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**The Difference Between the Academic Performance of Disadvantaged Youth Involved in Extracurricular Activities and the Academic Performance of Disadvantaged Youth Not Involved in Activities**

Michael R. Baer

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Thesis  
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1994

**THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE  
OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTH INVOLVED IN EXTRACURRICULAR  
ACTIVITIES AND THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF  
DISADVANTAGED YOUTH NOT INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES**

Michael R. Baer



A Culminating Project Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of Lindenwood College in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Art  
1994

COMMITTEE IN CHARGE OF CANDIDACY:

Pamela Nickels, E.D.D.

Chairperson and Advisor

Jesse B. Harris, Jr., Ph.D.

Rose Crofford, MSW, ACSW

Dedication:

To my wife Djuana,  
and my children Alexandria and Ryne,  
for all your love, support and inspiration.

## Table of Contents

<u>Abstract</u>	1
<u>Introduction</u>	2
<u>Literature Review</u>	4
<u>Interview with an Educator</u>	14
<u>Statement of Purpose</u>	16
<u>Methodology</u>	
Subjects	21
Procedure	22
Instrumentation	22
<u>Results and Discussion</u>	24
<u>Limitations</u>	29
<u>Appendices</u>	
a. Survey	31
b. Data	32
<u>References</u>	36
<u>Vita Auctoris</u>	40

### Abstract

The purpose of this research was to perform a comparative study of disadvantaged high school youth who participated in extracurricular activities and disadvantaged high school youth who were not involved in any activities. The sample was drawn from students enrolled at East St. Louis Sr. High School. The subjects in the study were 141 disadvantaged/at risk high school students. These 141 students were asked to fill out a student survey form. The survey was coded by student I.D. number and then administered by one instructor to nine classrooms. The results indicated that participation in extracurricular activities was related to overall increased GPA.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

The purpose of this research was to determine the difference between the academic performance of disadvantaged youth involved in extracurricular activities and the academic performance of disadvantaged youth not involved in activities. There seemed to be a considerable number of articles regarding the specific amount of problems that disadvantaged youth encounter. But, there appeared to be only a small amount of information that compared the academic performance of disadvantaged youth involved in activities with underprivileged youth not involved.

Information indicated that there were numerous outside stressors for underprivileged youth not involved in extracurricular activities. These stressors seemed to produce situations resulting in cognitive disturbances and deficiencies that impeded their adjustment as productive members of society. Extracurricular involvement provides not only the practical purpose of taking up free time, but it can provide an ideal setting for adolescents to accomplish developmental tasks. (Haensly, Lupkowski, Edlind, 1968.) It is the expectation of this researcher that an increased awareness and better understanding of the problems will better equip families and children to deal with the need for increased school activities,

self-esteem building techniques, more effective social programs and healthy support systems.

The secondary purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the problems that are facing youth from underprivileged backgrounds. It is stated in the article "Children, Families and the Cycle of Disadvantage":

"More and more, people are beginning to agree there is simply no way we can thrive economically without investing in people, particularly in poor youngsters and those from minority groups who will be so critical to the economy of the future" (Schorr, p. 441, 1991).



## Chapter 2

### Review of Related Literature

#### Definition of Important Terms

It is important to define the dynamics that are being explored. The concept of being disadvantaged or underprivileged can be explained in many ways.

Kohen-Raz states that "early deprivation creates a vicious circle of retardation, scholastic failure, frustration and social maladjustment" (Kohen-Raz, 1983, p. 2). It seems that based upon the background and circumstances of one's upbringing, specifically someone who is underprivileged is almost destined to fail. "In disadvantaged post-adolescents it is their displayed mental inferiority which fatally determines their social status as pupils placed in the lowest tracks of the high school system, as well as the fact that their self-image has been shattered by their scholastic failure and its consequences" (Kohen-Raz, 1983, p. 16).

In many cases these children have not developed adequate cognitive skills; therefore, to some degree their development is stunted. They progress at a slower rate in pre-school, elementary school and get passed on to middle school. By the time they reach high school they are in classrooms that are not designed for remediation (Kohen-Raz, 1983).

