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The Role of Extracurricular Involvement in Academic Success and Subjective Well-being at School

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Роль внеклассной деятельности в успеваемости и субъективном благополучии в школе

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Statement of the problem. Participation in extracurricular activities (ECA) has been associated with positive academic outcomes and enhanced well-being for school-aged children and adolescents. Understanding the factors that influence the relationship between involvement in ECA, academic outcomes and well-being may extend the benefits of these activities for students.

The purpose of the study was to examine the links between engagement in ECA, educational attainment, and subjective well-being at school.

Methods and respondents. The research study had a cross-sectional survey design. Participants included a total of 754 schoolchildren at Russian public schools and their parents. Students completed the Survey of Subjective Well-being in School and provided details about their involvement in activities. They also reported their final year grades for the previous year in six main school subjects and answered demographic questions. Parents offered information about the family and their strategies and aspirations around participation in organised activities.

Findings. Academic achievement and subjective well-being at school were positively, although weakly, correlated regardless of engagement in activities or not. There was also a positive association between these two theoretical constructs for schoolchildren from socioeconomically disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged backgrounds. Concerning school performance, disadvantaged students who were involved in ECA scored significantly higher than disadvantaged schoolchildren who were not involved in any activity. Moreover, non-disadvantaged students who participated in ECA scored significantly higher than all other student groups (non-disadvantaged non-participants, disadvantaged participants, disadvantaged non-participants). Further analysis will consider specific activity contexts, features of structured activities, and student characteristics to extend these preliminary results.

Key words: extracurricular activities, academic achievement, subjective well-being, well-being at school, disadvantaged children

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Introduction

It is becoming more widely acknowledged that in addition to academic goals, schools and communities need to provide children and young people with a meaningful and balanced education that supports their mental health and well-being (Alivernini et al., 2020; Cefai et al., 2024; Ling et al., 2022). This becomes a challenging priority as, according to contemporary research results, there is ambiguity and inconsistency regarding the association between students' well-being and academic performance (Amholt et al., 2020; Klapp et al., 2024). Clarke (2020) has suggested that educational attainment and well-being are not incompatible objectives, but the connection between them is rather underexplored and therefore not fully understood.

Participation in extracurricular activities (ECA) is associated with both the well-being (Badura et al., 2021; Oberle et al., 2019) and academic outcomes (Magaji et al., 2022) of school-aged children and adolescents, although causal effects are difficult to confirm (Shulruf, 2010). ECA are organised activities that take place outside of school hours, are voluntary in nature, include rules and expectations, and are guided by knowledgeable adults (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005; Mahoney et al., 2005). They usually have a specific content focus that is relatively similar across different cultures. In Western contexts, they include sports, arts, academic subjects, prosocial activities, school-related schemes, etc. (Eccles et al., 2003). In the Russian Federation, they are grouped around the areas of sports, artistic creativity, technology, natural sciences, social sciences and humanities, and tourism and local history (Kosaretsky et al., 2024).

Statement of the Problem

Involvement in extracurricular activities (ECA) is associated with academic success, increased school attendance and engagement, reduced school dropout rates, higher grades, and long-term educational ambitions (Barber et al., 2001; Fredricks & Eccles, 2008; Kravchenko & Nygård, 2023; Mahoney et al., 2003; Mahoney & Cairns, 1997; Zhang & Tang, 2017). Moreover, it encourages the development of psychological and social competencies, such as lower levels of depressed mood (LaForge-MacKenzie et al., 2022; Mahoney et al., 2002), and increased self-determination and self-efficacy (Catalano, 2004).

Engagement in sports predicts positive educational outcomes (Lipscomb, 2007) and problem-solving skills (Fredricks & Eccles, 2008). Athletic activities have been linked to better mental health (LaForge-MacKenzie et al., 2022; O'Flaherty et al., 2022) and positive learning

experiences that facilitate identity exploration (Hansen et al., 2003), development of initiative (Larson et al., 2006), goal setting, and persistence (Danish et al., 2003). Students involved in sports show lower levels of social isolation too, although they might engage more often in risky behaviours, e.g. alcohol drinking (Barber et al., 2001).

