

Engagement in Extracurricular Activities: A Gain or a Loss From The Sense of School Belonging Perspective?

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the intricate associations between engagement in extracurricular activities (ECAs), a sense of school belonging, and their joint effects on academic and non-academic outcomes. The findings, from the analysis of 892 students, suggested that being actively engaged in ECAs does not contribute directly to students' academic outcomes. Rather, it reflects the non-academic achievement of ECAs, particularly that of promoting wellbeing. Moreover, ECAs are only beneficial to both academic and non-academic outcomes under conditions of a low sense of school belonging. However, under conditions of a high sense of school belonging, engagement in ECAs becomes less advantageous, and it might even be detrimental to academic performance. This study offers an alternative perspective aimed at unpacking the intricacies of ECAs, which are then used for developing practical implications for higher education institutions.

Keywords: Extracurricular activities (ECAs), theory of student involvement, well-being, academic performance, sense of school belonging.