Kohen-Raz suggests in his literature that people have a working definition of what it means to be "culturally disadvantaged." Typically this classification carries with it characteristics such as low parental educational level of the mother, employed as either a housewife or domestic aid. Many times these families consist of three or more siblings, and often reside in overcrowded living quarters. Additionally, this group is known to live in the "inner city" or "urban" area, which many times is dilapidated and in sub-standard conditions. These are just a few characteristics that describe "culturally disadvantaged."

Webster's (Third) World International Dictionary describes disadvantaged as "lacking in the basic resources or conditions (as standard housing, medical and educational facilities, civil rights) believed to be necessary for an equal position in society (a class or section of populace)" (p. 400). One important facet to note when stating a definition for disadvantaged or underprivileged is that race is not a predisposing factor.

This study explores a predominantly "at-risk" population. By "high risk children," the researcher means those who underachieve in school despite adequate intellectual endowment, and as a result, will underachieve as adults (Comer, 1987).

When one discusses the sources of risk, one should look at societal conditions within a given community, family and also the school systems.

For many, it has become fashionable to identify at-risk children in terms of poverty, alcohol and drug consumption, sexual activity, school attendance, educational failure, and race and ethnicity (Pellicano, 1987).

Many "at risk" students would have been identified as "disadvantaged" or "minority" during the 1960s. They are now given a label of "at risk" which reflects the dysfunctions of the school systems, society and home.

In a study by Patrick Monahan who researched the development of a plan to increase school success for incoming, at-risk, ninth-grade students, he characterized "at risk" as those who experienced attendance problems. Wehlage (1986) noted that poor grades and disciplinary problems were key experiences in defining "at risk" students.

Additionally, focus was given to the role of the parents. Arnold (1986) maintained that a lack of parental encouragement and support doomed many school based models. Sabatini (1989) also looked at the parental role in evaluating programs to determine how they reflected on a student's self-esteem, decisiveness, confidence and leadership ability.

In his paper, Monahan (1992) saw the general conditions of "at risk" students as inclusive of one or more of the following characteristics: low motivation, inadequate study skills, or social immaturity.

A study by James Catterall (1987) suggests that Wehlage (1983) and others (e.g., Fine, 1986) reported that a deficit claimed by many school dropouts is the lack of anyone at school who cares about how they are getting along.

Another researcher, Bethany Rogers, has examined the essential conditions for providing high-quality education. The author's paper, "Small is Beautiful," suggests that first, students must be well known by their teachers. Secondly, students should be actively involved in school activities. Also, the school must provide a secure and caring environment. Ms. Rogers seems to convey that when children have a sense of belonging and are engaged, they are "available" to learn. The researcher also states:

Students who belong to a school community are far less likely to commit acts of vandalism or assault, are truant less often, and are less apathetic than students in large depersonalized schools. This becomes especially important in light of the growing number of alienated at-risk youth from dysfunctional families (Rogers, 1992, p.98).

Using a predominantly black high school sample, Phillips (1969) empirically addressed the relationship between participation in student activities and self-esteem. He found that participation in school activities, including athletics, was significantly related to self-esteem for boys, . . ." (Steitz and Owen, Spg. 1992, p. 38).

Another factor in making the correlation between academics and extracurricular activities is:

"Researchers have found that involvement in school activities is positively related to self-concept (Yarworth and Gauthier, 1978), status (Spady, 1970) and satisfaction with school in general (Nover, 1981). Again focusing on athletics, a significant relationship has been found between involvement in school activities and concurrent academic achievement as measured by class rank (Yarworth and Gauthier, 1978) and grades (Nover, 1981) (Haensly, Lupkowski and Edlind," 1986 p. 112).

#### Characteristics of the Underprivileged

When one examines characteristics of the underprivileged, discrepancies often occur. In today's society a considerable gap exists in the educational standards of county-affluent school systems vs. the inner city schools (Maeroff, 1988). Specifically, the amount of money appropriated for the two is significantly different. Inner city schools receive less than other school districts. The amount of money directly dictates the physical condition of the building, school supplies, salaries of teachers, extracurricular activities, and most importantly, the curriculum itself (Maeroff, 1988). Most disadvantaged and underprivileged adolescents are attending inner city schools. If adolescents are not provided the same tools, society cannot expect equal results, even in the

most ideal conditions. If the school system cannot successfully aid adolescents, the disadvantaged population cannot be expected to make meaningful contributions to the work force. Gene Maeroff (1988) stated in his article "Withered Hopes, Stillborn Dreams"; The Dismal Panorama of Urban School

"Disadvantaged adolescents lack the skills that will allow them to obtain gainful employment, and they are devoid of the preparation that will lead to success in further education. They are what the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies warned almost a generation ago could become the nation's 'lumpen proletariat'. A reform movement that was supposed to improve public education has been largely irrelevant to the needs of urban minority students. The reforms have either totally by-passed big-city school districts or have produced changes that lengthened the time for instruction or raised requirements for diplomas without addressing the underlying circumstances that lead to failure for these students" (1988, p. 633).