Similarly, arts programmes are associated with academic achievement, persistence, and concentration (Ishiguro et al., 2023; Metsäpelto & Pulkkinen, 2012). The literature suggests that they also cultivate self-discipline and artistic talents (Oreck et al., 1999). Furthermore, they contribute to self-discovery (Fredricks & Eccles, 2008), development of initiative (Larson et al., 2006), and interpersonal skills (Soep, 1996).

Participation in academic clubs, which are subject-oriented, yields higher school performance and increased Grade Point Averages (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Knopf et al., 2015; Marsh & Kleitman, 2002; Shulruf, 2010). Involvement in these activities is interconnected with fewer internalising behaviours (Metsäpelto & Pulkkinen, 2012), the acquisition of leadership skills (Fredricks & Eccles, 2008), and increased self-worth when combined with taking part in athletic activities (Blomfield & Barber, 2009).

In summary, organised after-school activities offer opportunities to practice mental, physical, and social skills; become part of valued groups and establish social connections; build a sense of responsibility and strengthen bonds within the community; confront and overcome challenges; and ultimately engage in short- and long-term positive development (Eccles et al., 2003; Liem & Fredricks, 2025).

Young individuals from socioeconomically disadvantaged families seem to gain greater advantages from participation in structured activities compared to their more affluent counterparts (Marsh & Kleitman, 2002). However, children and young people from these backgrounds, those living in rural areas, those with an immigrant origin, and girls face more barriers to access ECA (Behtoui, 2019; Kosaretsky & Ivanov, 2020; Snellman et al., 2015).

Theoretical Framework

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a macro-theory of human motivation and personality. It assumes that performance and wellness are affected by the type of motivation people have when engaged in activities. According to this theory, humans are inherently active, intrinsically motivated, and oriented toward growth through integrative processes (Ryan & Deci, 2020). These features are part of human nature but broaden over time and through interaction with others in social environments. SDT posits

that psychological well-being and successful social functioning depend on three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

In educational settings, when professionals teach in ways that support these fundamental needs, students have a greater chance to perform better and experience higher well-being (Howard et al., 2025; King et al., 2024). Autonomy support occurs when teachers offer students the freedom to develop their own internal motivational resources, acknowledge their viewpoints, and use language that is informative rather than controlling. They also show awareness of their students' interests, preferences, and goals and are open to their opinions and feelings (Reeve et al., 2018). Competence is facilitated when teachers set and communicate clear expectations and provide support so that students can meet them. By fostering an atmosphere that is consistent and predictable, laying out clear instructions, and offering constructive feedback, educators enhance competency (Jang et al., 2010). They also support relatedness by showing care, empathy, personal interest, and respect towards their students. As a result, schoolchildren are more likely to form meaningful interpersonal connections and relationships (Capon-Sieber et al., 2022).

Purpose of the Study

Despite a significant increase in research on student well-being over the last few years, there is still no consensus on what it exactly refers to (Hossain et al., 2023). According to a broad definition, it represents "feeling good and functioning effectively" (Huppert & So, 2013, p. 838). A recent compilation of the literature (Strukova, 2024) identified the main characteristics of students with a high level of well-being in school: individual psychological state, quality of personal relationships, health quality, features of school, objective factors, and moral and spiritual elements.

Based on previous theoretical models of subjective well-being (SWB) in the school setting (Tian et al., 2015; Turilova-Miščenko & Raščevska, 2008), Kanonire et al. (2020) proposed a comprehensive framework of SWB in school in accordance with suggestions for the conceptually sound selection of well-being variables (Collie & Hascher, 2024). Five components serve as the foundation for this model: satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the school environment, affect toward school, collaboration and hostility in relationships with classmates, and subjective physical well-being.

The study sought to examine the effects of extracurricular activity (ECA) engagement on subjective well-being at school and educational attainment. The analysis was guided by the hypotheses below.

• *Hypothesis 1:* There are significant and positive relationships between academic achievement (GPA) and subjective well-being at school for participants in extracurricular activities.

