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Relationships Between Participation in Extracurricular Activities, ACT Scores, GPA, and Attendance in Select Public High Schools in Mississippi

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The University of Southern Mississippi

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR
ACTIVITIES, ACT SCORES, GPA, AND ATTENDANCE IN SELECT
PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN MISSISSIPPI

by

Lance Kelvin Reed

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

December 2014

ABSTRACT

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR
ACTIVITIES, ACT SCORES, GPA, AND ATTENDANCE IN SELECT
PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN MISSISSIPPI

by Lance Kelvin Reed

December 2014

There are contemporary concerns about improving and sustaining positive student outcomes in secondary schools today. In light of student needs and limited time and resources available to address those needs, educational leaders are faced with making difficult decisions about what should and could be offered to students through their schools. In addition to the general curriculum, schools generally offer a variety of extracurricular activities. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between extracurricular participation and select student outcomes. The findings of this study can provide valuable insight to school leaders as they make decisions about how to allocate limited school funds for programs, especially extracurricular activities.

This study is designed to examine the relationships between participation in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance in select public high schools in Mississippi. The study provides informative views on how extracurricular participation impacted key educational factors that are important to the learning environment. The goal of this study is to offer quantifiable results on how participation in extracurricular activities related to important student characteristics that impact student outcomes.

A quantitative research design is used for this study. A researcher-developed survey, the Reed's Extracurricular Perception Instrument (REPI), was distributed to teachers and building level administrators throughout the state of Mississippi. Archival data were also collected from four consenting high schools on the senior class of 2013. Gender, race, ACT scores, GPA, absences, and lunch status were all collected from these schools. Utilizing Pearson correlations, Chi-square statistics, regression analysis, and survey methodology on the data collected for meaningful results was the goal of the researcher to address the questions of the study.

This study revealed that extracurricular participation significantly show positive relationships with ACT, GPA, and absences after controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. The results of REPI showed that academics, attendance, and behavior all were perceived to be positively related to extracurricular participation as well. Survey results showed that behavior was perceived to have the greatest impact as a result of extracurricular participation.

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A Dissertation
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for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved:

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December 2014

DEDICATION

The opportunity to complete this research is dedicated to my family, friends, and professional colleagues who have yielded me invaluable knowledge and experience.

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I would first like to offer thanks to my dissertation committee, Dr. Thelma Roberson (Chair), Dr. James T. Johnson (Statistician), Dr. David Lee, and Dr. Cheyenne Trussell. Your guidance and assistance were extremely supportive during the process.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACT – American College Test

GPA – Grade Point Average

IRB – Institutional Review Board

MDE – Mississippi Department of Education

MHSAA – Mississippi High School Activities Association

REPI – Reed’s Extracurricular Perception Instrument

SES – Socio-Economic Status

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When the headlines of a small Mississippi hometown newspaper announced the aim of the local school district to cut \$900,000 from the budget (Guajardo, 2013), it offered a sense of concern for the community's future of public education. According to this article, tough decisions were imminent to operate an effective school district in the upcoming school year. These decisions involved cutting a variety of extracurricular programs that leaders determined to be insignificant to the learning process. Killgo (2010) suggested that successful schools had strategic plans designed to involve students in some type of extracurricular program. The study made reference to high schools which academically performed well in extracurricular activities, improved drop-out rates, and enhanced school climate. The aim of this study was to discover the relationships between extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and student attendance while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status.

Kronholz (2012) discussed the importance of extracurricular activities by sharing how Walt Whitman High School in Montgomery County, Maryland offered 89 clubs, 26 sports, and seven choral ensembles. Students in this educational environment exhibited a 97% higher chance of attending college when participating in school-sponsored activities for two or more years. Lawhorn (2008) observed that participation not only improved academic skills but also benefited students when making friends, developing social skills, and leadership capabilities. Massoni (2011) described several positive effects of extracurricular activities, including positive behavior, higher grades, better attitudes,

improved school completion rates, and enhanced social skills. The abundance of literature offered reason to continue further inquiry on the topic.

This study determined the relationship between participating in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance in a select sample of public high schools in Mississippi. Gender, race, and lunch status were controlled in the analysis as well. The first chapter include an introduction of the topic, a purpose of the study, statement of the problem, hypothesis, research questions, definition of terms, delimitations, assumptions, justifications, and a summary.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship of participating in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance in select public high schools in Mississippi while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. Darling (2005) discovered in her study that participating in extracurricular activities lowered levels of deviance, increased academic performance, and developed positive attitudes toward school. The results of this study suggested the relevance of determining the impact of many programs throughout the state as budgets were developed. This data provided information that can help drive decision-making for school leaders as it relates to school funding and extracurricular participation.

Statement of the Problem

The problem this study addressed determined if there was a relationship between participation in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance. Limited resources are forcing districts to be selective in the offering of certain school sponsored activities. The focus was to determine if participation was in the students' best interest

based on data collected from select public high schools in Mississippi. The researcher suggested that there were noteworthy relationships between participation in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance.

Students involved in a variety of extracurricular programs fared better than those who did not participate or participate at low-levels (Bohnert, Fredricks, & Randal, 2010). According to Feldman and Matjasko (2005), school-based structured extracurricular participation in contrast to participation in unstructured activities were associated with positive adolescent developmental outcomes. Feldman and Matjasko (2005) also discovered that there was a positive relationship between higher academic performance, reduced dropout rates, lower substance abuse rates, less sexual activity among girls, better psychological adjustment, and reduced rates of delinquent behaviors when participating in extracurricular activities. Kort-Butler and Hagemen (2011) also described how those who participated in school-based extracurricular programs had higher initial levels of self-esteem compared to those who did not participate. With this literature as a basis, it was the aim of the research to further address the problem of cutting effective extracurricular programs because of the reduction of budgets and to provide conclusions as to what participation does for student outcomes.

Research Questions

The questions below serve as the research questions that will be explored in this study.

1. Is there a relationship among participating in extracurricular activities, GPA, and ACT scores?

2. Is there a relationship between participating in extracurricular activities and student attendance?
3. Is there a relationship among participating in extracurricular activities, gender, race, and lunch status?
4. What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers relative to participation in extracurricular activities and student academic achievement, student attendance, and student behaviors?

Hypotheses

In order to determine the effect of extracurricular activities on student outcomes in select public high schools in Mississippi the following hypotheses will be tested:

H₁: There is a significant relationship between GPA and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between ACT and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status.

H₃: There is a significant relationship between attendance and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status.

Definition of Terms

The terms below were used in this research.

Academic achievement – Levels in which students acquire measurable and attainable educational goals (Reeve, 2005).

American College Test (ACT) – A national college admissions examination that consists of subject area tests in English, Math, Reading, and Science (American College Test, n.d.).

Athletics – Those sporting activities recognized by the Mississippi High School Activities Association that include archery, baseball, basketball, bowling, cross country, golf, football, power lifting, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, track and field, and volleyball (Mississippi High School Activities Association, n.d.).

At-risk students – Academically and behaviorally struggling students who ultimately have a high probability of dropping out of school (Elffers, 2013).

Extracurricular activities – Those sporting activities recognized by the Mississippi High School Activities Association that include athletics, band, cheer, choral, dance, debate, drama, speech, and writing (Mississippi High School Activities Association, n.d.).

Grade point average (GPA) – A number that corresponds to letter grades scored by students on the final grade of each course. The grade point average is the average of those numerical values from all of the courses that a student has taken (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.).

Lunch status – For the purposes of this study, lunch status will be used as a measure of socio-economic status. The United States Department of Agriculture: Food and Nutrition Service developed a scale that uses household size and family income to determine if students are eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch at school. Student who exceed the amounts listed on the scale pay full price for a school lunch and any student who does not meet these listed amounts are eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch status (U. S. Department of Agriculture: Food and Nutrition Service, n.d.).

Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) – This organization provides resources and technical support to Mississippi’s public school system while functioning as a resource for federal education requirements (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.).

Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) – This is a nonprofit, nondiscriminatory association run by the secondary schools in the state of Mississippi and is responsible for both academic and athletic competitions (Mississippi High School Activities Association, n.d.).

School size – The classification or grouping of schools by enrollment as defined by MHSAA (Mississippi High School Activities Association, n.d.).

Socioeconomic status – Measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation that is commonly noted as the social standing or class of an individual or group. This study will use lunch statuses to measure socioeconomic status (American Psychological Association, n.d.).

Student behavior – Student actions as measured by the number of office referrals received in a school year (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.).

Truancy – When a student who has accumulated five or more unlawful absences in a school year, excluding suspension and expulsion days (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.).

Delimitations

This study was guided by several delimitations. The first delimitation was the selection of public high schools in Mississippi chosen for the study. Another delimitation was the data collection process and the hope that information was accurate.

The third delimitation was that seniors from the class of 2013 were used in this study where archival data was analyzed. The fourth delimitation included the discussion of only those activities defined by the Mississippi High School Activities Association. The last delimitation was the four month window to collect the data for this study.

Assumptions

There were several assumptions rendered from this study. The researcher first assumed that the people who responded to the questionnaire were honest. Another assumption was that the data collected from the school, including gender, race, ACT, GPA, absences, and lunch statuses were accurate. The researcher lastly assumed that the relationships analyzed from the study were the result of participation in extracurricular activities during high school years only.

Justifications

Several authors elaborated on the relevance of extracurricular activities as they related to student outcomes in secondary schools. Reeves (2008) stated that there was a strong association between student involvement in extracurricular activities and improved attendance, behavior, and academic performance. Research from Kronholz (2012) said that students who have a significant involvement in an extracurricular activity had a capacity for focus, self-discipline, time management. Many of these qualities were lacking in students who just went through school focused on their grade point averages. Kronholz (2012) also indicated that students never mentioned academics as significant tools for college preparation, and extracurricular activities introduced new ideas and interests that taught more efficient study habits. More scholarship mentioned that involvement in extracurricular activities was consistently and positively correlated with

good school attendance and correlated with a higher grade point average (Olson, 2008). This research determined that this involvement also developed social skills and exposed students to caring adults.

Graff (2008) discovered that even though budgets have been drastically reduced in extracurricular activities, participation has continued to increase. Graff's study concluded that parents think there were enormous benefits to participation in these programs despite apparent funding issues. Communities were willing to do whatever it took to keep the programs functioning. Rouse (2012) elaborated on how the budget reduction of programs interfered with students' leadership opportunities. Rouse also determined that the opportunities gained from leadership development in high school were tremendously beneficial for students in their future endeavors. This literature established the background for evaluating the relationship of student extracurricular participation, student achievement, and student attendance.

Summary

In Chapter I the researcher presented the basic organization of the study. The purpose of the study, statement of the problem, hypotheses, and research questions were all stated. Next the definition of terms, delimitations, assumptions, and justifications were present along with literature for support. It was the researcher's intention to continue the review of literature on this topic in Chapter II as well as to explain the design of the study in Chapter III.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

An extensive review of literature noted a variety of sources that observed interesting relationships between participation in extracurricular activities and student outcomes. A comparison between the expenses and benefits of participating in extracurricular activities yielded a conclusion that it was a simple task to create a new club, activity, or team that would benefit the students and the schools (Reeves, 2008). In this article Reeves also described how Woodstock High School in Illinois that serviced more than two thousand students showed drastic improvements in academics and student behavior. Although there were many positive changes in the improvement process, the one major change that occurred was the 400% increase in student participation in extracurricular activities. Reeves (2008) also discovered that if there were six or seven students interested in something that a new club would be started. Data analysis in this school showed that students who took part in three or four activities had better grades than students who had no participation, thus, suggesting that if schools made a commitment in extracurricular participation, the entire school community benefited.

Another source, Massoni (2011), identified extracurricular activities as beginning in the United States in the 19th century in Harvard and Yale Universities consisting of debate clubs and Greek organizations familiar in today's schools. Early educators were skeptical of the benefits of extracurricular activities and believed school should focus more on academics (Marsh & Kleitman, 2002). There has been an extreme evolution today where about one in four students participate in academic clubs (Sadker &

Zittleman, 2010). Bloomfield and Barber (2011) agreed that simultaneous participation in a diversity of activities apparently made a meaningful difference in youthful outcomes similarly as previous studies concluded. In general, Bloomfield and Barber (2011) indicated that participation in extracurricular activities had protective benefits for youth.

Administrators have to decide what type of commitment that school districts will have in extracurricular activities and their value in the learning process. A study by Cleveland, Powell, Saddler, and Tyler (2011) discussed how administrators play significant roles in making the proper decisions that create these necessary climate changes that facilitate positive outcomes. Another study by Klose (2008) concluded that for a student to reach desired levels of achievement motivation must be intact. Klose also noted that the leadership in the schools had a responsibility of analyzing the needs of the learning environment and made decisions that facilitated the learning process.

Finding literature on each program defined by the Mississippi High School Activities Association was the aim of this review. These programs included archery, band, baseball, basketball, bowling, cheer, choral, cross country, dance, debate, golf, football, power lifting, soccer, softball, speech, swimming, tennis, track and field, and volleyball. The subtopics of this literature review included the discussion of theoretical foundations, student achievement, student attendance, and student behavior in high schools. This review next elaborated on extracurricular participation and funding of extracurricular activities while focusing on how participation relates to academics, attendance, and behavior. The latter portion of the literature review illustrated student outcomes when participating in athletics, band, cheer, choral, dance, debate, speech, and writing. All of these topics presented an abundance of evidence that support this study.

