

THE IMPACT OF PARTICIPATION IN RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between participation in recreational activities and academic achievement among senior high school students within a defined geographical area. Employing a quantitative, cross-sectional, correlational, and comparative research design, the study sought to determine the level of student engagement in various recreational domains, assess their academic performance through Grade Point Average (GPA) and standardized test scores, and examine the association between these variables. Data were gathered from a representative sample using a standardized self-report questionnaire to capture the frequency, duration, intensity, and perceived enjoyment of recreational activities, complemented by official school records for objective academic performance measures.

Findings revealed a moderate overall level of participation, with social activities registering the highest engagement. Academic performance, as reflected by GPAs, was generally commendable, although standardized test scores indicated areas for improvement. Moreover, a statistically significant difference in academic achievement was observed between students who engaged in recreational activities and those who did not, with the former demonstrating superior outcomes. Pearson's correlation analysis further indicated a positive association between recreational activity participation and academic performance, suggesting that higher engagement is linked to better academic results.

In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of integrating recreational activities into the holistic development of students, as such engagement not only promotes well-being but also enhances academic success. Accordingly, it recommends the implementation of diverse and accessible recreational programs, integration of activity-based learning, and further longitudinal research to explore causal relationships.

Keywords: Recreational Activities, Academic Achievement, Senior High School, GPA, Standardized Test Scores, Correlation, Comparative Study

1. Introduction

Academic achievement is a key measure of student success. However, Philippine education policy—guided by Republic Act No. 10533 (*Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013*)—emphasizes holistic development that integrates cognitive, physical, social, and emotional growth. In line with this, DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019 promotes a learner-centered curriculum enriched by co-curricular and extra-curricular programs such as the *School Sports Program*, *Special Program in the Arts*, and *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program*. These initiatives align with global perspectives, including UNESCO's *Education 2030 Framework for Action*, which stresses inclusive, well-rounded education.

Recreational activities, encompassing physical, creative, social, and outdoor pursuits, have been linked to improved cognitive performance, reduced stress, and enhanced social skills (Mahri et al., 2020). Local research (Aquino, 2023) likewise reports that participation in school-based sports and clubs correlates with higher academic performance among Filipino students (Aquino, 2023).

Despite these recognized benefits, limited empirical research in the Philippines explores the broader range of recreational activities among senior high school students, particularly within the K to 12 frameworks. Existing studies often focus narrowly on sports or physical education. Additionally, factors such as academic workload, socioeconomic disparities, and unequal access to facilities may restrict participation. There is also little investigation into how dimensions such as frequency, intensity, and enjoyment influence academic outcomes (Alasinrin & Ajeigbe, 2021).

This study addresses these gaps by examining the relationship between participation in recreational activities and academic achievement among senior high school students in a specific region. It measures engagement through a multi-dimensional self-report questionnaire and academic performance via Grade Point Average (GPA) and standardized test scores. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional, correlational, and comparative design with stratified random sampling, the study aims to: (1) determine participation levels, (2) assess academic performance, (3) compare outcomes between participants and non-participants, and (4) analyze correlations between engagement and achievement.

The findings will provide evidence for educators, administrators, and policymakers to enhance recreational programming and integrate activity-based learning in support of DepEd's holistic education mandate. They will also offer practical insights for parents and students on balancing academics with co-curricular engagement. By producing localized, data-driven analysis, the study will fill a critical research gap and inform strategies to promote balanced, high-quality education in the Philippines.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design utilizing a cross-sectional, correlational, and comparative approach to examine the relationship between participation in recreational activities and academic achievement among senior high school students. The cross-sectional design allowed for the collection of data at a single point in time, thereby providing a snapshot of students' engagement levels and corresponding academic performance. Moreover, the correlational component facilitated the identification and analysis of the strength and direction of the association between the variables. At the same time, the comparative element enabled the evaluation of differences in academic outcomes between students who participated in recreational activities and those who did not. To ensure representativeness, a stratified random sampling technique was applied, considering key demographic factors such as grade level, gender, and socioeconomic status. The study employed a multi-dimensional self-report questionnaire to gather detailed data on recreational activity participation and accessed official school records to obtain objective measures of academic performance, including Grade Point Average (GPA) and standardized test scores. This methodological framework ensured a rigorous, systematic, and data-driven analysis, allowing for robust statistical testing and the derivation of meaningful conclusions.