Maeroff says that "what is clearly needed is a fresh approach to urban education, involving smaller learning units and a different philosophy of instruction" (p. 632). Within his book, Maeroff (1988) makes reference to William Julius Wilson who wrote of neighborhoods in which "the chances are overwhelming that children will seldom interact on a sustained basis with people who are employed or with families that have a steady breadwinner... (where) the relationship between schooling and post-school employment takes a different meaning" (p. 634).

Many of the underprivileged and disadvantaged live in environments which have norms and values of their own. These values are very much different from those of the American mainstream. This is reinforced by subcultures developing and perpetuating stereotypes of low achievement. Many underprivileged youth accept low achievement as all that there is because there is no comparison to anything else for them.

Many minority students have no countervailing force at home to reinforce the values that the school wished to instill. Schools in the heart of the city tend to have a sour atmosphere that strips them of the spirit and vitality that might motivate the young. Students, often consumed by poverty, simply do not participate in the kinds of activities that would enrich the school community (Maeroff, May 1988, p. 635).

For many youth that fall into the disadvantaged or underprivileged heading, extracurricular activities are the only way out of a dismal situation. When a youth in this predicament experiences success, the implications and effects are far reaching. This is how one accounts for the correlation between increased participation in extracurricular activities and increased academic performance.

"In another achievement-related area, it has been shown that involvement and success in competitive sports may promote the development of the competitive attitudes and values that are also beneficial to educational achievement"

(Hartzell 1979) (Haensly, Lupkowski and Edlind, 1986, p. 112).

Additionally, this idea is thought to be valid by many. Literature by (Jacobs and Chase, 1989) cited research by (Willingham, Shaw Hedpeth) indicated that there seems to be a direct relationship between participation in activities and academic achievement. (Willingham, 1989) found he was able to predict academic success in college by examining previous school activities along with SAT scores and class rank.

"He concluded that college admissions officers can improve their chances of recruiting students who will succeed at their institutions by selecting applicants who are not only strong academically but, who also have high school records that show 'persistent and successful extracurricular accomplishment'" (Jacobs and Chase, 1989, p. 181).

Further study seems to support the notion that many "at risk" children have limited family involvement and this is often detrimental to their growth.

A study by Alfredo Cuellar (1992) focused on gaining a better understanding of background and underlying influences for high achievement and low achievement.

"In general, this study confirms the accepted conclusions about the family of low achievers offering limited support to the students, have a low income, and have either poor or a bad communication" (Cuellar, 1992, p. 20).



### Childhood Development of Underprivileged Youth

One constant problem facing underprivileged youth is that their childhood experiences do not provide an adequate foundation to assume the adult roles prescribed for them (Kohen-Raz, 1983). Often times the environment in which underprivileged youth live is vastly different than the American Ideal.

As infants, underprivileged children face early deprivation and wants. Often their needs are met only on a minimal basis. The adult role models they see are people who have developed the essential survival skills in their environment. As infants these children develop anxious attachments. These children are unsure that their needs will be met, or know that their needs will not be met and learn to say nothing. One must admit that some of these children form healthy attachments, but these children are in the minority (Kohen-Raz, 1983).

As these kids progress to the adolescent stage, they are often unable to identify with society's expectations of them. It would seem to this researcher that many times disadvantaged youth are unable to assume the role of productive persons in society because they don't have an accurate perception of the role. These adolescents have not mastered the dynamics of childhood through experiences. They have, however,

learned to cope and survive. This says little for their potential to advance within society.

Most children grow up and develop in various ways. Physically, children mature and progress into young adults. Mentally, children grow and acquire knowledge necessary to advance. Socialization is the process by which an individual learns the ways of a specific society or social group so that he can function within it (Elkin and Handel, 1972). Socializations seems to indicate how a particular group responds as they do.