• *Hypothesis 2:* School performance (GPA) differs significantly for different groups of students, according to their socioeconomic background and participation in extracurricular activities (disadvantaged students who participate in ECA, disadvantaged students who do not participate in ECA, non-disadvantaged students who participate in ECA, and non-disadvantaged students who do not participate in ECA).

• *Hypothesis 3:* Subjective well-being at school differs significantly for different groups of students, according to their socioeconomic background and participation in extracurricular activities (disadvantaged students who participate in ECA, disadvantaged students who do not participate in ECA, non-disadvantaged students who participate in ECA, and non-disadvantaged students who do not participate in ECA).

Methods and Respondents

Study Design and Procedure

The research study had a cross-sectional design. Questionnaires were administered to students (school grades 4, 5, 6, 10, and 11) from 20 public schools and their parents in a metropolitan city (Yaroslavl). The study's sample was randomised and representative of students at Russian urban schools. Permission from school principals was granted to conduct the survey within schools. Participation was voluntary and participants had the right to withdraw at any time. Participants were informed about the purpose and processes of the research and provided their informed consent to participate. Coding was used to create unique anonymous identifiers for linking schoolchildren's and parents' responses. Data collection took place online in 2023, and each questionnaire took approximately 30 minutes to complete. Children and adolescents filled in the questionnaires during school hours under the supervision of at least one adult. Statistical analysis was performed with SPSS Version 29 statistical software package.

Participants

The study included a total of 754 students, comprising 401 girls (53.2%) and 353 boys (46.8%). Most of them were in the fourth grade (N = 194, 25.7%), fifth grade (N = 208, 27.6%), and sixth grade (N = 210, 27.9%) at school, while fewer were in the tenth grade (N = 61, 8.1%) and eleventh grade (N = 81, 10.7%). Adult participants (N = 754) were predominantly

mothers (N = 683, 90.6%). The sample included 366 (48.5%) disadvantaged students (female: N = 197, 53.8%; male: N = 169, 46.2%).

Instruments

Survey of Subjective Well-being in School (SSWBS): The tool was adapted in Russian (Kanonire et al., 2020; Kanonire et al., 2022) using previously published instruments (Tian et al., 2015; Turilova-Miščenko & Raščevska, 2008). The survey measured subjective well-being at school through the evaluation of satisfaction with school, satisfaction with the school environment, affect toward school, cooperation, hostility, and subjective physical well-being (see Table 1). The reliability coefficients of these aspects of well-being, calculated using Cronbach's alpha (α), were 0.80, 0.81, 0.61, 0.77, 0.68, and 0.70, respectively. The reliability coefficient for the full scale was excellent (α = 0.87, scoring for negative items was reversed). Higher scores indicate higher levels of well-being for each dimension except for hostility, where higher scores indicate lower well-being. Table 1 shows details of the (sub)scales.

Academic achievement: School performance was measured using the Grade Point Average (GPA), based on student self-reported grades for the following subjects: Russian Language, Reading or Literature, Mathematics or Algebra, Foreign Language, Environmental Science or Biology, and Physics. The learner could receive a grade between 1 and 5 for each subject (5 indicating the highest achievement).

Extracurricular activity (ECA) details: A questionnaire for students was designed to assess features of participation in ECA, e.g. types/categories of activities, intensity of involvement, diversity of ECA, enjoyment of each activity, form of classes, location, fee, etc. The equivalent questionnaire for parents included questions about the duration of their child's engagement in ECA as well as their selection strategies and aspirations regarding the child's participation in organised activities.

Demographics: A short questionnaire completed by schoolchildren and another one completed by parents was used to capture demographic information such as sex, age, school grade, maternal and paternal education level, family structure, family income, etc. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds met one or more of the following criteria: low family income (parental responses: "We do not even have enough money for food" or "We have enough money for food, but not enough for clothes" or "We have enough money for food and clothing; buying more expensive things such as a TV or refrigerator causes us problems"), low maternal and/or paternal education level (responses: "Did not finish school" or "Just finished

school"), single or no parent at home, and a different language spoken at home and school (considered as an indicator of immigration status).