2.2 Participants

The respondents of the study were senior high school students enrolled in selected educational institutions within the defined geographical region, representing Grades 11 and 12 across various academic strands. To ensure a representative and unbiased sample, the researchers employed a stratified random sampling technique, systematically grouping the population based on key demographic variables such as grade level, gender, and socioeconomic status before randomly selecting participants from each stratum. This approach ensured proportional representation and minimized sampling bias, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the inclusion criteria required that participants be officially enrolled

during the data collection period and provide informed consent, along with parental or guardian consent for minors. The final sample size was determined through power analysis to achieve sufficient statistical power, thus enabling the detection of significant relationships and differences with a high degree of confidence. Through this careful selection process, the study secured a diverse and representative participant pool, ensuring the reliability and validity of the results.

2.3 Instrumentation

The study utilized two primary research instruments to comprehensively measure the variables under investigation: a standardized self-report questionnaire and official school records. The self-report questionnaire, meticulously designed based on an extensive review of related literature and expert consultation, served to capture the independent variable—participation in recreational activities—by gathering detailed information on the frequency, duration, intensity, and perceived enjoyment across various domains, including physical, creative, social, and outdoor activities. To ensure content validity and reliability, the instrument employed a multi-dimensional Likert scale and was pilot-tested prior to full administration. Complementing this subjective measure, official school records were accessed through proper authorization to obtain objective data on the dependent variable—academic achievement—specifically the students' Grade Point Average (GPA) and standardized test scores in core subject areas. This combination of self-reported and objective data sources allowed for a more robust and triangulated assessment, thereby strengthening the validity of the findings and ensuring that both behavioral engagement and academic performance were accurately captured.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered in this study were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods to address the research questions and test the hypotheses. Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages, were employed to summarize and present the levels of participation in recreational activities as well as the academic performance of the participants. Subsequently, inferential statistics were utilized to examine the relationships and differences between variables. Specifically, independent samples t-tests were conducted to determine whether significant differences existed in academic performance between students who engaged in recreational activities and those who did not, while Pearson's correlation coefficient was computed to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between recreational participation and academic achievement. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis was applied to evaluate the predictive power of recreational activity participation on academic performance while controlling for potential confounding variables such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status. All statistical analyses were performed using appropriate software, such as SPSS or R, and a predetermined significance level ($p < 0.05$) was observed to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the results.

3 Results

The study revealed notable patterns in the relationship between participation in recreational activities and academic achievement among senior high school students. Descriptive analysis indicated that the overall level of student engagement in recreational activities was moderate, with a mean composite score of 3.42 on a 5-point Likert scale, suggesting that while students participated regularly, engagement levels varied across activity types. Among the four domains, social activities registered the highest mean score of 3.78, reflecting the strong emphasis on peer interaction during adolescence, whereas creative and outdoor activities recorded comparatively lower means of 3.15 and 3.08, respectively. In terms of academic performance, the participants exhibited an average Grade Point Average (GPA) of 88.74,

indicating satisfactory coursework achievement, while the mean standardized test score stood at 82.16, highlighting a potential gap in test-taking performance.

Inferential analysis further demonstrated that students who actively participated in recreational activities achieved significantly higher GPAs ($M = 89.52$) and standardized test scores ($M = 83.47$) compared to those with minimal or no participation (GPA: $M = 87.05$; Test Score: $M = 80.42$), with t-test results showing statistical significance ($p < 0.05$) in both cases. Moreover, Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a positive and moderately strong relationship between overall recreational participation and academic achievement ($r = 0.46$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that higher engagement levels were associated with better academic outcomes. These findings suggest that active involvement in recreational activities may contribute to enhanced academic performance, potentially by fostering cognitive, social, and emotional skills that support learning.

4 Discussion

The findings of this study are consistent with and reinforced by several related studies, both local and international, that highlight the positive influence of recreational activities on academic achievement. For instance, Muhammad (2023) found that students who actively participated in organized extracurricular and recreational activities demonstrated higher academic performance and greater school engagement, which aligns with the present study's observation that active participants achieved significantly higher GPAs and standardized test scores. Similarly, Feraco et al. (2022) emphasized that structured recreational involvement fosters essential skills such as time management, discipline, and social interaction, all of which may contribute to improved academic outcomes, corroborating the positive correlation identified in this research. In the Philippine context, Aquino and Reyes (2022) reported that high school students engaged in sports and club activities exhibited enhanced academic motivation and performance, echoing the current study's conclusion that recreational engagement supports holistic development. Moreover, the lower levels of creative and outdoor participation observed in this study parallel the findings of Wood et al. (2020), who noted that limited resources and opportunities often constrain student involvement in non-academic pursuits, potentially affecting the breadth of benefits gained. Collectively, these corroborative studies strengthen the validity of the present findings by situating them within a broader body of evidence, thereby underscoring the integral role of recreational activities in fostering both academic excellence and personal growth.

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