Often children who suffer from various forms of deprivation fail to become adequately socialized. They don't get the same experiences and have difficulty adjusting. (Elkin and Handel, 1972) discuss a study by Rene Spitz in the book The Child and Society. In his study, Rene Spitz was able to report on the detrimental effects of little human contact or stimulation. Even years later during follow-up when the conditions were changed and play activity increased, the development of these same children was below average and greatly retarded. The majority of the initial participants in this study died. However, those remaining had little chance of counteracting the psychological and physical deprivations they had incurred within their first year of life. Therefore, Spitz concluded that the conditions during the children's first year of life was so significant

that it dictated limitations that the living children would have the rest of their lives.

In essence, social factors actually are very significant forces in development. For adolescents to master the socialization process and grow into a healthy human beings, they must receive not only medical/physical care, but emotional/cognitive and social care. During the social development, an adolescent develops the skills and feelings necessary to facilitate the appropriate responsiveness to others. This responsiveness can be shaped greatly by poor economic and disadvantaged factors (Elkin and Handel, 1972).

"Hall, Hord, Rutherford, and Huling (1984, p.60) suggest that the co/extracurriculum, which "represents a rich array of opportunities and experiences," may be one of the reasons many students stay in school, much less find personal meaning for this time in their lives" (Haensly, Lupkowski and Edlind, 1986, p. 110).

#### Interview with an Educator

Annie R. Watkins (personal communication Nov. 2, 1992) is an educator at East St. Louis Sr. High School. Ms. Watkins has a Masters Degree in Science Education. She has been teaching at East St. Louis Sr.

High for 25 years. Additionally, she taught for three years in the Tennessee School System.

When Ms. Watkins started teaching at East St. Louis Sr. High School, her school was composed of 95% white affluent students. Today, the school is 98% black and composed of predominantly "at risk" students. Ms. Watkins says that, "one of the major issues and differences in her school is the students'/families' value system." She stated that, "when she first began, the students seemed to value an education." Today, she states, "students place value on their own survival skills, where part of the survival includes drugs, alcohol, truancy, and teenage pregnancies."

Ms. Watkins stated, "these children live in an environment that reeks of a dying and steadily decaying city." Initially, East St. Louis was a flourishing industrial town. Many teachers have acknowledged that the children come from dysfunctional families and have developed a "give me" mentality. Ms. Watkins seems to think that "some students expect society to give them or provide for them, and the concept of working and earning a given reward does not occur often in their setting." Ms. Watkins says, "they don't see much beyond the community that they live in."

The Educational System does not provide a sufficient outlet or alternative for those who do not excel in their academic pursuits. Many of the students, however, excel in athletics. East St. Louis has one of the best football teams in the nation. East St. Louis students are less known for their academic endeavors. Ms. Watkins says, "this does not mean that there are no children that excel academically, but the masses are in need of values clarification, a change in living conditions, motivation that provides for self-esteem, avenues which allow them to succeed and positive role models which provide incentives to achieve more than what they are exposed to daily."

#### Statement of Purpose

Research indicates that there is a correlation between participation in extracurricular activities and academic performance. Yet there seems to be many variables that need to be explored. Wells-Picou's (1980) study maintained that athletes have higher levels of educational aspirations than non-athletes. Athletes receive more interpersonal encouragement to go to college by their parents, peers and teachers. Athletes tend to be more competitively oriented than non-athletes. Finally, athletes seem to maintain higher grade point averages.

Using Picou, the research notion of the present study was to investigate GPA differences for students who participate in extracurricular activities. In some instances, athletes may have a better understanding of competition through participation in extracurricular activities.

In examining a disadvantaged population such as the students in East St. Louis, one will see that these students live in a steadily decaying city. There are few positive role models, few two parent families and horrid living conditions. Information obtained from The 1985 North Central Evaluation of schools provided some statistical information. The population demographics indicated a population of 95.6% black, 4.0% white, and 0.4% Hispanic, Asian, or other. The median income was \$7,710.00. The number of persons receiving public assistance and social security was 19.8%.

