular activities resulted in a larger probability of attending college as well as graduating college than their peers who were not involved.

A review of extracurricular activities on a sense of belonging, mental health, peer and adult connectedness, non-cognitive skills, and school factors also found positive impacts on high school students. Knifsend and Graham (2011) stated that when students have a greater sense of belonging at their school, it promotes their academic motivation, engagement, and achievement

as well as overall connectedness to their school. When participants were surveyed in their early twenties it was found that those who consistently participated in sports reported lower depressive moods, lower stress levels, and an overall higher self-rated mental health when compared to individuals who were never involved in sports (Jewett, et al., 2014). In addition, the more time students spend in any one activity the more likely they are to create connections and form friendships (Martinez, Coker, McMahon, Cohen, & Thapa, 2016). Morris (2016) explains that participation in extracurricular activities provides students a way to learn skills like promptness, organization, delayed gratification, self-control, as well as attention to detail.

Students are spending more time participating in activities and therefore breadth and intensity is a key aspect in the research of extracurricular activities. Fredricks & Eccles (2006) reviewed breadth, participation in more than one type of activity, at the eleventh-grade level. It was found that it was positively linked to both academic as well as psychological adjustment for participants. Specifically, it was found that breadth of participation in sports, school clubs as well as prosocial activities were shown to produce higher grades and overall education expectations along with additional years of schooling beyond high school. Fredricks (2012) reported that the participants' overall well-being, including math achievement, GPA, and overall educational status, increased as the number of hours they participated in extracurricular activities also increased. They did find, however, that when going over 14 hours these results began to decrease. It was proposed that at very high-intensity levels their identification levels with the activity may overtake that of school and therefore decrease their time spent on homework.

Professional Application

Through research, it has been found that there are many positive impacts of participation in extracurricular activities by high school students. This research can be applied in many ways

and more importantly by many individuals. With this research in mind, it can help teachers, schools, coaches, and adults in general both interact, coach and offer advice when it comes to extracurricular activities. Through these positive roles, students will get the most out of their participation in extracurricular activities.

Teachers are faced with many different roles at school. Not only are they there to teach specific subjects, they are also there to guide, support, and oftentimes counsel students. For each of those roles, this research can be utilized to provide students the guidance they seek. Teachers can share what can be gained by participating in extracurricular activities. These gains specifically include increases in GPA, test scores, and college attendance. In addition, participants can increase their non-cognitive skills that will help as they move beyond high school. This also includes their social-emotional learning through their mental health, sense of belonging, and building connections with their peers and adults. Finally for those students who feel they want and need to be involved in a wide range of activities teachers can share specifics based on research that goes with the breadth and intensity of participating in numerous activities to help them decide the best course of action.

Schools have a large impact on a student's high school experience. A school's culture can influence whether a student participates or does not participate in extracurricular activities. Schools need to take a proactive approach to their culture so that students feel connected and empowered to get involved. Another aspect for schools to review is the overall climate or how students feel in terms of safety, the teaching and the relationships students are building. Each of these items relates specifically to a student's sense of belonging. A student's sense of belonging at school is a powerful tool and schools need to ensure students are feeling included and accepted. In addition, instead of administrators simply encouraging students to get involved, they

can share with the students what they can gain through participating. Providing specific research based examples of extracurricular impacts could go a long way to helping students join activities and become more involved in the school community.

Finally, coaches and the adults they encounter through extracurricular activities have an amazing impact on students. Through research, it has been shown that adults can influence a student's social-emotional learning journey. The positive role these individuals can play is one of the keys to the benefits students gain and coaches knowing and understanding these impacts is key to their role. When coaches remain cognizant of their influence as well as the skills participants are learning in their activity they can truly foster the positive experience each student is hoping to achieve.