Theoretical Foundations

There were many theorists who were impactful with ideas that are exhibited in schools today. According to Pieratt (2010), John Dewey's progressive approaches to child-centered learning can be seen in our schools today. Pieratt also explained how Dewey emphasized the importance for students to have engaging learning experiences that imparted more into them than just a recite and rote curriculum. Usher and Kober (2013) insisted that extracurricular programs can motivate students by providing opportunities to demonstrate skills and building confidence outside the classroom. This study explains the value of student engagement in the learning environment and the impact extracurricular activities has on a student academic outcomes.

Bumen (2007) described the theories of another educational reformer, Howard Gardner, who advocated multiple intelligence instruction as a beneficial component to understanding the learning process. Gardner (n.d.) adamantly emphasized that students were academically stimulated when being exposed to a variety of learning styles including verbal-linguistic, mathematical-logical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical-rhythmic, and naturalistic. This understanding was necessary when addressing the individual need for each learner. Scholars speculated that involvement in a mix of organized activities offered youth exposure to a greater variety of adults, peers, skills, and experiences that promoted successful development and more readily counter the risks of problematic behaviors (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). This study examined the benefits of exposure to a variety of instructional methods to address optimal learning styles.

Jean Piaget was another theorist who developed principles employed in educational reform today (Slavin, 2006). Slavin explained how Piaget suggested that children construct understanding through many channels, including reading, listening, exploring, and experiences. This text eluded to the importance of reaching each student's learning needs. This theorist too was driven to believe in the uniqueness of every learner and the need for a variety of experiences to maximize the learning environment. Students who participated in extracurricular activities tended to be more comfortable in school with greater feelings of belonging and more cohesive social networks than other students (Barber, Stone, Hunt, & Eccles, 2005). This study explained that students who were exposed to programs that offered positive experiences gain tremendously because of the meeting of each student's learning needs as described by Piaget.

Student Achievement

Student achievement was the next focus of this literature review and how it related to extracurricular activities. Reeves (2005) defined student achievement as levels in which students acquire measurable and attainable educational goals. Neal (2005) concluded that student achievement gaps may exist for much of the 21st century. According to the National Center of Educational Statistics, elementary and secondary schools showed that about one in five public schools were considered high poverty in 2011 where 75% or more of their enrolled students qualified for free or reduced lunch thus affecting student achievement results (Aud et al., 2013). There were a joint force of multiple reforms that must integrate to make all the difference in improving student achievement (Casserly et al., 2012). Cause and effect relationships cannot be established between student characteristics and achievement because many factors may influence

student achievement including educational practices, available resources, and demographic characteristics of the student body (Aud et al., 2013). These findings laid the foundation for more probing looks at student achievement and what affects it.

Current literature suggested the role that education plays for young adults in schools as stated below:

In this new economy, most students hope to go to college and those who are not entering college face a rapidly eroding labor market for young adults with only a high school education. This changing educational landscape means that students' coursework and activities in senior year are becoming increasingly important.

(Roderick et al., 2013, para 2)

More literature suggested the following:

In this era of standards and accountability policies, policymakers, school administrators, and teachers have identified the instructional core as the primary foci for school improvement. This study on high school effectiveness, however, turns our attention to activities in schools that both support the instructional core as well as the socio-emotional life of students. The research from this study as well as other research on personalization in schools suggests that by providing for and attending to the personalization of academic and social learning (PASL), high schools may see rewards in student outcome. (Rutledge et al., 2012, p. 59)

In 2012, the American College Test (ACT) emphasized how strong relationships between teachers and students were the largest predictor of student achievement. The results of this study recommended that educators at higher performing high schools attributed much of their success to possessing supportive and orderly learning environments as well as

having a clear focus on academics (ACT, 2012). Another study that focused on ingredients to influence school improvements included the following:

A list of recommendations compiled in the Institute of Educational Sciences Practice Guide on School Turnaround, based on case studies of schools that showed substantial improvement, starts with establishing strong leadership focused on improving school climate and instruction, strengthening partnerships across school communities, monitoring instruction, addressing discipline, and building distributed leadership among teachers in the school. (De la torre, Allensworth, Jagesic, Sebastian, & Salmonowicz, 2012, p. 6)

Much of the literature continued to explain a variety of influences on student achievement. Aikens (2013) described how young people actively seek ways of achieving their goals and how students thrive when exposed to positive language, acts, people, and role models. Another study illustrated how attachment to teachers, school involvement, attachment to school, and school commitment were all correlated to positive achievement results (Bryan et al., 2012). The last emphasis that the literature made clear was that teachers should increase rigor in the classroom and students should take more challenging classes (National Governors' Association, 2008).

Student Attendance

Student attendance in high schools had a significant amount of literature associated with it. Walker and Education Partnerships (2007) suggested that many students do not attend school because of boredom in classes, the ease of work, or no strong relationships in the learning environment. Walker and Education Partnerships also discussed how being suspended, being bullied, missing the bus, and lack of clean clothes

all made differences in attendance. Working, domestic violence, and babysitting for siblings were also mentioned in Walker and Education Partnerships' research about common reasons for missing school. This literature continued to concentrate on how a lack of effort or engagement to the school environment was extremely influencing. Students who were connected with their teachers and thought school was a safe learner friendly environment were more comfortable with coming to school (Wilkins, 2008).

Many researchers promoted school-wide interventions at the high school level that positively affected student attendance (Kaufman et al., 2010). According to Capps (2003), truancy was not a new problem in America, and since the 1980s educators searched for ways to identify and address this problem as it became rampant. Nemecek and Watson (2007) described how students admitted that classroom activities, relationships with teachers, and positive incentives improved their attendance.

Researchers suggested that students who attended school regularly were more successful than those who did not (Education Partnerships, 2012). Literature stated that students which dropped out of high school illustrated the ability to earn \$8,000 a year less than high school graduates on average (Smink & Heilbrunn, 2006). This literature continued to state that poor attendance guaranteed poverty and proclaimed that reports of shoplifting in the community increased.

Academic achievement may be raised by improving attendance of those students who would normally have a high rate of absenteeism (Daugherty, 2008). Daugherty continued to contend that students who regularly attend school were less likely to fail high-stakes tests. Beyond parental influence, peer influence also played a role in a student's truancy where there could be either positive or negative effects (Hartnett, 2008).

Schools that could improve attendance had a better chance meeting adequate yearly progress goals because improving attendance had a direct impact at improving academic achievement (Marburger, 2006). Conversely, academic success was adversely affected by a lack of attendance in which grade point average (GPA), test scores, quizzes, and even the ability to complete homework suffered (Spencer, 2009). Chen and Lin (2008) wrote that students who attended classes regularly have a 9.4% to 18.0% improvement as shown in examination grades. The literature supported improved attendance in high schools as a predictor for high student outcomes.

Student Behavior

There was a large amount of literature on how student behavior in high schools related to student outcomes. This first study examined archival office referral data from an urban school district to determine that there were patterns in types of referrals across grade levels and how these patterns differ for students by race and gender (Kaufman et al., 2010). Black and Hispanic students received a greater number of referrals for disciplinary problems and special education services than White students (Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). Duncan (2010) also suggested that students with disabilities and Black students, especially males, were suspended far more often than their White counterparts. These students, he also noted, suffered more severe punishment for similar misdeeds.

More recently, the validity of using office referral data to make decisions about student behavior in schools became prominent (Irving et al., 2006). Irving et al. (2006), also found that office referrals were competent ways to make decisions like identifying specific behavior problems and changing the physical layout of classroom. Therefore,

office referral data have important implications for interventions targeting disruptive student behaviors.

Determining the effects of high-quality instruction on achievement and behavior was described as vital to the success of the future of public education (Algozzine et al., 2012). Truancy, defiance, and tardiness were the most common discipline referrals, and detention was the most common result in correcting these behaviors (Spaulding et al., 2010). Spaulding emphasized greatly the importance of keeping the students in class as much as possible because time out of class hindered student achievement greatly. Suspended students are more likely to have low achievement (Arcia, 2006).

Another theory associated with managing student behavior included the need of connecting with students about their lives and being available to offer assistance for their emotional needs (Hamre & Pianta, 2006). An additional disciplinary strategy was one that focuses on building relationships with students to prevent and diffuse disciplinary interactions (Hoy & Weinstein, 2006). Early detection of student disengagement with minimal disruption to instruction are hallmarks of good classroom management (Jones & Jones, 2007). According to Warren et al. (2003), school wide support was necessary to promote a positive climate within a school by changing the focus from solely punitive approaches to using more positive approaches to support appropriate behavior. Teachers who communicated regularly with parents found fewer office referrals and improved grades as well as improved parental attitudes toward the class (Shirvani, 2007). This article found it important to be proactive not reactive to behavioral problems within a school. Students needed systems in place that curtailed discipline referrals. Writing referrals did not correct the behavior (Rickert, 2005).

According to Losen, Martinez, and the University of California (2013), there were several important conclusions drawn from their research. They first discovered that harsh punitive responses do more harm than good to students. They also revealed that reserving out-of-school suspension as a measure of last resort can lead to higher achievement and improved graduations rates. Finally Losen, Martinez, and the University of California professed that the idea that we must kick out the bad students so the good students can learn is a myth. There are many viable alternatives that do not result in chaotic school environments.

According to Losen and the University of Colorado in 2011, student misbehavior was attributed exclusively to students, but researchers knew the same students behaved very differently in different classrooms. Losen and the University of Colorado further described how disruptions tend to increase or decrease with the skill of the teacher in providing engaging instruction and in managing the classroom. These views offered illustrations on how student behavior affected student outcomes.

Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Several researchers described relationships between participation and extracurricular activities. One study illustrated that students committed to school with increased participation or engagement displayed a more positive attitude and reported higher academic achievement (Sciarra & Seirup, 2008). Dotterer, McHale, and Crouter (2007) concluded that time in extracurricular activities positively related to greater school self-esteem and school bonding.

Many researchers studied the relationship between participation and positive outcomes for minority and poverty stricken students. Casserly et al., (2012) emphasized

how important it was for Black males to have full access to high-quality instruction during the school day as well as ample opportunities for out-of-school enrichment.

Casserly et al. also suggested that they need to engage not only schools and teachers, but also parents, social service agencies, and communities to create a wide network of people and institutions ready to intervene and support them. Low income and minority students also benefited from relevant supplemental school programs, including after-school programs featuring strong technology, athletics, arts, and social components in a structured environment with adult guidance and supervision (Shernoff & Shmidt, 2008).

More studies on this topic discussed Black youth as a basis where those who spent their time watching television and unattached to organizations exhibited less involvement in the school learning environment (Shulruf, 2010). Shulruf also stated that those who participated in a combination of extracurricular programs had the highest levels of initial self-esteem growth. Shulruf continued to describe how research consistently showed positive effects for students who participated in extracurricular activities where connections were identified among extracurricular participation and academic achievement, academic aspirations, and attendance.

In a survey exploring why students dropped out of school, 70% of high school dropouts said they were unmotivated (Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006). An example of how motivation improved student underachievement was in an Ohio program for boys at risk of dropping out which provided personal motivators, participation in special extracurricular activities, and close monitoring of students' progress by a school-community team (Hoke, 2008). After the first year of the program, participants' grade promotion and attendance rates increased, and suspension rates decreased.

Another program in the Baltimore City Public Schools identified why chronically absent students were missing school and responded with individualized interventions, such as mentors, home visits, meetings with parents, and the involvement of service providers if necessary (Sundius & Fothergill, 2010). The percentage of chronically absent students declined, dropout rates decreased, and the graduation rate increased. Barry (2007) indicated that students lacking the ability to apply self-motivation academically may be incapable of setting their own goals, but if they are helped to set goals, they may establish the motivation needed to enhance their achievement. Martin and Dowson (2009) furthermore described how relatedness and belonging were important reasons extracurricular activities were thought to yield positive effects.

Logan and Scarborough (2008) overwhelmingly demonstrated that students were positively motivated by relationships with club leaders and peers within their extracurricular activities. Logan and Scarborough continued to mention the importance of having quality programs in secondary schools. A school's climate and culture are key elements in that school's performance (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009). Participation in activities also developed students' connection with adults within and outside the school, thus, creating an optimal climate. School extracurricular activity involvement exposed students to the positive existence of supportive social networks, interaction with non-parent adults, and promotion of self-efficacies and identity (Gilman, Meyers, & Perez, 2004).

Interscholastic athletics and other extracurricular activities were important fixtures in the culture of American high schools and middle schools (Stader, 2007). A Baltimore Kids Chess League exemplified how an after-school activity cannot only

increase student confidence and academic ability but also could build strong social relationships and skills for student who may otherwise have been afflicted by violence, truancy, and academic failure (Madigan, 2008). Bleile (2012) stated that students who felt connected to school were less likely to skip school or be involved in fighting, bullying, and vandalism. These students were also more likely to succeed academically according to Bleile. If extracurricular activities were not provided and encouraged, students could become bored and uninterested (Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Sesma, 2006). When students participated in activities, they became a part of a new network of peers and found purpose and self-worth in their community. Determining just how significant certain factors were to student achievement was a constant part of research. Extracurricular activities were powerful and empowering experiences because they had the potential to influence student belonging, promote positive academic and psychosocial outcomes (Akos, 2006).