The study revealed that the educational level of the population was:

Elementary (0-8) through 1 to 3 yr of high school .....	51.2%
High School.....	26.5%
College .....	22.3%
1 to 3 yrs of college.....	16.5%
5 yrs or more of college .....	2.7%

In the report on East St. Louis, the team clearly defined that :

"The majority of students attending school district 189 are economically disadvantaged" (North Central Evaluation, 1985).

The Better School Accountability Law (Illinois School Code, par. 10-17a) requires all public school districts to report on the performance of their schools and students through school report cards. Information obtained by the researcher from the 1993 School Report Card for East St. Louis Senior High School, District 189, listed information that further defined the disadvantaged population that composes East St. Louis.

In a section that was classified Low-Income, Limited-English Proficient Students and Dropouts, 60.0% of the students attending East St. Louis Senior High School were classified as Low Income. 80.4% of the district's students were classified as low income.

The definition for Low Income was as follows:

"Low Income students are pupils aged 3-17, from families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public funds or eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches" (School Report Card, 1993, p. 2).

It seems necessary to state that objective statistical information maintains that East St. Louis is composed of a disadvantaged population of students.

If it is possible to provide students with an alternative support system ie: extracurricular activities then increased participation in activities should be stressed. It is the contention of the researcher that in gaining the experiences of extracurricular activities the students are able to balance/bridge the gap between their reality and the outside world's expectations.

Haensly, Lupkowski and Edlind (1986) thought that many students were able to learn outside the traditional classroom setting.

Extracurricular activities allow students the chance to extend and enrich learned academic skills through competition. These opportunities and experiences seem to have immense effects. Extracurricular activities help develop and practice various skills such as: musical, occupational, artistic, leadership and writing, interpersonal, problem solving and conflict management abilities.

When examining a disadvantaged group, one must look at academic performance as well as potential for success and achievement after high school. For disadvantaged youth in East St. Louis, there is very little home-school coordination for the betterment of the pupils. Therefore, the children cannot rely on their family support system to teach them how to integrate the systems in which they live with the outside systems of the world. Many of the disadvantaged youth in East St.



Louis can substitute extracurricular activities and further their developmental progress. Students use the relationships and experiences they gain through interaction with teachers, administrators and coaches to supplement the lack of interaction with healthy, positive and successful role models.

"Efforts such as 'maintaining one's individuality in a group, practicing appropriate adult behaviors in different settings, and understanding and coping with peer pressures' (Hass, et al., 1984, p. 60) all contribute to the developmental tasks that adolescents must accomplish in order to move effectively from childhood to adulthood (Havinghurst, 1972). Participation in the "non-academic" life of the secondary school may provide an ideal setting for the adolescent to resolve any of the eight developmental tasks proposed as necessary by Havinghurst. Participation is particularly effective, however, in providing a healthy setting for the task of forming new and more mature relationships with age mates of both sexes, achieving an appropriate masculine or feminine social role, accepting one's physique and using the body effectively, and a set of ethics as a guide to behavior" (Haensly, Lupkowski and Edlind, 1986, p. 111).

The researcher has attempted to explore the relationship between the academic performance of disadvantaged youth involved in extracurricular activities and the academic performance of disadvantaged youth not involved in activities.

Chapter 3  
Methodology  
Subjects

The subjects for the study were eleventh and twelfth grade students who were enrolled in East St. Louis Sr. High School in East St. Louis, Illinois. One important factor for the researcher was to have a study that was representative of a population of disadvantaged youth.

A total of 151 surveys were distributed. Ten surveys were eliminated due to insufficient data. Seventy-six percent of the 141 participants were seniors, and twenty-four percent were juniors. The range of ages was 14-19 with the mean and median age being 17. Forty percent of the subjects were female and sixty percent were male. Permission was given by the principal to use the sample of the students for this study. Of the students selected by the principal for research, forty-six percent were in the regular senior classes, thirty percent were seniors in the Principal Scholars Program (PSP), and twenty-four percent were PSP juniors. PSP is a college preparatory program.

Prior to administering the surveys, the students were given the instructions for completion. The researcher reviewed the administering procedure to allow for consistency and validity. The students were told

the purpose of the survey and it was administered. See Appendix A for the student survey.

### Procedures

The researcher used surveys coded by student ID number. The surveys were given to a school official and passed out by homeroom instructors with the same instructions for administering. The surveys were given on a Monday and Tuesday. The surveys were returned to the researcher after being collected by the school official on Wednesday of the same week.

