

SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL AND ENGAGEMENT IN EXTRACURRICULAR SPORT AND CREATIVE ARTS ACTIVITIES: RESULTS FROM A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY OF SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

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The purpose of this research was to investigate the relationship between involvement in extracurricular activities, specifically sports and arts, and subjective well-being at school. The study was based on survey data from 635 socially and economically disadvantaged students in Russia and their parents. Six dimensions of self-reported well-being at school were assessed: satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the school environment, affect toward school, cooperation, hostility, and subjective physical well-being. Independent samples t-test results showed significantly higher subjective physical well-being for students who participated in sports. Football was the most beneficial activity in terms of satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the school environment, and subjective physical well-being.

Keywords: subjective well-being, sports, arts, extracurricular activities, extracurricular education.

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Introduction. Extracurricular education refers to non-compulsory programmes outside the usual school curriculum. Although there is encouraging research on the positive effects that extracurricular activities (ECA) may have on students' academic and social outcomes [2], a considerable number of studies are not rigorous enough to support safe conclusions [8]. Further research is required to explore the role of ECA in influencing children's emotional, social, and cognitive development. This is particularly important for children and adolescents of low socio-economic status, which has been associated with barriers to ECA participation [6] as well as poorer health and well-being [9].

Well-being is described as an educational value and a key determinant of the quality of school life [7]. Subjective well-being (SWB) at school emphasises elements such as positive emotions, lack of school-related negative emotions, student satisfaction, social relationships, and achievement [1; 5].

This research is based on the theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) of human motivation [3]. According to SDT, performance and wellness are affected by the type of

motivation people have when involved in activities. Supportive social contexts facilitate the fulfilment of an individual's basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Objectives. The primary goal of this cross-sectional study was to examine the potential positive effects of engagement in sport and creative arts activities on SWB at school for disadvantaged students. Indicators of socio-economic disadvantage included obstacles such as low family income, low family educational level, single parenthood (or no parent at home), and/or a different language spoken at home and at school. The following hypotheses were proposed:

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant and positive effect of participation in athletic activities on dimensions of SWB at school, such as satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the school environment, affect toward school, hostility, cooperation, and subjective physical well-being.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant and positive effect of involvement in specific athletic activities (football, wrestling, volleyball, water sports, and basketball) on dimensions of SWB at school, such as satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the school environment, affect to-

ward school, hostility, cooperation, and subjective physical well-being.

Hypothesis 3: There is a significant and positive effect of participation in artistic activities on dimensions of SWB at school, such as satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the school environment, affect toward school, hostility, cooperation, and subjective physical well-being.

Hypothesis 4: There is a significant and positive effect of involvement in specific artistic activities (art school, music school, modern dance, choreography, and theatre) on dimensions of SWB at school, such as satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the school environment, affect toward school, hostility, cooperation, and subjective physical well-being.

Study design, participants, and procedure.

Data were collected using a survey that was administered to children and adolescents attending public schools in Russia. The online survey was completed by 635 students (Grades 4-11) from disadvantaged backgrounds as well as their parents, who provided demographic information. The purpose of the study was explained to both children and parents who provided their assent and consent to participate. Statistical analysis was performed with SPSS Version 29.0.2.0 statistical software package.

Instruments. Students completed the Subjective Well-being and Social-Emotional Skills Questionnaire, a questionnaire about aspects of their involvement in ECA, and some demographic questions. The following scales assessed subjective well-being at school [4; 10; 11]: *Satisfaction with School Scale*; *Satisfaction with the School Environment Scale*; *Affect toward School Scale*; *Cooperation Scale*; *Hostility Scale*; and *Subjective Physical Well-being Scale*.

The *Satisfaction with School Scale* contains eight items (13 items for Grades 7-11) and measures pupil achievement, school manage-

ment, student-teacher relationships, relationships with peers, teaching, and academic learning. The *Satisfaction with the School Environment Scale* is made up of eight items and describes how students perceive their physical school environments. The *Affect toward School Scale* incorporates three items (four items for Grades 7-11) and refers to emotional experiences at school. Items describing positive emotions were reverse scored. The *Hostility Scale* is composed of seven items detailing hostile behaviours directed at the student or between the student and his or her peers. The *Cooperation Scale* consists of six items about collaboration within and outside of the educational setting. The *Subjective Physical Well-being Scale* includes two items: «Over the past week, how often have you felt full of energy?» and «How do you rate your health?». Higher scores are equivalent to higher well-being for each dimension of SWB at school apart from higher scores for the *Affect toward School Scale* and the *Hostility Scale*, which represent lower well-being for the corresponding elements.

Results. Six hundred thirty-five students (9-18 years old; $M = 13.21$; $SD = 2.02$) participated in the study. Approximately 54% of the sample were female. Almost two-thirds of children and adolescents ($N = 393$, 62%) were attending at least one extracurricular programme. For students taking part in athletic activities ($N = 252$, 40%), the most popular sports programmes were football ($N = 46$, 12%), wrestling ($N = 43$, 11%), and volleyball ($N = 41$, 10%). Likewise, for those engaged in artistic activities ($N = 157$, 25%), popular arts classes included art school ($N = 52$, 13%), music school ($N = 41$, 10%), and modern dance ($N = 36$, 9%). Tables 1 and 2 show details of ECA participation (results have been rounded, as a percentage, to the nearest whole number).