Scholarship continues to emphasize the advantages of student connection in the secondary learning environment. Beyond providing enjoyable, demanding, and suitable activities to the skill level of the adolescents, the adult leader's attitude and interaction style was considered essential to adolescents' engagement with the activity (Mahoney, Vandell, Simpkins, & Zarrett, 2009). Gadbois and Bowker (2007) also concluded that athletic participation may be more relevant for enhancing boys' self-esteem, whereas participation in non-athletic activities may be more relevant for girls' self-esteem. Kort-Butler and Hagewen (2011) finally concluded that high school aged students do benefit from participation in school-based extracurricular activities provided that the activities in which they participate are associated with self-concepts and skill sets that remain

pertinent beyond high school. This study further stated that students associated to programs will make them more linked to school.

Fredricks and Eccles (2006) described how participating in a range of extracurricular activities may be beneficial because it may help youth to compensate for negative experiences in one particular activity. They continued to say that this practice offered more opportunity to experience the features of the activity setting that promoted successful development. Fredricks (2010) added that youth benefited most from participating in a greater number of organized activities. Similar to the previous work, participating in a combination of activities may counterbalance the risks associated with participation in other extracurricular activities that themselves enhance the likelihood of problem behaviors (Linver, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2009). The literature advised the increased exposure and variety of experiences.

Some views of increased involvement looked at this as a damaging phenomenon. Fredricks (2012) did a study to determine if increased involvement caused negative results, and these outcomes concluded that few American high school students are over-scheduled. It was stated that an even larger portion of high school students are not involved in any school-based extracurricular activities.

The last theoretical view of extracurricular activities was that participation is not beneficial. Hunt (2005) offered the point of view that students doing better academically choose certain types of extracurricular activities, while students who are not choose other types of activities. This theory does not believe participation in athletics matter where good students are not getting any benefits from participation. Guest and McRee (2009) discovered that participation in extracurricular activities can be positive, neutral, or

negative. Although there was an abundance of literature that supports the advantages of extracurricular activities, some research is opposing.

Boaz (2010) concluded that the current knowledge of extracurricular participation does not suggest that student achievement outcomes are affected positively or negatively. Reeves (2008) determined that parents and teachers may fear students' loss of focus on academics when they become too busy with out-of-school activities. Hartmann and Massogolia (2007) emphasized that extracurricular activities have both deterring and facilitating effects on delinquency. Although extracurricular activities may provoke students to maintain a busy schedule and distract them from the opportunities to act in trouble-causing ways, extracurricular activities themselves will not prevent teens from compromising their moral standards (Baker, 2010). One last opposing study described that the possible demands on students' time when heavily involved in extracurricular activities appeared to have adverse effects on high-achieving students' GPA (Langenkamp, 2009). Langenkamp focused on students evolving into high school and the possible barriers involved participation.

Funding of Extracurricular Activities

The literature described a variety of issues common to the process of funding extracurricular activities. According to Gehring (2004), a district's four schools have lost nearly 20% of their teaching staff along with several custodial workers and administrators. Gehring also described how a school board voted to eliminate all sports programs and close school libraries in the fall, prompting expressions of outrage from the community and an outpouring of financial support from local businesses. After voters

rejected increased taxes sought by the district, board members said they had no choice but to eliminate \$16.5 million from the 35,000 student district's \$181 million budget.

The challenges of funding public education continued in many places as proven in this article describing how a variety of programs were impacted. “In many school districts, pay raises have been frozen, funds for supplies have dwindled, and monies for new technologies and building upgrades have dried up, leaving the impression that support for education has taken a step back” (Sterrett & Imig, 2011, p. 69). The decline in housing values meaning lower property tax for schools, uneasiness about passing local levies for extra funds, diminishing federal dollars, increased health care costs for education staff, and obligated pay increases for teachers each year brought major discussions about how to curtail costs in every district in America that are a challenge to honor (Farkas, Duffet, & Thomas Fordham Institute, 2012). Many school boards discussed possibilities of constructing fees for participating but for fear of violating the legal guarantee of a free education drastically cutting extracurricular activities became a questionable alternative (Taylor, 2009). Kronholz (2012) deliberated how in some school districts they eliminated middle school sports, junior varsity sports, majorettes, cheerleading squads, Key Clubs, Math Counts, jazz, weight lifting, and a variety of other programs that were familiar to a high school setting.

Hu (2008) discoursed a last-ditch campaign to save a tradition of school sports in a district has raised \$225,451, including \$100,000 from the actor Denzel Washington, a former resident there. According to Hu, the donations made it possible for the district to restore the high school's entire fall lineup of varsity and junior varsity sports. About 325

high school students on eight varsity and five junior varsity teams began competing for the school district.

Medina (2010) described how another school district facing potential budget cuts convinced the school board to unanimously approve a plan to allow the district to seek corporate sponsorships as a way to get money to the schools. Reduction in athletics had been evident in many districts, but there was also an ongoing issue of financial cuts in arts programs where these programs continued to struggle to function (Walkowicz, 2009). Another study stated how school officials described the effort of a parent group in raising \$650,000 to restore sports and extracurricular activities cut for budget reasons a great victory for the community (Saslow, 2009). Saslow also explained how educational officials worried that more districts are being forced to rely on outside sources to pay for programs and services. Ahmad (2002) discussed a school district that has been affected by similar fiscal issues has raised classroom sizes as well as sports fees to make the \$2 million in cuts needed to balance the district's \$27 million budget for the fiscal year.

Coysh (2005) described school districts who had music programs that exhibited effective leadership, appropriate music repertoire, reliable feeder systems, sufficient funding, adequate community support where no cuts were made. This example suggested how a district invested in the schools and the community used extracurricular activities as a driving force. Music teachers in Oregon tracked data to show the jobs lost by budget cuts around the state due to cuts in music (Block, 2011). Leenman (2010) mentioned that budget cuts in music education can cripple children's development because music can be a key component in raising their test scores and helps them socialize and communicate. Block (2012) suggested that even though budget cuts are increasing, government officials

do not understand the effects these cuts are to have on the arts. Olson (2009c) proclaimed that cutting funds from the arts would be detrimental and that funding these areas would be investments to the economy. While funding woes and No Child Left Behind mandates have led many school districts to cut music programs, Bay Shore, N.Y., remained committed in its support of all forms of arts education (Patt, 2011).

Socioeconomic Status and Participation

The literature described the relationship between socioeconomic status and participation in a variety of ways. Finances and transportation issues prohibiting student participation caused the missing of opportunities that could enhance their future options (Logan & Scarborough, 2008). This view made schools ponder over the issue of making these programs available for all learners. Gager and White (2007) added that students of lower economic status were less likely to participate in extracurricular activities because of the lack of financial support. This theory eluded to the idea that students with higher economic status were the only students involved in these programs, thus, only affecting influential students who already have a developed academic foundation.

Carbonaro and Covay (2010) suggested that lower socioeconomic status students were less likely to participate and have the opportunities to develop intrinsic skills. They explain that high socioeconomic students have access to these programs, thus, continuing to provide these students with an advantage. Wormington, Corpus, and Anderson (2012) stated that students with high socio economic statuses reported the strongest academic performance and greatest extracurricular activities participation. Wormington et al. (2012) suggested this as an impactful relationship.

Extracurricular Participation and Student Achievement

More literature described the relationship of extracurricular participation and student achievement. Feldman and Matjasko (2005) explained that individuals involved in extracurricular activities during high school were more likely to have higher GPA's. Shulruf, Tumen, and Tolley (2008) learned in their work that extracurricular activities improved literacy scores in schools as well and also described how structured activities offer youth the opportunity to participate in enriching activities. It was also emphasized that the importance of interaction with adult role models. Students who participated in out-of-school activities were more likely to earn a high school diploma and to have higher grades than those who do not participate (Gifford et al., 2011). Lipscomb (2007) examined the benefits of participating on academic achievement as well as on future abilities to attain bachelor's degrees. These discoveries concluded that students gained valuable leadership skills and work ethics that contributed to their abilities to perform in the classroom setting. Everson and Millsap (2005) elaborated on this view with its examinations of significant increases in students' scores particularly at-risk students and minority students. This study concluded that participation in high school extracurricular activities appeared to be one of the few interventions that benefited students less well served by traditional educational programs.

More work by Dumais (2009) explained that positive relationships exist between students' involvement in extracurricular activities and academic achievement. This study examined students in two eras and gained a great incite on how students performed the best. Academics alone did not motivate students to achieve at high scholarly levels. Another useful study by Zwart (2006) determined the benefits of the extracurricular

activity that students were already participating in at Paramount High School. This quantitative study looked at the cumulative GPA's, standardized test scores in mathematics, and standardized test scores in English/Language Arts of students involved in school athletics, music instruction, and non-participants. Athletes and music students outperformed their non-participating counterparts in all areas.

Howard and Ziomek-Daigle (2009) suggested that professional school counselors, school officials, and community agency personnel collaborated and used extracurricular activities to help target the academic achievement of other uninvolved students. This study's approach used these programs as interventions for academic progress. All of this scholarship illustrated advantageous views of participation effects on student achievement.

Extracurricular Participation and Student Attendance

The relationship between extracurricular participation and student attendance is further developed in this section. Lipscomb (2007) suggested that extracurricular activities positively affected school attendance and resulted in students being in class doing the things that would influence success. This study also found that there was a great effect on females, Black males, and Hispanic participants. Reeves (2008) stated that there was a strong association between student involvement in extracurricular activities and improved attendance. Students who participated in activities such as sports, music, the arts, clubs, and interest groups had higher attendance rate than students who did not participate in extracurricular activities (Education Partnerships, 2012).

Extracurricular Participation and Student Behavior

There was an abundance of research on the relationship of extracurricular participation and student behavior. Durlak and Weissberg (2007) suggested that students who spent time outside class involved with organized and constructive programs were more likely to exhibit positive behaviors. The study specifically described desirable changes in the areas of feelings and attitudes, behavioral adjustments, and school performance. Furthermore, the study emphasized how these areas of improvement encompassed a multiple of domains, thus illustrating strong support of extracurricular activities.

More studies on this topic included the idea of how student behaviors in school could effectively predict student achievement (Choy, O'Grady, & Rotgans, 2012). This study determined that properly engaged students who participate in group discussions and attempt to understand what was taught do learn. More research showed that participating in after-school activities made students less likely to partake in at-risk behavior (Linville & Huebner, 2005). Linville and Huebner specifically looked at the effects of participation in extracurricular activities on fighting at school as well as having possession of weapons at school. There were also positive conclusions gathered from participation in extracurricular activities on deterring fighting and the carrying of weapons in secondary schools in a rural Virginian community.

This kind of investigation provided insight into the potential stabilizing nature of schools and significant implications for the healthy development of academically strong young people (Blum, 2005). Blum suggested that participation developed the entire student and addressed issues such as disruptive behavior, school violence, and substance abuse. In schools where students feel safe in a well-behaved environment, academic

achievement tended to be higher (Milam, Furr-Holden & Leaf, 2010). A cross-sectional study conducted by Darling (2005) found that participation in extracurricular activities was associated with more positive adolescent outcomes for high school students. Howie, Lukacs, Pastor, Reuben, and Mendola (2010) discovered that the most dangerous time for bad behavior was the time after school and before parents get home. The ages that usually participated in this poor behavior during this time were between 12 and 17. Durlak and Weissburg (2007) concluded that the students who participate in extracurricular activities had increased academic, social, personal, and recreational development. Morrissey (2005) noted a reduction in delinquency and less engagement in risky behaviors when students participated in extracurricular activities. He also concluded that these results had an impact on future educational attainment and career options as they related to imminent success.

More literature continued the discussion of behavior where Knifsend and Graham (2011) discussed how participating in a moderate number of different types of activities may be optimal for helping adolescents to feel connected to their school and to do well academically. Reeves (2008) also stated that there was a strong association between student involvement in extracurricular activities and improved attendance, behavior, and academic performance. In 2008 Smith described adolescent students who did not have opportunities to identify with a particular group or who were affiliated with delinquent social groups were more likely to suffer negative repercussions, including dropout, suicide, substance abuse, or discipline problems (as cited in Wilson, 2009). Feldman and Matjasko (2005) identified extracurricular activities as a vital developmental program for

American youth with participation in such activities often viewed as an important strategy to protect youth from engaging in a variety of at-risk behaviors.

Bohnert and Garber (2007) linked youths' participation in structured extracurricular activities to a lower likelihood of risk behaviors such as internalized behavior problems, depressive symptoms, dropping out of school, substance use, and delinquent behaviors. Students who were committed to school reported higher academic achievement and lower levels of school-related misbehavior (Stewart, 2008). School extracurricular activities served as positive environments where youth were supervised by adults and have less time available for involvement in unstructured and unsupervised settings (Osgood, Anderson, & Shaffer, 2005).