### Instrumentation

The students were asked to enter their ID number, then circle their grade level and homeroom. The students were then asked to check the extracurricular activities in which they actively participated, whether their parents attended their activities, and to circle the number of disciplinary referrals. The survey contained a total of nine questions. Subjects had unlimited time to complete the survey. The surveys were completed in the participants' homeroom classes. They were

administered by the room teacher, and all participants were instructed to complete it before leaving the homeroom. The survey was composed by the researcher, and approved by the members of his thesis proposal committee. A sample of the survey form is included in Appendix A.

For the purpose of this study, Extracurricular Activities was inclusive of the activities listed below. These activities are often used interchangeably but fall under the general heading of Extracurricular Activities.

Football	Scholar Quiz	Student Council
Basketball	Math Club	Jr. Achievement
Volleyball	Nat. Honor Society	Student Aide
Softball	Nat. Beta Society	Pep Club
Baseball	French Club	Youth Forum
Golf	Office Occupations	HOSA
Tennis	Honors Seminar	Newspaper
Track	Marching Band	Yearbook
Cross Country	Jazz Band	
Cheerleaders	Choir	
Pom Pon	Chess Team	

Pearson's chi square analysis was used, and the study used an alpha level of 0.05. The data did not allow acceptance of the null hypothesis: there is no relationship between GPA and involvement in high school activities.

## Chapter 4

### Results

Pearson's chi-square analysis was run for extracurricular activities by cumulative GPA and found to have a significance level of .00019. This data did not allow acceptance of the null hypothesis: that there is no linear association between the GPA and participation in extracurricular activities in this sample. The overall mean GPA was 2.87, with a standard deviation of .91. Of the 141 participants in the survey, 76% represented students involved in activities. The mean GPA of those involved in extracurricular activities was 3.119. Of the non-participants in activities the mean GPA was 2.238. A crosstabulation of the GPAs with the number of activities is represented in Table 1. 76% of the 141 students surveyed participated in one or more extracurricular activities. 24% of the subjects did not participate in activities. Of those students involved, 52% had parents and/or relatives attend events, and 48% of the parents and relatives did not attend. 19% of the students involved in extracurricular activities were sent to the office for disciplinary reasons one or more times. 21% of the students not involved were sent to the office for disciplinary reasons (Table 2).

The District could not release attendance data to the researcher.

TABLE 1  
Distribution of Activity Level by GPA

Number of Activities	CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE				Total
	0.00 through 1.50	1.51 through 2.50	2.51 through 3.50	3.51 through 5.00	
0	6	15	11	2	34
1-3	5	17	36	19	77
4-6	0	2	8	12	22
> than 6	0	1	2	5	8
	11	35	57	38	141

Degrees of freedom = 0.05

Critical value  $\chi^2 = 0.00019$

Decision: reject null hypothesis

TABLE 2

Crosstabulation of Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities with  
Family Support and Disciplinary Referrals

	Parents/ Relatives		Disci- plinary Office Refer- rals	No Disci- plinary Refer- rals
	Attend Activi- ties	Do Not Attend Activ.		
Active Students (1 or more activities)	56	51	20	87
Not Active	N/A	N/A	7	27

## Chapter 5

### Discussion

The review of literature explored many problems for disadvantaged youth. Specifically, the research to date that measures the relationship between increased extracurricular participation and GPA seems adequate for this study.

The purpose of this research was to identify the connection between extracurricular activities and increased GPA's compared to non-participants in activities. It seems obvious that more research is needed regarding the relationship between activities and GPA among high school students. This research suggests the need to supplement activities or some type of support system which helps disadvantaged youth.

When one looks at the book "The Right Kind of Heroes" it takes an in-depth look at East St. Louis football coach Bob Shannon. Bob Shannon came from a poor family, under very strained conditions. He is quick to say that the vehicle for advancement he used was athletics, but the tool for success was education.

"Like I said, athletics is just a vehicle," Shannon continued, "but you need something like that to help you accomplish what you need to accomplish. No way I could have done what I did without athletics and the people who were associated with athletics, people who'd been in a situation like mine and who could influence me. Guys like Eugene Marshall, who told me how poor he'd been. It put realism



on it, made it look like it could happen for me. The key is you have to be willing to try." (Horrigan, 1992, p. 102)

Shannon, along with other educators, feels that it is his responsibility and job to teach youngsters how to succeed.