Table 1

**FREQUENCIES OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS INVOLVED
IN SPECIFIC ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES**

Variables	<i>N</i>	Proportion of students participating in ECA	Proportion of all students
Football	46	12%	7%
Wrestling (various)	43	11%	7%
Volleyball	41	10%	6%
Water sports	38	10%	6%
Basketball	26	7%	4%
Gymnastics and rhythmic gymnastics	12	3%	2%
Hockey	11	3%	2%
Scouting	11	3%	2%
Chess	7	2%	1%
Rhythmic	4	1%	1%

Table 2

**FREQUENCIES OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS INVOLVED
IN SPECIFIC ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES**

Variables	<i>N</i>	Proportion of students participating in ECA	Proportion of all students
Art school	52	13%	8%
Music school	41	10%	6%
Modern dance	36	9%	6%
Choreography (classical or academic)	22	6%	3%
Theatre	20	5%	3%
Vocals (individual)	17	4%	3%
Choir	16	4%	3%
Photography (photo studio)	3	1%	0%

Participation in sports or arts and SWB: T-test results. Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare dimensions of well-being at school (satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the school environment, affect toward school, cooperation, hostility, and subjective physical well-being) for students who were engaged or not engaged in regular extracurricular classes.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare subjective physical well-being for students who attended at least one sports programme and those who did not participate in any organised athletic activity. There were significant differences ($t(586) = -3.635, p < 0.01$) in the scores with the

mean score for children and adolescents involved in sports programmes ($M = 0.14, SD = 0.96$) being higher than the mean score for those not involved in such activities ($M = -0.16, SD = 0.99$). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -0.30 , 95% *CI*: -0.462 to -0.138) was significant. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was partially supported.

Another independent-samples t-test compared satisfaction with school between students participating in football and those not involved in the sport. There were significant differences ($t(586) = -2.389, p < 0.05$) in the scores with the mean score for children and adolescents involved in football ($M = 0.77, SD = 2.47$) being

higher than the mean score for those not involved in football ($M = -0.05$, $SD = 2.14$). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -0.82 , 95% CI : -1.600 to -0.037) was significant.

An additional independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare satisfaction with the school environment between students involved and not involved in football. There were significant differences ($t(586) = -2.299$, $p < 0.05$) in the scores with the mean score for children and adolescents involved in football ($M = 0.74$, $SD = 2.35$) being higher than the mean score for those not involved in football ($M = 0.02$, $SD = 1.96$). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -0.72 , 95% CI : -1.344 to -0.106) was significant.

Furthermore, an independent-samples t-test compared subjective physical well-being for students involved and not involved in football. There were significant differences ($t(586) = -2.079$, $p < 0.05$) in the scores with the mean score for children and adolescents involved in football ($M = 0.26$, $SD = 0.80$) being higher than the mean score for those not involved in football ($M = -0.06$, $SD = 1.00$). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -0.32 , 95% CI : -0.630 to -0.018) was significant. Hence, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported.

While Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 4 were not supported by the data, there was a significant result that suggested an effect in the opposite direction. More specifically, an independent-samples t-test compared subjective physical well-being for students involved and not involved in an art school. There were significant

differences ($t(586) = 2.266$, $p < 0.05$) in the scores with the mean score for children and adolescents involved in an art school ($M = -0.36$, $SD = 1.02$) being lower than the mean score for children not involved in an art school ($M = -0.01$, $SD = 0.98$). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 0.35 , 95% CI : 0.046 to 0.645) was significant.

Discussion. Most of the children and adolescents who completed the survey were involved in athletic rather than artistic extracurricular activities (40% versus 25%). This is consistent with previous findings suggesting that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to participate in sports, tourism and local history whereas foreign languages, arts classes and school subjects are more popular among affluent families [7].

The results indicated that students engaged in sports programmes showed significantly higher levels of subjective physical well-being. Football appeared to be the most advantageous activity in terms of satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the school environment, and subjective physical well-being. This could be explained by the fact that football can facilitate team building and promote a spirit of inclusion. Further research could investigate factors that may be related to students' personal gains and sense of belongingness which might make this activity particularly meaningful for them.

On the other hand, students attending art school showed lower levels of subjective physical well-being. Three-quarters of them did not attend any sports activities, and none of them were involved in football, which appeared to be the most popular and beneficial activity in the analysis.

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СУБЪЕКТИВНОЕ БЛАГОПОЛУЧИЕ В ШКОЛЕ И УЧАСТИЕ ВО ВНЕКЛАССНОЙ СПОРТИВНОЙ И ТВОРЧЕСКОЙ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ: РЕЗУЛЬТАТЫ ПЕРЕКРЕСТНОГО ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ СОЦИАЛЬНО И ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКИ НЕБЛАГОПОЛУЧНЫХ УЧАЩИХСЯ

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Целью данного исследования было изучение связи между участием во внеклассной деятельности, а именно в спорте и искусстве, и субъективным благополучием в школе. Исследование основано на данных опроса 635 социально и экономически неблагополучных школьников России и их родителей. Были оценены шесть аспектов самооценки благополучия в школе: удовлетворенность школой, удовлетворенность школьной средой, аффект по отношению к школе, сотрудничество, враждебность и субъективное физическое благополучие. Результаты t-тестов независимых выборок показали значительно более высокое физическое благополучие у студентов, которые занимались спортом. Футбол оказался самым полезным занятием с точки зрения удовлетворенности школой, удовлетворенности школьной средой и физического благополучия.

Ключевые слова: субъективное благополучие, спорт, искусство, внеклассная деятельность, внеклассное образование.