Participation in extracurricular activities promoted positive activities and decrease involvement with felonious peers or others whose activities promote problematic behavior (Dotterer et al., 2007). Peck, Roeseer, Zarrett, and Eccles (2008) showed how extracurricular activity quality is associated with educational attainments among at-risk students. They also stated how at-risk students who did not participate were less likely to show educational resilience by going on to post-secondary education. Research stated that many of these behavioral problems were related to increases in emotional and behavioral issues among students (Stanley, Canham, & Cureton, 2006).

Several scholars offered alternative ways of viewing extracurricular activities' effects on behavior. Agnew (2007) discovered that students who join competitive academic clubs in school with rigorous expectations might engage in anti-social conduct as a way of reducing the strain of the organization. Linville and Huebner's (2005) analysis of the role of extracurricular activities in physical fighting and weapons carrying

for rural boys versus girls found that participation in school extracurricular activities does not significantly influence boys' fighting or weapons carrying or girls' weapons carrying. Kreager (2007) suggested that youth who engage in extracurricular sports activities are more likely to be involved in delinquency than their counterparts who do not. Voisin (2007) discussed how Black male adolescents are battling new independence, in unfamiliar school environments, with less adult attention and support, and increased peer pressures. Along with these new freedoms and pressures, these youth were increasingly susceptible to gang invitations, leading to increased risk for exposure to violence.

Not only does delinquent behavior become apparent but also so does substance abuse. The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (2007) reported that alcohol is used more by young people in the United States than tobacco or illicit drugs. The damage that alcohol and drugs have on people from long-term use was extremely devastating. The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services continued to suggest that high school students who participated in this activity also have a common illicit behavior exhibited by its use. Alcohol consumption by young people was viewed as a developmental rite of passage or a test of limits (Martinic & Measham, 2008). This article continued to state that young drinkers often place themselves at risk for immediate physical effects including hangovers, blackouts, impaired cognitive and motor coordination, and injury. More delayed social outcomes such as problems at home, school, and work are also included in this list of complications. These studies eluded that this trendy behavior can be contributed to the influences that surround high school students.

Literature detailed the consequences of unfavorable behavior. Suspended student achievement gains decreased as the number of days students were suspended increased (Arcia, 2006). Arcia showed that school suspension is used not only for serious behavioral that threaten the safety of the students themselves or others but also for nonthreatening behaviors, such as repeated disruption in the classroom, talking back to the teacher, and skipping school. Evidence from this study showed that school suspension can have serious unintended negative consequences for the suspended student, including intensifying academic difficulties, dropping out of school, disengagement from school, alienation, crime, and substance abuse (Arcia, 2006). When involved in extracurricular activities, many of these negative issues are addressed. The conflicting views of extracurricular participation relationships were apparent in the literature.

Participation in Athletics

The research continued to describe athletics as having strong effects on student outcomes. Ostro (2007) spoke on how being a part of an organization usually sets certain eligibility standards. These standards force students to maintain high academic levels to participate in the organization. Ostro continued to state that schools that perform well academically are encouraging environments and create positive public views because of their performance. This study also discovered that standout athletes and highly motivated students can often be seen causing trouble both in and outside school. Although extracurricular participation provoked students to maintain a busy schedule and distract them from the opportunities to act in trouble-causing ways, extracurricular activities in and of themselves will not prevent teens from compromising their moral standards. This

study further stated that although extracurricular activities are a good venue for individual development and staying active, they are not a major factor in a teen's decision-making process.

More literature reflected the theory that students who have high fitness levels performed at a higher academic level (Chomitz et al., 2009). This theory made for an increased emphasis in health consciousness where students can be physically fit as well as academically prepared. A consistent narrative emerging from this literature was that youth who participate in sports generally have a lower likelihood of troublesome outcomes than those not involved in extracurricular activities. The benefits of participation in sports over non-participation became more noticeable when involvement in sports occurs in concurrence with involvement in non-sports (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). Similarly, Gardner, Roth, and Brooks-Gunn (2009) found that the likelihood of non-violent delinquency among boys who participate in sports is lower than for boys who do not participate in extracurricular activities after adjusting for race, family structure, parental education, and prior nonviolent problem behavior and physical violence. However, boys who participated only in sports activities have a higher likelihood of such delinquency than those who combine sports with involvement in other activities.

Interscholastic athletics and other extracurricular activities were considered important fixtures in the culture of American high schools and middle schools (Stader, 2007). While sporting events created a sense of school spirit and fun for participants and spectators alike, they also served as a valuable community relations tool because attendance at sporting events were sometimes the only thing that brought some members of the community to a local school (Bagin, Gallagher, & Moore 2008). Juvenile arrest

rates and teen birth rates were lower but sexually transmitted disease rates were not lower in areas where schools offered more extracurricular sports (Cohen et al., 2007). At-risk students received praise from athletics that they would never hear at home or from peers (Ringer, 2009). This sense of motivation was suggested to be a driving force in many students' lives.

More literature stated a wide-range of views pertaining to athletics impacts. Chomitz et al. (2008) emphasized the importance of understanding athletics' relation to student success when policymakers were working to develop budgets. This view made the tough decisions more scientific. Peguero (2009) conducted a study that demonstrated involvement in classroom-related extracurricular activities and clubs were associated with a connection to violent victimization, while involvement in interscholastic sports were related to a lower likelihood of such victimization. In some studies, athletic involvement, particularly among males, were associated with more alcohol use (McHale et al., 2005). This opposing literature offered a variety of positions to the relationships of athletics to student outcomes.

Participation in Band

Literature has been very specific about the areas of extracurricular activities that benefit student outcomes. This literature stated that many school bands organize their year around competitions, but at Freedom High School in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, the only contest is topping the previous season's performances for the student body and surrounding community (Olson, 2010). This article gave great value regarding the connectedness of band within its school and community. Olsen (2011a) also described a Missouri band director who kept working to bring the students and community together.

This school leader was dedicated and passionate toward the band, school, and community. Another story of success described a band director at Central Davidson High School who took a failing band program and turned it into a premier organization (Olson, 2009a). The influence by this instructor went beyond competition because of the caring and sense of family attitude that was displayed. Olson (2011b) described two instances in which a band instructor took a school that had a reputation of gang violence and transformed the institution into a strong band school that excelled tremendously. Unlikely students enjoyed and appreciated the music that they were learning at uncanny rates.

Another study found where large ensembles exerted tremendous influence in the community among the teachers, parents, administrators, and school board, thus creating the desire for increased participation (Townsend, 2006). This study believed in keeping the public informed with the program by utilizing websites, photo releases, and many other media outlets. Buyer (2005) stated that band offered students the opportunities to compete at extraordinary levels, establish goals, instill motivation, develop work-ethic, build confidence, improve commitment, ripen leadership, enhance teamwork, and heighten focus.

More research continued to make conclusions on the impact of band participation. Cox and Stephens (2006) suggested that there was not any significant links between academic success and music. This research observed that before any budget cuts were made in the music department the schools should look at data and make decisions. Suggestions advocated schools to compare music participation with overall grades as well as the morale of the students who were affected. Training teachers to make cross-

curricular connections in their planning was suggested, but one interesting fact from this study specified that students who had at least two music credits per grade level had a higher GPA than students who did not. Another study that focused on the impact of involvement in band on GPA and attendance found no significant differences in academic achievement between band and non-band members (Vitucci, 2010). All of these studies had unique views on the impact of participation in band.

Schilf (2011) described the importance of individualized instruction when teaching music where educators were offered the opportunity to connect with their students. Schilf advised that individualized instruction was something that administrators articulated to teachers for a long time that kept kids in school and reduces many forms of discipline problems. This study continued to address the relationship of band and student outcomes in high school.

Participation in Cheerleading

There were key relationships discovered from participating in cheer teams. According to Bettis and Adams (2006), cheerleading, invented in America, has 3.8 million participants in the United States where 97% of whom are female. This literature emphasized the emergence of this extracurricular activity and its goal of developing strong credibility as a premier sport. Kronholz (2012) also stated that cheerleading, similar to all other extracurricular activities, would benefit students when it came to confidence, self-esteem, status amongst peers, and leadership. Even more research defined the work put in to cheerleading where participants practice year around because of the rigor of games and competition keeps students involved in a positive environment on regular basis (Barnett, 2006). Kronholz discussed how the U. S. Department of Education compiled data on extracurricular activities a decade ago when it reported that

more than half the country's high school sophomores participated in sports. The data also stated that one-fifth were in a school-sponsored music group, and that cheerleading and drill teams, hobby, academic, and vocational clubs each involved about 10% of the students. These numbers explained a significant amount of students involved in these programs.

Even though many benefits of cheerleading were discovered, there was literature that found negative benefits of cheerleading groups as well. Barnett (2006) advocated the following:

The results suggest that school personnel and parents should pay more attention, in the immediate and longer term, to those unsuccessful in auditioning for these selective and highly valued school activities.

School-related activity experiences might be expanded to include more aspirants, for example, by having multiple cheerleading and dance teams individually aligned to the various sport and spirit activities. In addition, the auditioning process might be revisited to place less emphasis on the dichotomous "win-lose" outcome and add other types of recognitions for effort and participating. Finally, the possible devastating effects on the unsuccessful girl students in their bid to secure a place on the team should be recognized by counselors and parents, and appropriate strategies designed to assist these girls in appropriately situating the outcome. (pp. 537-538)

This literature emphasizes the need to take all students into consideration when developing a cheerleading program and the need to be sensitive to the needs of all.

Participation in Choir

Research offered continued views on the influence of choir on student outcomes in the high school setting. Elpus and Abirl (2011) discovered that music students' test scores and GPA's were significantly higher than non-music students. MacLellan (2011) argued that participation in music played a major role in the identity development among students when compared to the general population of high school students. This study convinced that choir students developed a keen personality that was disciplined and more aware of being focused on the material that they encounter. Rodriguez (2009) elaborated on the formal music training of the teacher and how this passing to the student empowers them with greater decision making skills as well as the ability to accept challenges and problem solve. Fehr (2005) discussed the influence of music on an entire school when prior to a game the student section stood and sang the National Anthem after technical difficulties. The impressiveness of this group to be able to do this overwhelmed the community in such a manner that the music department was praised for the preparation that the students had been given. The music teacher in the article felt ignored and valueless up until this moment where the significance of musical influence was shown to the entire community.

Parker (2011) continued to describe participation in music as an opportunity to develop social growth, musical achievement, emotion, self-confidence, academic success, and development of personal character. This study articulated that adolescents had their own personal ways of expressing their unique benefits of participation in choir. In 2010, Parker discussed the sense of belonging that was developed when associated with a school choral group. This safe haven that was developed offered the student a place of

comfort within the school setting that was transmitted throughout the student's high school experiences. The study also expressed how students in the program affected the overall school climate in a positive way.

More discussion on how choral music impacted high school student outcomes include Schertz (2005) who described music as a personal expression that stimulates students to think more clearly and creatively. According to Olson (2008), participation in a school's music program lessened students' feelings of estrangement, promoted individual development, and provided a common attachment between home and school.

Participation in Debate, Drama, Speech, and Writing

Debate, drama, speech, and writing teams also had literature that described how student outcomes were affected by participation. Mezuk, Bondarenko, Smith, and Tucker (2011) suggested that debate programs may offer a means to extend learning time and promote engagement with scholastic material in a manner that promotes academic performance. This premise added serious value to the opportunities for students to dissect informative topics that were essential to the curriculum.

Jones (2013) expounded the benefits of speech team on being able to proudly deliver a graduation speech. This article explained how tremendous confidence was gained through the experiences on the team as well as the strength to stand before an audience comfortably. Another article by Bell in 2013 described the advantages of being on a prominent speech and debate team as giving the opportunities to develop critical thinking skills, break-down topics more easily, and once again confidence to perform at high levels. Although there was limited research on the topic, there was significant responses to illustrate impacts of participation.

Scholarship described the relationship of participating in a drama club as well. Weilbacher, LeMasters, Gill, Wisniewski, and Arnold (2005) suggested that drama clubs offered beneficial outcomes to students involved as well as the teachers. This study also described how teachers noticed students become comfortable in front of audiences, developed self-confidence, and broadened perspectives of life through story.

Academic competitions were a focus in the literature, too. Ozturk and Debelak (2008) described academic competitions as development of self-motivation, self-concept, subjectivity, competitiveness, and provided adult role models. This study was convinced that participating in academic clubs were greatly significant.

Conclusion

There were many ways to view the perceptions of extracurricular activities as related to impacting student outcomes on the secondary level. This issue had an abundance of literature that supported varying positions connected with extracurricular activities' worth. With significant amounts of research in place, it is vital to expound upon the hypotheses that were made in this study by examining the influence extracurricular participation has on student ACT scores, GPA, student attendance, and student behavior. These factors set a measurable basis for determining the relationship of extracurricular participation levels to secondary schools in Mississippi.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Overview

The objective of this study was to measure the relationship between participation in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance in select public high schools in Mississippi. The research design was quantitative where gender, race, ACT scores, grade point average, absences, lunch status, and participation status were collected from participating schools. A regression was utilized to define the correlation of each variable along with effect sizes to determine the magnitudes of correlation. Survey methodology was also implemented where administrators and teachers were asked to give the perception of extracurricular activities participation on student outcomes within the school.