Table 1. Survey of Subjective Well-being in School: (Sub)scales

(Sub)Scales	Content	Type of scale & No. of items	Examples) of items
SWBS Satisfaction with School Scale	Achievement, school management, student-teacher relationships, teaching, academic learning	Five (5) items; 4-point Likert-type scale "Totally disagree" to "Totally agree"	"I have good relationships with teachers."
SWBS Satisfaction with the School Environment Scale	Satisfaction with school facilities	Five (5) items; 4-point Likert-type scale "Never" to "Always"	"I am happy with our dining room."
SWBS Affect toward School Scale	Emotional experiences in the school setting	Three (3) items; 4-point Likert-type scale "Never" to "Always"	"I don't feel like going to school."
SWBS Cooperation Scale	Cooperation in and out of the learning context	Five (5) items; 5-point Likert-type scale "Never" to "Always"	"I discussed school matters with my classmates."
SWBS Hostility Scale	Hostile actions aimed at the student or hostile behaviours between the student and classmates	Two (2) items; 5-point Likert-type scale "Never" to "Always"	"I had fights with my classmates."
SWBS Subjective Physical Well-being Scale	Physical well-being	Two (2) items; 5-point Likert-type scale "Never" to "Always"; 5-point Likert-type scale "Bad" to "Excellent"	"Over the past week, how often have you felt full of energy?" "How do you rate your health?"

Note 1: Items have been translated into English for the purposes of this article. They were presented in Russian.

Note 2: For the SWBS Affect toward School Scale, scoring was reversed for an item referring to positive emotions.

Note 3: The number of items is slightly reduced compared to the first version of the Survey of Subjective Well-being in School (Kanonire et al., 2022) due to further validation by the psychometric tool developers (T. Kanonire, personal communication, March, 12, 2025).

Results

Descriptive Statistics

A total of 754 schoolchildren aged 9-18 years (M_{age} = 12.52 years, SD_{age} = 2.31) and their parents participated in the study. A quarter of them (N = 193, 25.6%) lived in low-income households, and a similar proportion of students (N = 192, 25.5%) were living with one or none of their parents. A low family education level was observed for around one in ten students (low maternal education level: N = 54, 7.2%; low paternal education level: N = 71, 9.4%). Only twenty-one students (2.8%) were speaking a different language at home than at school.

More than two-thirds of the schoolchildren (N = 518, 68.7%) were engaged in at least one extracurricular activity. Participation profiles for specific types of activities were as follows: Sports and physical education, N = 346, 45.9%; arts (fine arts, dance, music, theatre), N = 211, 28.0%; foreign languages, N = 98, 13.0%; engineering/technology programmes (including design, modeling, and robotics), N = 27, 3.6%; tourism, N = 23, 3.1%; school curriculum subjects (except foreign languages), N = 21, 2.8%; crafts (cutting and sewing, knitting, embroidery, carpentry, pottery, etc.), N = 15, 2.0%; social/community activities (including volunteering), N = 9, 1.2%; and science (research activities in the field of natural sciences, humanities, social sciences, ecology, and local history), N = 8, 1.1%.

Variable Correlations: Academic performance and subjective well-being at school

Spearman's rank-order correlations were run to examine the relationships between academic achievement (GPA) and subjective well-being at school for students who were involved in out-of-school activities (see Table 2). There were significant, weak, and positive correlations between school performance and four (sub)scales of well-being: subjective well-being at school (r = .19, p < .01), satisfaction with school (r = .30, p < .01), affect toward school (r = .17, p < .01), and cooperation (r = .17, p < .01). This indicates that an increase in educational attainment is associated with and higher levels of subjective well-being at school, higher satisfaction with school, more positive emotional experiences in the school setting, and improved cooperation with classmates. There were similar results for schoolchildren who did not engage in structured activities, with the addition of significant, weak, and positive correlations between academic achievement and satisfaction with the school environment as well as subjective physical well-being.