"In a city where most young men wind up on the streets, in jail, or dead, the high school football coach has sent dozens of his players on to college on football scholarships. He has done it by hard work and absolute dedication to virtues that went out of style in East St. Louis decades ago. He's done it by refusing to desert boys who need his attention and discipline. "If I don't care about them, who will?" (Horrigan, 1992, preface)

It seems as though this story reaffirms the belief that extracurricular activities are related to academic performance as well as the acquisition of life skills necessary to succeed.

It became clear to the researcher that there was a need for further understanding of the realities of living and achieving in a clearly disadvantaged setting. For the poor students in the inner city, extracurricular activities become the stabilizing force. Extracurricular activities become the outlet to gain attention, support, experience and life skills. These experiences seem to give the disadvantaged youth the foundation necessary to achieve academically. It would appear that extracurricular activities become the vehicle and academic achievement becomes the instrument in which to succeed.



### Limitations

There were several issues that became apparent as limitations during the course of the study. The school was in the process of transferring students' attendance records to a computerized system and was unable to release the school attendance information. This was a specific limitation because the researcher had originally included attendance as part of his survey. The school had incomplete information regarding disciplinary referrals. However, the group surveyed (Principal Scholars Program students), was an unlikely representation of students apt to have disciplinary problems.

Additionally, the information given by participants was self-reported. Another distinct limitation was the fact that this study was geared toward a disadvantaged population. It would be interesting to examine the results in a different setting. The study was also limited to junior and senior classes as opposed to a greater variety of grades. The researcher was unable to factor in part-time employment, family history or activities in addition to school. Another factor to mention was that the sampling was a weakness because it only represented one (1) school. These specific limitations leave significant room for research in the area with additional factors being measured. The final two limitations to mention are: 1) the students who participated were selected by the

principal, and 2) when examining the results of the cell that have expected values less than 5, if 20% or more of the expected values less than 5 the chi square is suspect, this should be noted.

#### Suggestions for Further Study

The researcher did not do a comparative study of East St. Louis Sr. High School compared to other inner city urban school districts in the area. The researcher did not measure specifically the effects of self-esteem and any correlation to extracurricular activities. It would be interesting to measure several other variables such as self-esteem, support, faculty influence, parental involvement, pregnancies, and infractions with the law in relation to academic achievement.

## Appendix A

## STUDENT SURVEY

1. What is your student I.D. Number? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Grade level (circle one)    11                    12
3. Age \_\_\_\_\_
4. Gender (circle one)            Female            Male
5. Homeroom (circle one)  
                                  Regular Senior    PSP Senior    Regular Jr.    PSP Jr.
6. What extracurricular activities do you actively participate in? (Check as many as applicable.)

Athletics

Football \_\_\_\_\_  
 Basketball \_\_\_\_\_  
 Volleyball \_\_\_\_\_  
 Softball \_\_\_\_\_  
 Baseball \_\_\_\_\_  
 Golf \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tennis \_\_\_\_\_  
 Track \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cross Country \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cheerleaders \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pom Pon \_\_\_\_\_

Scholastic/Fine Arts

Scholar Quiz \_\_\_\_\_  
 Math Club \_\_\_\_\_  
 Nat. Honor Society \_\_\_\_\_  
 Nat. Beta Society \_\_\_\_\_  
 French Club \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office Occupations \_\_\_\_\_  
 Honors Seminar \_\_\_\_\_  
 Marching Band \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jazz Band \_\_\_\_\_  
 Choir \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chess Team \_\_\_\_\_

Service Related

Student Council \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jr. Achievement \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Aide \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pep Club \_\_\_\_\_  
 Youth Forum \_\_\_\_\_  
 HOSA \_\_\_\_\_  
 Newspaper \_\_\_\_\_  
 Yearbook \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do your parents attend your activities?    Yes                    No
8. Who else attends your activities?  
 Friends \_\_\_\_\_    Relatives \_\_\_\_\_    Peers \_\_\_\_\_    Fans \_\_\_\_\_
9. How many times have you been sent to the office this school year for disciplinary reasons? (circle one)  
 0  
 1-3  
 4-6  
 more than 6