Schools were compared in a variety of ways. The influence of school state accountability ratings and school size were evaluated. For the purpose of this study, specific extracurricular participation were the independent variables. Students were categorized as participants or nonparticipants in the final analysis. The dependent variables consisted of ACT scores, GPA, absences, gender, race, and lunch status.

The researcher evaluated the relationship of the variables by measuring student achievement using ACT scores and GPA, student attendance by the number of absences, and socio economic status by students' lunch status were a focus. Chapter III continued to discuss further the complete research design, participants of the study, instrumentation utilized, specific procedures, the data analysis implemented, and a summary of methodology.

Research Design

There was a quantitative research design in place where a multiple regression technique was completed comparing the relationship between student participation, academic achievement, and attendance while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. Survey methodology was utilized as well where administrators and teachers were asked to complete the Reed's Extracurricular Perception Instrument (REPI) to analyze perceptions of extracurricular participation on academic achievement, attendance, and behavior. This data were entered in SPSS for analysis.

These data were requested from a select number of high schools in the state of Mississippi. The researcher acquired data from a sufficient sample of schools representing a variety of classifications determined by enrollment as defined by the Mississippi High School Activity Association. The researcher also acquired data from a selected sample of schools representing a variety of Mississippi accountability ratings as defined by the Mississippi Department of Education. Extracurricular activities in this study included archery, band, baseball, basketball, bowling, cheer, choral, cross country, dance, debate, drama, golf, football, power lifting, soccer, softball, speech, swimming, tennis, track and field, writing, and volleyball.

Participants

The participants of this study included the 2013 seniors from a select number of public high schools of Mississippi who compete under the Mississippi High Schools Activity Association (MHSAA). The MHSAA divides these schools by size into six classifications based on enrollment nine through twelve. These classifications were the basis of comparing each school by size. The Mississippi Department of Education

(MDE) has academic accountability ratings of A through F. These ratings are determined by a number of distinct factors including state test scores, attendance, and the percent of students who actually took the test. These accountability levels allowed the researcher to compare schools based on these ratings. This study was designed to provide valuable information for all schools in the state.

The principals and teachers from around the state were also involved in this study where the REPI was given to them. It was used for feedback on overall perceptions of extracurricular participation on student achievement, student attendance, and student behavior. This survey was offered to all secondary teachers and administrators in the state by email from the researcher utilizing Qualtrics (Qualtrics, Provo, Utah) software capable of designing and distributing research instruments.

Instrumentation

The REPI was developed by the researcher for the purpose of this study. Section 1 of the REPI gathered background information from the participant including demographics, size of the school, and accountability status of the school that they worked in. This instrument was designed to measure several perceptions in section 2 including those regarding academics (questions 1-6), attendance (questions 7-12), and behavior (questions 13-18) as each related to students who participate in extracurricular activities. All teachers and administrators in the state were asked to complete this instrument with 491 students responding.

The questions on the survey instrument were created by the researcher. When developing the survey instrument, the researcher reviewed appropriate literature to decide which variables to measure in this study and how to design the instrument. Several local

superintendents, athletic directors, principals, and coaches from around the state of Mississippi were contacted by email to offer expertise in the design of the survey.

Once IRB approval (Appendix A) was given, a pilot test was administered using Reed's Extracurricular Perception Instrument to test the validity and reliability of all questions. The instrument measured teacher and administrator perceptions on extracurricular with respect to academics, attendance, and behavior. Acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated using SPSS on the pilot group where academics was .938, attendance was .937, and behavior was .928. In the actual study where 491 teachers and administrators responded similar Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated where academics was .920, attendance was .904, and behavior was .923. Both administrations of Reed's Extracurricular Perception Instrument offered acceptable coefficients of .70 or greater.

Procedure

The researcher first emailed a select number of the superintendents in the state describing the study and that Institutional Review Board's permission had been granted to acquire permission to collect data from the high schools in their district (Appendix B). Once superintendents responded in writing giving consent to the study, principals were emailed the data collection form which was in an excel format (Appendix C). The data collection form included detailed instructions for the person responsible for collecting data to follow in order to accomplish this task. The researcher also called and emailed each participating school to explain the data collection procedure required for the study.

The data collector at each school followed the data collection procedures as explained by the researcher. The researcher asked the participants to complete the form

using data on the 2013 senior class at their school. The researcher required that the data collector not add the names of each student to the data form in the space provided. Each school was given a letter that was associated with them, and each student was identified by code such as A1, A2, or A3. No names were used in this study. The data collector next acquired participation lists of 2013 seniors from all coaches and sponsors who were responsible for extracurricular activities during the school year. Once all of the lists were acquired, the data collector entered race, gender, ACT score, GPA, absences, lunch status, and specific extracurricular activities that each student participated in onto the data collection form. Once each participating school completed the data collection form, all forms were emailed back to the researcher. The researcher regularly followed up with each participating school to verify the progress of all data collection. The researcher gave two \$50 gift cards to the principal and the participating data collector for use at their schools for their help in this data collection.

The researcher also distributed the Reed's Extracurricular Perception Instrument (Appendix D) to all teachers and administrators in the state using Qualtrics (Qualtrics, Provo, Utah) software. The researcher contacted all building principals in the state in an email to emphasize the importance of the study and the hopes that all administrators and teachers would take part in the survey. All data were collected at the building level compiled in Qualtrics (Qualtrics, Provo, Utah) for analyzing by the researcher. It was the hope of the researcher that all data requested from the campus were complete.

Data Analysis

Once all of the data were collected statistical relationships were determined using the designated variables of the study. Research questions 1 and 2 were analyzed by using a Pearson correlation to determine the statistical association between extracurricular participation and GPA, ACT, and attendance separately. Research question 3 was analyzed using a multiple regression where participation was the dependent variable and gender, race, and lunch status were independent variables. A Chi-square test was also utilized for statistically significant independent variables as well for the determination of independence of variables. Research question 4 was analyzed by evaluating the weight of responses to REPI. These responses offered descriptions of teacher and administrator responses to extracurricular participations effects on academics, attendance, and behavior. Hypotheses 1-3 were all analyzed using a multiple regression where GPA, ACT, and absences were dependent variables separately, and gender, race, and lunch statuses were independent variables. The variable of extracurricular participation was added to the independent variables then rerunning the regression in each of these cases to determine the change in variance. This technique of controlling for gender, race, and lunch offered a specific quantitative explanation as to how extracurricular participation impacts GPA, ACT, and absences. Survey methodology was also utilized to quantitatively analyze the responses to REPI. The analysis of the data was obtained through SPSS.

Summary

This study was designed to determine the relationship of participation in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance. The design of the study

allowed for several other factors to be analyzed as well including race, gender, and participation levels. It was the researcher's goal to uncover quantitative discoveries from statistical analysis of the collected data to unveil solid conclusions on participation. The researcher hoped to discover information that could offer understanding on what relationship participating in extracurricular activities had on student outcomes.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter includes a summary of the data analysis as it relates to relationships between participation in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance in select public high schools in Mississippi. Two types of data were collected in this study. The first data set consisted of gender, race, ACT scores, GPA, lunch status, and extracurricular participation for all students graduating in the class of 2013 for a select number of public schools in the state of Mississippi where all student names remained anonymous. Six schools originally consented to participate in this study, but four of them completed the excel data collection form submitted by the researcher. This data set consisted of 552 students from the consenting schools who participated.

The second data set were collected using Reed's Extracurricular Perception Instrument (REPI). The REPI consists of 8 demographic questions and 18 questions dealing with teacher and administrative perspectives of extracurricular activities as they relate to academics, attendance, and behavior. The survey was created and distributed by email through Qualtrics (Qualtrics, Provo, Utah), an online data analysis program. The data collected from both data sets were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS.

Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised of high school students, teachers, and administrators in the state of Mississippi during the school year of 2012-2013. Six schools consented to give anonymous data on their senior class of 2013 consisting of ACT scores, GPA, lunch status, attendance, and extracurricular participation. Four out of

the six schools returned completed data collection forms to the researcher with 552 seniors submitted from the responding schools. The REPI was emailed to schools throughout the state of Mississippi where the researcher's goal was to get all teachers and administrators to take participate. There were 491 total respondents to the instrument with a 45 day response time being allowed.

Descriptive Data on Participation

The 552 student data sets that were reported by four responding schools offered a variety of descriptive characteristics. There were 276 male and 276 female students reported. Of this group, 388 were Black, 156 were White, 7 Hispanic and 1 other. Also of the 552 data sets, 347 students had free lunch, 26 had reduced lunch, and 179 paid full price (Table 1).

Table 1

Frequency of Gender, Race, and Lunch Status

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	276	50
Male	276	50
Total	552	100
Race		
Black	388	70.3
Hispanic	7	1.3
Other	1	.2
White	156	28.3

Table 1 (continued).

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Total	552	10
Lunch Status		
Free	347	62.9
Full Price	179	32.4
Reduced	26	4.7
Total	552	100

Extracurricular activities in this study included archery, band, baseball, basketball, bowling, cheer, choral, cross country, dance, debate, drama, golf, football, power lifting, soccer, softball, speech, swimming, tennis, track and field, writing, and volleyball. There were a variety of participation levels indicated in the data set of 552 students as well. There were 342 students who did not participate in any extracurricular activities, 142 students who participated in one extracurricular activity, 49 students who participated in two extracurricular activities, 17 students who participated in three extracurricular activities, and two students participated in four extracurricular activities (Table 2).

Table 2

Frequency Participation Levels

Variable	Frequency	Percent
No Participation	342	62
1 Activity	142	25.7

Table 2 (continued).

Variable	Frequency	Percent
2 Activities	49	8.9
3 Activities	17	3.1
4 Activities	2	.4

The number of students participating in each extracurricular activity was described in the returned data as well. There were 69 in band, 23 in baseball, 27 in basketball, 16 in cheer, 15 in choir, 13 in cross country, 9 in dance, 4 in drama, 2 in golf, 70 in football, 2 in powerlifting, 7 in soccer, 4 in softball, 7 in tennis, 30 in track, and 1 in volleyball. Archery, bowling, debate, speech, swimming, and writing had no students participating based on the data received from the 4 responding schools (Table 3).

Table 3

Extracurricular Frequencies

Extracurricular	Responses (n)	Responses (%)	Percent of Cases
Archery	0	0	0
Band	69	23.1	32.9
Basketball	27	9	12.9
Bowling	0	0	0
Cheer	16	5.4	7.6
Choir	15	5.0	7.1
Cross Country	13	4.3	6.2

Table 3 (continued).

Extracurricular	Responses (n)	Responses (%)	Percent of Cases
Dance	9	3.0	4.3
Debate	0	0	0
Drama	4	1.3	1.9
Golf	2	0.7	1.0
Football	70	23.4	33.3
Powerlifting	2	0.7	1.0
Soccer	7	2.3	3.3
Softball	4	1.3	3.3
Speech	0	0	0
Swimming	0	0	0
Tennis	7	2.3	3.3
Track and Field	30	10	14.3
Volleyball	1	0.3	0.5
Writing	0	0	0
Total	299	100	142.4

Descriptive Data for REPI

This section presents demographic information for all respondents of the REPI. There were 491 respondents to the instrument that was distributed through email using Qualtrics (Qualtrics, Provo, Utah). There were 389 teachers, 95 administrators, and 7 missing responses for this question. There were 94 teachers with 0 to 5 years of

experience, 100 with 6 to 10 years of experience, 86 with 11 to 15 years of experience, 80 with 16 to 20 years of experience, 125 with 21 years of experience or more, and 6 missing responses. From these respondents there were 183 with a bachelors, 239 with a masters, 37 with a specialist. 22 with a doctorate, and 10 missing responses. The race of the respondents included 338 White, 127 Black, 3 Hispanic, 4 Asian, 5 other, and 14 missing responses. The respondents' gender included 208 male, 274 female, and 9 missing responses (Table 4).

Table 4

REPI Frequencies of Position, Years of Service, Degree, Race, and Gender

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Position		
Teacher	389	79.2
Administrator	95	19.3
Total	484	98.6
Missing	7	1.4
Years of Experience		
0 to 5	94	19.1
6 to 10	100	20.4
11 to 15	86	17.5
16 to 20	80	16.3
21 and above	125	25.5
Total	485	98.8
Missing	6	1.2

Table 4 (continued).

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Degree		
Bachelors	183	37.3
Masters	239	48.7
Specialist	37	7.5
Doctorate	22	4.5
Total	481	98.0
Missing	10	2.0
Race		
White	338	68.8
Black	127	25.9
Hispanic	3	.6
Asian	4	.8
Other	5	1.0
Total	477	97.1
Missing	14	2.9
Gender		
Male	208	42.4
Female	274	55.8
Total	482	98.2
Missing	491	100

There were a mixture of respondents from a variety of school sizes including 109 6A, 90 5A, 119 4A, 52 3A, 68 2A, 6 1A. Also in this data set there were a variety of school accountability levels represented by the responding teachers and administrators. There were 115 A schools, 123 B schools, 116 C schools, 87 D schools, 27 F schools, and 23 missing responses. The last descriptive that was collected consisted of the describing the respondents experience with extracurricular activities. 146 respondents were currently sponsors of extracurricular activities, 123 were formerly sponsors of extracurricular activities, and 212 never sponsored an extracurricular activity (Table 5).