Limitations of the Research and Implications for Future Research

Research has limitations that may impact the outcome and application of the results. This thesis found five primary limitations and ultimate areas of future research. The first limitation was the difficulty in locating research on the relationship between test scores and extracurricular activities. Many studies and articles reported on the relationship between extracurricular participation and college attendance but did not touch on the test scores to get into college. In 2018 nearly 2 million United States students took the SAT and 1.91 million students took the ACT (Anderson, 2018). Due to the overwhelming use of these tests future research should be performed on how participation in extracurricular activities impacts a student's test results. Due to the considerable number of students, across all backgrounds, who take these two tests, it would provide interesting results that could be easily compared and utilized.

Second, the samples in many of the research studies were of White students. Focusing on one particular set of participants changes the application of the studies and does not allow the

results to be generalized for all high school students. Extending the research to ensure a more diverse racial core of participants would ensure the research would apply to all students.

Another limitation relates specifically to longitudinal studies. One of the major procedural problems surrounding this specific type of research is panel attrition (Eisner, Murray, Eisner, Ribeaud, 2018). Longitudinal studies depend on the same subjects to participate over several years, however, some subjects ultimately drop out or stop participating for various reasons. To draw valid conclusions from longitudinal data studies, outcomes must be taken into account. The MADICS study (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006) found that attrition was a major concern as it collected data over five waves. Through analysis, it was revealed that information was missing at random waves, and African-American and high-risk youths had a higher study dropout rate than European Americans and low-risk youths. The Educational Longitudinal Study took the approach of dropping respondents who were missing data for the two dependent variables but retained those who were missing less significant data (Morris, 2016).

Fourth, additional research is needed to explore the relationship between social and emotional learning and extracurricular activities. While there is research surrounding a student's sense of belonging, peer and adult connectedness, non-cognitive skills, and school factors there is so much more that can be done. According to CASEL (n.d.), additional areas that should be included when discussing social-emotional learning are responsible decision making, self-awareness, and social awareness. Including these would ensure research is including important areas that will provide schools and coaches needed information to prepare participants for academic, health and wellness, and future success.

Finally, the current pandemic related to COVID-19 is changing extracurricular activities and ultimately the impact they have on high school students. How students are currently

participating is changing, from certain activities becoming solely conducted online to other activities requiring social distancing and mask mandates. Sports are changing how bus rides are conducted, locker rooms are used, and equipment is being utilized. Overall the experience students are having will have an impact on both current and future participants and therefore will require additional research to be conducted once the pandemic is over. This research will need to focus on the mental health impacts of students while participating in addition to impacts that go beyond their high school years. Will the changes occurring in students' schools in combination with their activities produce a change in their academic performance. The overall impact of going to school and participating in activities during COVID-19 is unknown and therefore the mental health and academic performance will be key in future research. Also, once the pandemic is over there is an unknown surrounding how the breadth and intensity of extracurricular participation will change and so this also should be included in future research. Will students change what activities they participate in or how many activities they choose to be involved in is unknown but will be important to understand.

Conclusion

Extracurricular activities are offered in high schools and communities across the country. There is often a significant emphasis on students to get involved in their high school community. Students are encouraged to participate in activities and clubs but are not often provided with the benefits of doing so. While the reason a student ultimately decides to participate may be different for each individual, the impact of participation may be more common. The purpose of this literature review was to examine the impacts of extracurricular activity participation on high school students. In particular, reviewing how participation in extracurricular activities impacts high school students' academic performance as well as their social-emotional learning. In

addition to examining if the breadth and intensity of extracurricular activity participation can change those impacts on these high school students.

Overall participation in extracurricular activities has been proven to be beneficial for high school students. While students participate in a wide range of activities, each one has shown to have positive impacts. These impacts include higher academic performance, greater enjoyment in school, school connectedness, higher educational attainment, and less risky behaviors. Students also were found to have a greater sense of belonging, positive impacts on their mental health, create peer and adult connections, as well as increase non-cognitive skills. While many students may participate in extracurricular activities for the joy of the activity they are also gaining positive attributes to help them succeed in high school, future education and careers.

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