DO NOT WRITE BELOW

Cumulative G.P.A. \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance Days

Present 92-93 \_\_\_\_\_

Absent 92-93 \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

Data List

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u># Act.</u>	<u>GPA</u>
F	JR	2	4.330
M	JR	1	2.717
M	JR	2	3.467
M	JR	2	3.000
M	JR	2	3.404
F	JR	3	3.464
M	JR	3	2.500
M	JR	8	4.071
M	JR	0	3.200
M	JR	3	3.189
M	JR	0	3.071
F	JR	2	3.138
F	JR	3	2.266
M	JR	4	3.360
M	JR	4	4.133
M	JR	2	4.467
M	JR	3	3.933
M	JR	3	3.462
F	JR	1	3.143
M	JR	5	4.765
F	JR	1	3.133
M	JR	4	3.060
M	JR	3	4.357
F	JR	3	2.154
M	JR	5	3.286
M	JR	2	4.000
M	JR	4	3.930
M	JR	1	3.530
F	JR	4	2.857
F	JR	3	2.467
M	JR	6	3.133
M	JR	2	4.667
M	JR	1	3.733
F	JR	3	2.600
M	SR	1	2.708

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u># Act.</u>	<u>GPA</u>
F	SR	1	2.091
F	SR	1	1.702
M	SR	1	2.600
M	SR	0	1.682
F	SR	3	2.167
M	SR	2	1.587
M	JR	5	2.462
F	SR	0	1.708
M	SR	1	2.808
F	SR	0	1.600
F	SR	1	1.304
M	SR	0	1.565
M	SR	0	1.905
F	SR	0	1.875
F	SR	1	2.261
M	SR	0	2.208
M	SR	0	1.800
F	SR	3	2.840
M	SR	0	2.750
M	SR	1	1.040
M	SR	0	1.750
M	SR	1	1.667
F	SR	1	3.333
M	SR	0	3.125
F	SR	2	2.125
F	SR	2	2.080
M	SR	2	1.462
F	SR	1	3.192
F	SR	4	3.000
M	SR	0	1.240
F	SR	0	2.720
F	SR	0	0.854
F	SR	1	2.750
F	SR	0	1.600
M	SR	0	1.450
M	SR	0	2.440
M	SR	0	1.162
M	SR	2	2.400
M	SR	0	1.885

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u># Act.</u>	<u>GPA</u>
F	SR	1	2.264
F	SR	2	1.600
F	SR	3	2.542
M	SR	2	3.404
F	SR	1	2.720
M	SR	0	2.600
M	SR	2	3.764
F	SR	4	3.885
F	SR	5	3.750
F	SR	3	4.000
F	SR	1	3.800
F	SR	3	1.412
F	SR	2	1.526
F	SR	0	2.875
F	SR	0	2.917
F	SR	2	2.800
M	SR	0	1.606
M	SR	0	2.067
F	SR	2	1.706
M	SR	0	1.308
M	SR	1	1.162
M	SR	0	3.500
F	SR	0	2.038
F	SR	3	1.042
M	SR	0	3.545
F	SR	5	3.923
M	SR	8	4.731
M	SR	7	3.962
M	SR	6	3.000
M	SR	3	3.308
F	SR	1	2.885
F	SR	5	3.864
M	SR	2	3.308
M	SR	3	2.741
M	SR	3	3.760
M	SR	5	3.885
M	SR	9	3.120
M	SR	4	3.423
M	SR	1	3.000

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u># Act.</u>	<u>GPA</u>
F	SR	4	3.760
M	SR	3	3.370
M	SR	1	3.600
M	SR	1	4.296
F	SR	0	2.615
M	SR	1	3.320
M	SR	6	4.280
M	SR	7	4.889
F	SR	3	3.640
F	SR	2	3.708
M	SR	4	4.385
M	SR	1	3.115
F	SR	2	2.928
M	SR	8	4.429
M	SR	1	3.852
M	SR	1	3.038
M	SR	2	4.600
F	SR	3	2.720
M	SR	2	3.308
M	SR	4	2.167
M	SR	7	2.333
M	SR	2	3.480
F	SR	3	4.280
F	SR	0	3.368
F	SR	6	2.840
M	SR	1	3.667
M	SR	0	3.647
M	SR	4	4.280



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