Table 5

Frequencies of School Sizes, School Accountability, and Extracurricular Background

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
School Sizes		
6A	109	22.2
5A	90	18.3
4A	119	24.2
3A	52	10.6
2A	68	13.8
1A	29	5.9
Total	467	95.1
Missing	9	1.8

Table 5 (continued).

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
School Accountability		
A	115	23.4
B	123	25.1
C	116	23.6
D	87	17.7
F	27	5.5
Total	468	95.3
Missing	23	4.7
Extracurricular Background		
Current Sponsor	146	29.7
Former Sponsor	123	25.1
Never Been a Sponsor	212	43.2
Total	481	98.0
Missing	10	2.0

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This section of analysis will focus on the quantitative results from analyzing relationships between extracurricular participation, ACT scores, GPA, lunch status, and attendance. A more specific outlook on these discoveries will be to analyze the relationship between ACT scores, GPA, and lunch statuses while controlling for gender, race, and attendance. The following analysis will describe quantitative relationships of

each originally stated research question from data gained from the data collection form as well as the REPI.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asked, “Is there a relationship between participating in extracurricular activities, GPA, and ACT scores?” The data received from the consenting schools allowed the researcher to run a Pearson correlation analysis between students who participated in extracurricular activities and those who did not participate with respect to GPA and ACT scores. Of the 552 students reported the analysis between participation and GPA resulted in a Pearson Correlation of .320 with $p \leq .001$. The analysis between participation and ACT resulted in a Pearson Correlation of .319 with a $p \leq .001$ also. These significance levels indicate that there were positive relationships between the correlations of participants with respect to GPA and ACT scores.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 asked “Is there a relationship between participating in extracurricular activities and student attendance?” The data collected from the consenting schools in this study were also used for this analysis to run a Pearson correlation analysis between students that participated in extracurricular activities and those who did not participate with respect to attendance. Of the 552 students reported the analysis between participation and attendance resulted in a Pearson Correlation of -.343 with $p \leq .001$. The negative correlations infers that participation in extracurricular activities is associated with a decrease in absences.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 asked, “Is there a relationship between participating in extracurricular activities, gender, race, and lunch status?” This analysis of the data utilized a regression with the number of extracurricular activities designated as the dependent variable gender, race, and lunch status were entered as independent variables. This regression indicated that the dependent variable (extracurricular activities) can be explained by the independent variables (gender, race, and lunch status) with $R^2 = .052$, $F(3, 540) = 9.957$, $p \leq .001$. It was found that gender significantly predicted extracurricular participation ($\beta = .135$, $p = .001$), as did race ($\beta = .218$, $p \leq .001$). According to the regression output lunch status did not deliver a significant predictor for the independent variable extracurricular activities (Table 6).

Table 6

Regression Table between Extracurricular Activities (Dependent Variable) and Independent Variables Gender, Race, and Lunch Status

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Sig
Gender	.132	.073	.135	3.231	$\leq .001$
Race	.234	.055	.218	4.296	$\leq .001$
Lunch Status	-.093	.051	-.092	-1.812	.071

Notes: $R^2 = .052$ ($p \leq .001$)

A Chi-square test was initiated to compare associations between genders with extracurricular activities. The relationship between these two variables was significant where males participated more. More results of the Chi-square test and descriptive statistics for extracurricular participation by gender were illustrated below (Table 7).

Table 7

Results of Chi-square Test and Descriptive Statistics for Extracurricular Participation by Gender

Extracurricular Participation	Female	Male
Did Not Participate	189(68.5%)	153(55.4%)
Participated	87(31.5%)	123(44.6%)

Note. $\chi^2(1, N = 552) = 9.961, p = .002$.

A Chi-square test was also initiated to compare associations between races with extracurricular activities. The relationship between these variables was significant as well where more Black students participated in this sample. More results of the Chi-square test and descriptive statistics for extracurricular participation by gender was illustrated below (Table 8).

Table 8

Results of Chi-square Test and Descriptive Statistics for Extracurricular Participation by Race

Extracurricular Participation	White	Black
Did Not Participate	116(74.4%)	219(56.4%)
Participated	40(25.6%)	169(43.6%)

Note. $\chi^2(1, N = 544) = 15.095, p \leq .001$.

Research Question 4

Research question 4 asked “What is the perception of administrators and teachers relative to participation in extracurricular activities and student academic achievement,

student attendance, and student behavior?” This data were collected by way of the REPI created by the researcher where 491 respondents participated. The instrument was divided into three sections, academics, attendance, and behavior. Each question’s responses ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. There were very consistent findings from each of these questions. These findings did factor in all missing responses into the percentages. A description and summary of the responses follows below as well as a detailed look at the hypotheses that correspond with this research question.

Questions 1 through 6 focused on academics, and the following highest percentages were discovered. Question 1 asked if participation in extracurricular activities positively affected student test scores where 42.6% of the respondents agreed and 27.5% strongly agreed. Question 2 asked if participation in athletics positively affected test scores where 42.2% agreed and 22.6% strongly agreed. Question 3 asked if participation in non-athletic programs positively affected test scores where 46.4 agreed and 21% strongly agreed. Question 4 under academics asked if participation in extracurricular activities positively affected student grades where 51.4% agreed and 26.5% strongly agreed. Question 5 asked if participation in athletics positively affects student grades where 46% agreed and 25.3% strongly agreed. Lastly, question 6 asked if participation in non-athletics positively affected student grades where 47.9% agreed and 22.2% strongly agreed (Table 9).

Table 9

Means and Standard Deviations of Questions on Academics

Questions	Mean	SD
EA positively affected grades	3.99	.88

Table 9 (continued).

Questions	Mean	SD
EA positively affected tests scores	3.89	.98
Non-athletics positively affected grades	3.86	.89
Athletics positively affected grades	3.85	1.03
Non-athletics positively affected test scores	3.84	.88
Athletics positively affected test scores	3.71	1.05

Note: One is Strongly Disagree and five is Strongly Agree

Questions 7 through 12 concentrated on educators' perceptions of how extracurricular activities related to student attendance. Question 7 asked if participating in extracurricular activities positively affected student attendance where 48.8% agreed and 32.8 strongly agreed. Question 8 inquired if participating in athletics positively affected student attendance where 45.2% agreed and 37.1% strongly agreed. Question 9 asked if participating in non-athletic programs positively affected student attendance where 47% agreed and 24.4% strongly agreed. Question 10 continued to ask if participating in extracurricular activities positively affected student tardiness where 38.3% agreed, 22.2% where neutral, and 17.1% strongly agreed. Question 11 asked if participating in athletic programs positively affected student tardiness where 34.8% agreed, 21.2% where neutral, and 17.9% strongly agreed. Question 12 finally asked if participating in non-athletic programs positively affected student tardiness where 32.4% agreed, 30.5 were neutral, and 16.7% disagreed (Table 10).

Table 10

Means and Standard Deviations of Questions on Attendance

Questions	Mean	SD
Athletics positively affected student attendance	4.11	.98
EA positively affected student attendance	4.08	.93
Non-athletics positively affected student attendance	3.87	.96
EA positively affected tardiness	3.52	1.08
Athletics positively affected tardiness	3.47	1.13
Non-athletics positively affected tardiness	3.36	1.04

Note: One is Strongly Disagree, and five is Strongly Agree

The last set of questions of REPI focused on student behavior. Question 13 inquired if participation in extracurricular activities positively affected student behavior where 53% agreed and 27.3% strongly agreed. Question 14 probed to determine if participation in athletics positively affected student behavior where 47.9% agreed and 30.3% strongly agreed. Question 15 asked if participation in non-athletic programs positively affected student behavior where 49.7% agreed, 22.2% strongly agreed, and 16.5% were neutral. Question 16 asked if participation in extracurricular activities reduced student behavior referrals where 51.9% agreed and 26.1% strongly agreed. Question 17 asked if participating in athletic programs reduced student behavior referrals where 45.6% agree and 31% strongly agreed. Finally question 18 asked if non-athletic programs reduced

student behavior referrals where 47.5% agreed, 22% strongly agreed, and 17.3% were neutral (Table 11).

Table 11

Means and Standard Deviations of Questions on Behavior

Questions	Mean	SD
EA positively affected student behavior	4.03	.85
Athletics positively affected student behavior	3.99	.99
Athletics reduced student behavior referrals	3.99	.98
EA reduced student behavior referrals	3.99	.88
Non-athletics positively affected student behavior	3.88	.90
Non-athletics reduced student behavior referrals	3.83	.94

Note: One is Strongly Disagree, and five is Strongly Agree

The REPI offered a view on the perceptions of all respondents on the relationship of extracurricular participation, academics, attendance, and behaviors. The preceding tables gave an illustration of how each question was interpreted. Finding the mean of the responses from the sections of academics, attendance, and behavior was also offered from the data set (Table 12).

Table 12

Means and Standard Deviation of Responses from Sections of REPI

Section	Mean	SD
Behavior	3.94	.79

Table 12 (continued).

Section	Mean	SD
Academics	3.85	.82
Attendance	3.73	.85

Note: One is Strongly Disagree, and five is Strongly Agree

Even more interesting data was collected from the REPI observing responses between administrators and teachers. These responses were organized with respect to academics, attendance, and behaviors. A t-test was performed on the difference between responses from administrators and teachers. The section on academics showed there was a significant difference in the responses between teachers ($M = 3.80$, $SD = .85$) and administrators ($M = 4.06$, $SD = .67$); $t(476) = -2.75$, $p = .005$. The section on attendance also showed a significant difference in the responses between teachers ($M = 3.68$, $SD = .87$) and administrators ($M = 3.95$, $SD = .71$); $t(476) = -2.87$, $p = .004$. The last section on behaviors too showed a significant difference in the responses between teachers ($M = 3.88$, $SD = .83$) and administrators ($M = 4.21$, $SD = .58$); $t(476) = -3.72$, $p < .001$. All of these results suggest that administrators have a stronger view on how extracurricular activities relate to academics, attendance, and behavior than teachers.

H₁. It was hypothesized that there would be a significant relationship between GPA and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. A regression analysis was run on these variables where GPA was the dependent variable, and gender, race, and lunch status were added first as independent variables. Extracurricular activities were then added to the equation as independent

variables as a way to control for gender, race, and lunch status. This regression indicated that GPA can be explained by the independent variables with $R^2 = .311$, $F(4, 539) = 60.965$, $p < .001$. Once gender, race, and lunch status were controlled, extracurricular activities added a significant amount of explained variance [$R^2_{\text{change}} = .158$, $F(1,539) = 124.028$, $p < .001$]. This technique was utilized to determine the relationship between extracurricular activities and GPA while controlling for gender, race and lunch status (Table 13).

Table 13

Regression Table between GPA (Dependent Variable) and Independent Variables Gender, Race, Lunch Status, and Extracurricular Activities

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Sig
Gender	-.383	.053	-.261	-7.219	$\leq .001$
Race	-.493	.072	-.303	-6.891	$\leq .001$
Lunch Status	-.191	.066	-.126	-2.893	.004
Extracurricular	.618	.055	.409	11.137	$\leq .001$

H₂. It was hypothesized also that there would be a significant relationship between ACT and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. A regression analysis was run on these variables where ACT was the dependent variable and gender, race, lunch status were added first, and then extracurricular activities was added to the equation. This regression indicated that ACT could be explained by all the independent variables with $R^2 = .247$, $F(4, 539) = 44.183$, $p \leq .001$ (Table 14). Once gender, race, and lunch status were controlled, extracurricular

activities added a significant amount of explained variance [$R^2_{\text{change}} = .138$, $F(1,539) = 98.551$, $p \leq .001$]. This technique was utilized to determine the relationship between extracurricular activities and GPA while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status.

Table 14

Regression Table between ACT (Dependent Variable) and Independent Variables Gender, Race, Lunch Status, and Extracurricular Activities

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Sig
Gender	-2.417	.667	-.137	-3.624	$\leq .001$
Race	-5.595	.899	-.287	-6.222	$\leq .001$
Lunch Status	-2.242	.830	-.123	-2.700	.007
Extracurricular	6.920	.697	.381	9.925	$\leq .001$

H₃. It was hypothesized lastly that there would be a significant relationship between absences and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. A regression analysis was run on these variables where absences was the dependent variable and gender, race, lunch status were entered first, and then extracurricular activities were added to the equation. This regression indicated that attendance can be explained by all independent variables with $R^2 = .161$, $F(4, 539) = 25.828$, $p \leq .001$. (Table 15). Once gender, race, and lunch status were controlled, extracurricular activities added significant explained variance [$R^2_{\text{change}} = .094$, $F(1,539) = 60.383$, $p \leq .001$]. This technique was utilized to determine the relationship between extracurricular activities and absences while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status.

Table 15

Regression Table between Absences (Dependent Variable) and Independent Variables Gender, Race, Lunch Status, and Extracurricular Activities

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Sig
Gender	1.099	.786	.056	1.398	.163
Race	-5.255	1.060	-.241	-4.957	$\leq .001$
Lunch Status	2.205	.979	.108	2.252	.025
Extracurricular	-6.388	.822	-.315	-7.771	$\leq .001$

Summary

This analysis of data provided a variety of statistical results that explain the outcomes of the study. The population and sample of the research was clearly described first. Next, illustrations of the descriptive data on participation were defined as well as descriptive data from the REPI. The last inquiry that was presented were statistical results of all research questions and hypotheses. Analyzing Research Question 1, the researcher determined that there was a noteworthy relationship between participating in extracurricular activities, GPA, and ACT scores. Investigating Research Question 2, the researcher determined that there is a considerable positive relationship between participating in extracurricular activities and student attendance also. Exploring Research Question 3, the researcher determined that there was a significant positive relationship among participating in extracurricular activities, gender, and race. Lunch status did not show a statistical positive relationship.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The results of this study offered informative points on how participation in extracurricular activities, while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status, influenced ACT scores, GPA, and attendance. School leaders attempted to make data driven decisions that improve student outcomes on a consistent basis. Significant relationships that were analyzed can allow educational leaders to make the appropriate resolutions pertaining to funding and support of influential programs. There were also useful perceptions offered from educators in Mississippi about how extracurricular activities impacted academics, attendance, and behavior. This chapter included a review of the problem, purpose of the study, summary of findings, limitations, recommendations for future research, and discussion and conclusions.

Review of Problem

The problem this study addressed was the determination if there was a relationship between participation in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance while controlling for race, gender, and lunch status. Limited resources have forced districts to be selective in the offering of certain school sponsored activities. The focal point was to determine if participation in extracurricular activities was in the students' best interest based on data collected from select public high schools in Mississippi. The researcher suggested, initially based on literature, that there were informative relationships between participation in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance.

Students involved in a variety of extracurricular programs tend to fare better than those who do not participate or participate at low-levels (Bohnert et al., 2010). According to Feldman and Matjasko (2005), school-based structured extracurricular participation in contrast to participation in unstructured activities were associated with positive adolescent developmental outcomes. Feldman and Matjasko also discovered that there was a positive relationship between higher academic performance, reduced dropout rates, lower substance abuse rates, less sexual activity among girls, better psychological adjustment, and reduced rates of delinquent behaviors when participating in extracurricular activities. Kort-Butler and Hagewen (2011) continued to describe how those who participated in school-based extracurricular programs had higher initial levels of self-esteem compared to those who did not participate. With this literature as a basis, it was the aim of the research to further address the problem of cutting effective extracurricular programs because of the reduction of budgets and to provide data that explain the strength of participation for educational leadership decision making purposes.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship of participating in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance in select public high schools in Mississippi while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. The results of this study suggested the relevance of determining the impact of many programs throughout the state as budgets were developed. The researcher also collected perceptions from secondary educators in the state of Mississippi at the building level with respects to participating in extracurricular activities. This data provided valuable information that

could drive decision-making for school leaders as it related to school funding and the importance of extracurricular programs.

Summary of Findings

Two types of data sets were collected from this study. One data set came from four Mississippi high schools that consented to give anonymous data on their senior class of 2013 which included gender, race, lunch status, absences, ACT scores, and GPA. There were a total of 552 respondents included in the four-school data collection. These data were put into SPSS where Pearson correlations, Chi-square statistics, and multiple regressions were utilized to quantify the results. The other set of data was obtained through the administration of Reed's Extracurricular Perception Instrument (REPI), a researcher-developed survey. The survey's goal was to acquire educators' perceptions on extracurricular participation with respect to academics, attendance, and behavior. The survey was dispersed using Qualtrics (Qualtrics, Provo, Utah) to the email of secondary educators throughout the state of Mississippi, and there were 491 respondents. These data were also entered into SPSS where descriptive statistics were gathered on the respondents and means were calculated for each question. The descriptive data revealed the characteristics of the respondents where the means of the questions allowed the researcher to determine the strength of the perception of each respondent.

Major Findings

An analysis of the data collected from the four consenting high schools in the study and an analysis of the data collected from the REPI were conducted with an alpha level of .05. Research questions 1 to 3 addressed the relationship of participation between ACT, GPA, gender, race, and lunch status. Research question 4 responded to

the data analyzed from REPI that explained discernments of educators as determined by extracurricular participations. There also were three Hypotheses that were measured by way of a multiple regression that addressed the relationship of extracurricular participation and GPA, ACT, absences while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status.

Research Question 1

“Is there a relationship between participating in extracurricular activities, GPA, and ACT scores?” After comparing a Pearson correlation between students who participated in extracurricular activities with students who did not, there showed a statistically significant difference between the two groups. Students who participated in extracurricular activities had a higher GPA than students who did not participate. Students who participated in extracurricular activities had higher ACT scores as well. These findings were directly related to Feldman and Matjasko’s (2007) conclusion that individuals involved in extracurricular activities during high school were more likely to have higher GPA’s. Other literature that supported the researcher’s findings determined the benefits of extracurricular activity when cumulative GPA’, standardized test scores in mathematics, and standardized test scores in English/Language Arts of students involved in extracurricular activities were superior to students who were non-participants (Zwart, 2006). Students who gained the opportunity to be influenced by another meaningful adult figure took away valuable influences that affects their personal and academic life. Not only does this correspond with the current literature that was presented in this study, but it also parallels the theoretical findings that promote student centered learning as well as offering engaging learning experiences as strong academic components for success.

Research Question 2

“Is there a relationship between participating in extracurricular activities and student attendance?” The data that were collected for this research question also utilized a Pearson correlation with students who participated in extracurricular activities versus students who did not participate. Students who participated in extracurricular activities showed a significant decrease in absences as compared to the students who did not participate. Students who participate in extracurricular activities were held to certain attendance requirements thus explaining this strong relationship. It was speculated by the researcher that the influence of the extracurricular sponsor once again factors greatly into the students strong attendance. When students attended school regularly they were in class gaining valuable opportunities for academic success. These findings paralleled Lipscomb (2007) who suggested that extracurricular activities positively affected school attendance and resulted in students being in class doing the things that would influence success. Reeves (2008) also stated that there is a strong association between student involvement in extracurricular activities and improved attendance.

Research Question 3

“Is there a relationship between participating in extracurricular activities, gender, race, and lunch status?” After utilizing a multiple regression on these variables, it was determined that gender and race showed a statistical difference with respect to participation when comparing students who participated to students who did not participate. A significantly larger number of males participated in extracurricular activities than females. The data set included a high number of participants in male dominated programs, football and baseball. Utilizing a larger and more diverse data set

might have offered a more meaning result to this measurement although the amount of participants in male dominated sports often outnumbered their female counterparts

There were significantly more Black students who participated than any other group as well. However, this finding is not surprising considering the racial composition of the participating schools. The percentage of Black students in the participating schools were 92%, 30%, 100%, and 46% where school size is listed in descending order by percentage. The percentage of Black students who participated in extracurricular activities were 99%, 33%, 100%, and 42% respectively to the overall school composition. The participation rates were very closely related to the overall demographics of each school. These statistics also illustrated how the large number of Black students in the larger schools initiated significant findings when performing a regression analysis for measuring how race related to extracurricular participation. Also extending this study with a larger data set that include additional students with a more diverse group of extracurricular participants would offer more noteworthy results that could possibly corresponds with the literature that has been discussed. Casserly et al., (2012) emphasized how important it was for Black males to have full access to high-quality instruction during the school day as well as ample opportunities for out-of-school enrichment.

Finally, the lunch status variable which was used to make discoveries pertaining to how socioeconomic status relates to extracurricular participation indicated no statistically significant difference within the multiple regression. There were a variety of lunch statuses submitted within this data, and this finding inferred that students from different socioeconomic backgrounds had similar participation levels. This finding

opposed the theory of Gager and White (2007) that students of lower economic status were less likely to participate in extracurricular activities because of the lack of financial support.

Research Question 4

“What is the perception of administrators and teachers relative to participation in extracurricular activities and student academic achievement, student attendance, and student behaviors?” This research question was measured by the REPI, which measured perceptions on academics, attendance, and behavior. The data revealed that participants held positive perceptions in all three areas.

Teachers and administrators who participated in the study responded favorably that participation in extracurricular activities positively influenced student achievement. Specifically educators agreed that participation in extracurricular activities positively affected grades and test scores. These findings are supported by researchers such as Knifsend and Graham (2011) who found that participating in a moderate number of different types of activities may be optimal for helping adolescents feel connected to their school and do well academically. Students who are connected, engaged, and involved in the high school experience show strong evidence for excelling in the classroom and on standardized tests.

Results from the survey portion of the study also affirmed that teachers and administrators perceived a positive connection between participation in extracurricular activities and attendance. These findings were similar to the work of Daugherty (2008) which confirmed that academic achievement was raised by improving attendance of those students who would normally had a high rate of absenteeism. Daugherty continued to

contend that students who regularly attend school are less likely to fail high-stakes tests. Students who were involved in extracurricular activities usually have an attendance requirement in place in order for them to participate which suggested that attendance can be improved significantly just by participating. Once students attended school more regularly then they have a greater opportunity for increased learning.

Additionally, respondents in this study perceived a strong relationship between participating in extracurricular activities and student behavior. These results were consistent with the literature that recognizes the positive effects of participation in extracurricular activities with respect to student behavior and number of student referrals for misconduct. Durlak and Weissberg (2007) suggested that students who spent time outside class involved with organized and constructive programs were more likely to exhibit positive behaviors. More literature that corresponded to these findings stated that participation in extracurricular activities promoted positive activities and decreased involvement with felonious peers or others whose activities promote problematic behavior (Dotterer et al., 2007). The steadfast theme that the three components of the survey instrument share is that student association with an influential adult has a strong impact on student outcomes. It was lastly noticed that behavior showed the most favorable responses when compared to attendance and academics as to how extracurricular participation is positively affected.

Hypothesis 1

H₁: There was a significant relationship between GPA and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. Based on the statistical analysis that took place with the collected data from the four school data

set, there was a significant relationship between GPA and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. Extracurricular participation explained a significant percentage of what positively affected GPA. This conclusion took out gender, race, and lunch status as variables and measures how extracurricular activities affect GPA. This finding made it very important to promote extracurricular participation in hopes of adding value to students' academic achievement as measured by GPA.

Hypothesis 2

H₂: There was a significant relationship between ACT and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. Based on the statistical analysis that took place with the collected data from the four school data set, there was a significant relationship between ACT and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. Extracurricular participation also explained a significant percentage of what positively affected ACT. This conclusion took out gender, race, and lunch status as variables and measures how extracurricular activities affect ACT scores. ACT scores appeared to show the largest effects as a result of extracurricular participation. This conclusion would also make it essential to increase the number students who participate within a secondary school setting in order to see meaningful increases to the students' ACT scores.

Hypothesis 3

H₃: There was a significant relationship between attendance and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status. Based on the statistical analysis that took place with the collected data from the four school data

set, there was a significant relationship between absences and participation in extracurricular activities while controlling for gender, race, and lunch status.

Extracurricular participation continued to explain a substantial portion of what positively affected student absences. This conclusion took out gender, race, and lunch status as variables and measures how extracurricular activities affect student absences. This supposition demonstrated once again how developing an environment driven by strong extracurricular participation levels would offer improved attendance levels, thus offering increased achievement levels.

Limitation

The following limitations were identified as possible restrictions in the research method for this study:

1. The study relied on data collected from consenting schools on students who graduated in the senior class of 2013 (archival data). The researcher had no assurance given that all of the information reported was precise.
2. The study also relied on a survey that was distributed electronically and has no assurance given that the participants answered questions as accurately as possible.
3. The survey was limited to secondary administrators and teachers in the state of Mississippi, and the data set consisted of only four consenting high schools in the state. There were adequate data received but were relatively small when comparing to the entire state of Mississippi.
4. Extracurricular activities were limited to those that are defined by the Mississippi High School Activities Association.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendation for future research can be made:

1. Future research that can expand the scope of the study including more schools thus offering more respondents. This expanded study should include additional data from diverse schools and further representatives from every extracurricular activity.
2. Future research could also compare the funding of extracurricular activities along with all of the current variables. This would offer a comparison on how certain kinds of funding philosophies compare to one another.
3. Future research could too be done on the perspectives of central office staff and school board members to see how they view these same variables.
4. Future research could also be done on comparing attendance of extracurricular participants during season and out of season along with all of the other variables listed in the study.

Discussion and Conclusions

It was the researcher's aim to analyze the relationships between extracurricular participation, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance in select public high schools in Mississippi. The researcher aspired to discover meaningful conclusions that can offer important contributions to decisions that were made in regard to the funding and implementation of extracurricular activities in public secondary schools in Mississippi. Expanding the discussion of the problem associated with this study and each research question was the goal of this section.

The researcher found significant relationships between extracurricular participation, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance in select public high schools in Mississippi. Even though resources were limited because of budgetary issues in many districts, the results of this study showed that students who participated in extracurricular activities revealed important differences in ACT scores, GPA, and attendance. What was even more significant was the technique of controlling for the variables gender, race, lunch status (socioeconomic status) that have commonly been recognized as being influential to certain outcomes. Scholarship similar to Feldman and Matjasko (2005) suggested that school-based structured extracurricular participation in contrast to participation in unstructured activities were associated with positive adolescent developmental outcomes were the basis of the researcher's hypotheses. The researcher's results positively corresponded to the conjectures presented from the literature. These positive outcomes served the purpose of the researcher to offer evidence to school leaders as to how participating in extracurricular activities influence student ACT scores, GPA, and attendance.

From the results of the study the researcher offered significant evidence that extracurricular participation positively affected ACT scores and GPA. The American College Test (ACT, n.d.) emphasized how strong relationships between teachers and students were the largest predictor to student achievement. This literature offered support as to why participation affected these important variables within a secondary school environment. More literature by Aikens (2013) described how young people actively seek ways of achieving their goals and how students thrive when exposed to positive language, acts, people, and role models. This view also presented the researchers point

that participation influenced students in a manner that would offer increased academic outcomes. Another study illustrated how attachment to teachers, school involvement, attachment to school, and school commitment were all correlated to positive achievement results (Bryan et al., 2012). The researcher's results continued to expose corresponding views as the literature previously presented. The generalized conclusion drawn from this data was that students who participate in extracurricular activities are offered the opportunity to be around other influential adults who can positively impact academic achievement.

The results of the study also offered significant evidence that extracurricular participation positively affected student attendance. Students who participated in extracurricular activities had statistically substantially lower absences than students who did not participate. Walker and Educational Partnerships (2007) suggested that many students do not attend school because of boredom in classes, the work is too easy, or no strong relationships in the learning environment. This literature once again expounded on the benefit of students having increased opportunity to associate with positive adults. The researcher found more literature that supported a theory which stated that students who were connected with their teachers and thought school was a safe learner friendly environment were more comfortable with coming to school (Wilkins, 2008). The researcher discovered that school attendance was a vital variable in improving student achievement. Academic achievement might be raised by improving attendance of those students who would normally have a high rate of absenteeism (Daugherty, 2008). This literature supported the researcher's advocacy of extracurricular participation and its positive influence on absenteeism, thus, improving student achievement. Conversely,

academic success could be unfavorably affected by a lack of attendance in which grade point average (GPA), test scores, quizzes, and even the ability to complete homework could suffer (Spencer, 2009). This literature view stated, as viewed by the researcher, how important improved attendance is to student outcomes. Similarly as academics, students who participate in extracurricular activities were associated with a role model who can positively influence a student's attendance and ultimately impact student achievement.

Gender and race were other variables that showed positive relationships with participating in extracurricular activities where socioeconomic status did not. Although the data set was heavily male and Black, the researcher was guided by the literature of many including Casserly et al., (2012) who emphasized how important it was for Black males to have full access to high-quality instruction during the school day as well as bounteous opportunities for out-of-school enrichment. These researchers also suggested that they need to engage not only schools and teachers, but also parents, social service agencies, and communities to create a wide network of people and institutions ready to intervene and support them. This literature explained how Black males can be impacted by participating in an extracurricular activity. This conclusion continued to support the need to expose students to extra adult support systems that further influence their overall development. Gardner et al., (2009) found that the prospect of non-violent delinquency among boys who participate in sports was lower than for boys who do not participate in extracurricular activities after adjusting for race, family structure, parental education, and prior nonviolent problem behavior and physical violence. This set of literature supported the researcher's conclusion of extracurricular participation positively relating to gender

and race. The researcher contends that a larger and diverse data set would offer even more insightful conclusions that share the views of the literature.

The literature continued to show meaningful relationships socioeconomic status and extracurricular participation. Gager and White (2007) concluded that students of lower economic status were less likely to participate in extracurricular activities because of the absence of financial support. The variable of lunch statuses which was used to represent economic status did not show a significant difference with respect to student participation in this study. However, literature stated that students with high socioeconomic statuses reported the strongest academic performance and highest extracurricular activities participation (Wormington et al., 2012). Finances and transportation issues barring student participation may cause the missing of opportunities that could boost their future options (Logan & Scarborough, 2008). The data set used by the researcher did not offer the same results as the literature, but there was some viable credibility to the scholarship that was discovered. The overall inference offered by the researcher based on the limited data set was that extracurricular participation added value to students by race and gender, but did not influence student outcomes based on lunch statuses.

Teachers and administrators responded similarly as the researcher hypothesized where extracurricular participation positively related to ACT scores, GPA, attendance, and behavior. ACT scores, GPA, and attendance were collected from the data of the four participating high schools, but behavior was analyzed from the perceptions gathered from the educators who responded to the REPI. The analysis of the REPI showed that educators perceived behavior to be most influenced by extracurricular participation when

compared to attendance and academics. These results concluded that there was some value added to improving student behavior when participating in extracurricular activities. Research has shown that participating in after-school activities made students less likely to partake in at risk behavior (Linville & Huebner, 2005). More literature by Durlak and Weissburg (2007) concluded that the students who participate in extracurricular activities showed evidence of improved academic, social, personal, and recreational development. Reeves (2008) also stated that there is a strong association between student involvement in extracurricular activities and improved attendance, behavior, and academic performance. These consistent views coincided with the perceptions of educators and the added value of participating in extracurricular activities. This conclusion also built upon the increased view of the power of adult intervention in the overall achievement of students.

Summary

The goal of analyzing the relationships between participation in extracurricular activities, ACT scores, GPA, and attendance in select public high schools in Mississippi was accomplished. The purpose of these results were to enlighten educational leaders about the true value of these programs where preservation of them with the least disruption seemed to be highly valuable. Literature supported the promotion of extracurricular participation for a variety of reasons, and it has been strongly discovered that these programs offered the opportunity of added adult relationships that were instrumental to the motivational process of students. Improving ACT scores, GPA, and attendance were paramount to creating an affluent learning environment as was illustrated in this study. Based on educator perceptions, positively affecting student

behavior because of extracurricular participation was another strong factor that contribute to developing an improved academic culture. With an enriched awareness of the value of these programs, district-level leaders could be more knowledgeable as to how to allocate funds for the benefit of the learner. These findings would suggest to building-level administrators and teachers to encourage extracurricular participation for all students in order to increase the level of interactions with positive adult figures, thus, improving the opportunity to excel academically and socially.

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

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NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months.
Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 14020602

PROJECT TITLE: Relationships between Participation in Extracurricular Activities, ACT Scores and Attendance in Select Public High Schools In Mississippi

PROJECT TYPE: New Project

RESEARCHER(S): Lance Reed

COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education and Psychology

DEPARTMENT: Educational Leadership and Counseling

FUNDING AGENCY/SPONSOR: N/A

IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Expedited Review Approval

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 02/06/2014 to 02/05/2015

Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER TO ENSURE INFORMED CONSENT
Cover Letter/Consent

Dear Participant:

My name is Lance K. Reed. I am a Doctoral student at The University of Southern Mississippi in the Department of Educational Leadership under the supervision of Dr. Thelma Roberson. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: **RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, ACT SCORES, AND ATTENDANCE** in select Mississippi high schools.

The purpose of this study is to discover the relationships of participation in extracurricular activities on student achievement and student attendance. This study will use accurate but anonymous data on the senior class of 2013 including ACT scores, GPA, race, gender, lunch status, and absences. Students will be identified accordingly by the extracurricular activities that they participated in during the 2012-2013 school year. This anonymous data along with the completion of a survey by all teachers and administrators will offer a tremendous amount of insight on this topic.

The following study's survey was developed to ask you a few questions regarding participating in extracurricular activities. It is my hope that this information can indicate the degree that participation in extracurricular activities has on student achievement, student attendance, and school behavior. This can in turn give informative data on the future investments into these extracurricular programs within school districts. There are no identified risks from participating in this research.

The data collection form included in this document will be sent to the building level administrator where an assigned person will complete with the proper information. The researcher will provide clear data collection procedures and will hope that all input is as accurate as possible. Two \$50 gift cards will be provided to each school that participates.

To insure safe and proper research procedures, auditors of the Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board and regulatory authority will be granted direct access to the research data without violating the confidentiality of the participants. Further information regarding the research can be obtained from Lance K. Reed (lanreed@natchez.k12.ms.us) or my faculty committee chairman Dr. Thelma Roberson (Thelma.Roberson@usm.edu or 601-266-4579). If you wish further information regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board Administrator, Dr. Betty Ann Morgan, Administrator, betty.morgan@usm.edu, (601) 266-6820.

If you would like to know the results of this research, contact Lance K. Reed (lanreed@natchez.k12.ms.us). Thank you for your consideration. Your help is greatly appreciated.

If you agree, kindly submit a signed letter of permission on your institution's letterhead acknowledging your consent and permission for me to conduct this study in your district.

Sincerely,

Lance K. Reed, University of Southern Mississippi

APPENDIX C

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR
ACTIVITIES, ACT SCORES, GPA, AND ATTENDANCE IN SELECT PUBLIC HIGH
SCHOOLS IN MISSISSIPPI

Data Entry Form

Directions: Please complete the following form using data from the 2013 senior class at your school. The researcher requires that the participating school first adds the names of each student to the data form in the space provided. The counselor should next get lists of 2013 seniors from all coaches and sponsors who participated in extracurricular activities during the school year. Once all of the lists have been acquired the participant should complete the data form with the requested information.

A description of each column will be given below:

Student name – The name of each student from the senior class of 2013 will be placed in this column.

Gender – The gender of each student will be placed in this column. Use M (male) or F (female) in the space.

Race – The race of each student will be placed in this column Use W(white), B(Black), H(Hispanic), A(Asian), or O(Other)

ACT – The ACT score of each student will be placed in this column. If the student did not take the ACT please put NA in this column.

GPA – The GPA of each student will be placed in this column.

Absences – The number of absences of each student will be placed in this column.

Lunch status – Each student will be listed as either F(Free), R(Reduced) or NA(Full Price)

Extracurricular Activities – Please list all extracurricular activities that each student participates in from the given list of activities. archery, band, baseball, basketball, bowling, cheer, choral, cross country, dance, debate, drama, golf, football, power lifting, soccer, softball, speech, swimming, tennis, track and field, volleyball, and writing. The suggested abbreviations for this section are arch, ban, bb, baskb, bow, che, chor, cc, dan, deb, go, fb, pl, soc, sftb, spe, swi, ten, tf, vol, and writing. Place an NA in the column for those students who do not participate in any extracurricular activities.

Student Name	Gender	Race	ACT	GPA	Absences	Lunch status	Extracurricular Participation

Once all of the data is complete, please input all data into an electronic data base given by the researcher or return the hard copy after removing the student name column. Thanks for your help.

APPENDIX D

REED'S EXTRACURRICULAR PERCEPTION INSTRUMENT

This survey is designed to evaluate the perceptions of teachers and administrators as related to students who participate in extracurricular activities.

Please complete each of the questions below by placing a check mark in the blank.

Section: 1 Personal Information

1. Position Teacher
 Administration

2. Years of experience 0 to 5 years
 6 to 10 years
 11 to 15 years
 16 to 20 years
 21 or more years

3. Highest degree Bachelors
 Masters
 Specialist
 Doctorate

4. Race White
 Black
 Hispanic
 Asian
 Other

5. Gender Male
 Female

6. School size 6a 5a 4a
 3a 2a 1a

7. School's 2012-13 State Accountability Rating

 A B C D F

8. Please choose one of the following that best describes you.
 Presently a coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity.
 Formerly a coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity.
 Never coached or sponsored an extracurricular activity.

Section 2 (Academics 1-6, Attendance 7-12, Behavior 13-18)

Please answer each response below using the criteria given.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Neither Agree nor Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

Use the below definitions to answer questions about athletics and non-athletics.

Athletics -archery, baseball, basketball, bowling, cross country, golf, football, power lifting, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, track and field, writing, and volleyball.

Non-athletics - band, cheer, choral, dance, debate, speech, and writing.

Academics

1. _____ Participation in extracurricular activities positively affects student test scores.
2. _____ Participation in athletics positively affects test scores.
3. _____ Participation in non-athletic programs positively affects test scores.
4. _____ Participation in extracurricular activities positively affects student grades.
5. _____ Participation in athletics positively affects student grades.
6. _____ Participation in non-athletics positively affects student grades.

Student Attendance

7. _____ Participating in extracurricular activities positively affect student attendance.
8. _____ Participation in athletics positively affects student attendance.
9. _____ Participation in non-athletic programs positively affects student attendance.
10. _____ Participation in extracurricular activities positively affect student tardies.
11. _____ Participation in athletic programs positively affect student tardies.
12. _____ Participation in non-athletic programs positively affect student tardies.

Student Behaviors

13. _____ Participation in extracurricular activities positively affects student behavior.
14. _____ Participation in athletics positively affects student behavior.
15. _____ Participation in non-athletic programs positively affects student behavior.
16. _____ Participation in extracurricular activities reduce student behavior referrals.
17. _____ Participation in athletic programs reduce student behavior referrals.
18. _____ Participation in non-athletic programs reduce student behavior referrals.

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