Moreover, similar correlations were run to investigate the relationships between academic performance and subjective well-being at school for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged participants in extracurricular activities (see Table 3). There were significant, weak, and positive associations between educational achievement and three (sub)scales of well-being for the first group: subjective well-being at school ($r = .14$, $p < .05$), satisfaction with school ($r = .23$, $p < .01$), and cooperation ($r = .18$, $p < .01$). Equivalent results were noted for students who did not belong to socioeconomically vulnerable families, with an additional significant, weak, and positive correlation between school performance and affect toward school.

Table 2. Correlations between academic achievement and subjective well-being at school for participants in extracurricular activities ($N = 518$) and non-participants ($N = 236$)

Variables	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
1. Academic achievement (GPA)	—	0.29**	0.20*	0.22**	0.26**	0.25**	-0.17	0.18**
2. Subjective well-being at school (SWBS)	0.19**	—	0.76**	0.77**	0.75**	0.50**	-0.40	0.68**
3. SWBS - Satisfaction with school	0.30**	0.74**	—	0.63**	0.62**	0.31**	-0.19	0.38**
4. SWBS - Satisfaction with school environment	0.06	0.71**	0.57**	—	0.57**	0.33**	-0.12	0.39**
5. SWBS - Affect toward school	0.17**	0.76**	0.59**	0.50**	—	0.28**	-0.29	0.34**
6. SWBS - Cooperation	0.17**	0.48**	0.25**	0.25**	0.23**	—	-0.03	0.22**
7. SWBS - Hostility	-0.12	-0.50	-0.24	-0.22	-0.28	-0.14	—	-0.10
8. SWBS - Subjective physical well-being	0.01	0.69**	0.35**	0.26**	0.41**	0.20**	-0.24	—
Participants								
N	518	518	518	518	518	518	518	518
Mean	4.2231	2.9829	3.1181	2.5729	2.6013	2.6556	1.8407	3.6371
Median	4.2	3.00556	3	2.6	2.67	2.6	1.5	3.5
Mode	4.2	3.2	3	2.2	3	3	1.5	4
Standard Deviation	0.54	0.45	0.60	0.75	0.60	0.59	0.64	0.91
Skewness	-0.75	-0.25	-0.41	0.01	-0.11	-0.19	1.17	-0.37
Kurtosis	1.67	-0.27	-0.22	-0.54	-0.17	-0.06	1.54	-0.42
Minimum	1	1.66667	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	4.11111	4	4	4	4	4	5

Non-participants								
N	236	236	236	236	236	236	236	236
Mean	3.9624	2.9476	3.0992	2.6196.	2.5739	2.5966	1.8305	3.5148
Median	4	2.93611	3	2.6	2.67	2.6	1.5	3.5
Mode	4	2.9	3	2.6	2.67	2.8	1.5	3.5
Standard Deviation	0.57	0.46	0.58	0.78	0.61	0.65	0.68	0.98
Skewness	-0.12	0.07	-0.19	0.13	-0.20	0.07	1.15	-0.26
Kurtosis	-0.59	0.04	-0.42	-0.64	0.08	-0.27	1.24	-0.59
Minimum	2.2	1.6	1.4	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	4.16667	4	4	4	4	4	5

Note 1: **p<.01 (2-tailed)

Note 2: For Variables, coefficients below the diagonal are for participants in activities, and those above the diagonal are for non-participants

Table 3. Correlations between academic achievement and subjective well-being at school for disadvantaged (*N* = 237) and non-disadvantaged (*N* = 281) participants in extracurricular activities

Variables	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
1. Academic achievement (GPA)	—	0.21**	0.33*	0.04**	0.23**	0.13**	-0.10	0.03**
2. Subjective well-being at school (SWBS)	0.14**	—	0.76**	0.70**	0.79**	0.48**	-0.45	0.70**
3. SWBS - Satisfaction with school	0.23**	0.72**	—	0.57**	0.65**	0.21**	-0.26	0.37**
4. SWBS - Satisfaction with school environment	0.09	0.73**	0.57**	—	0.47**	0.15**	-0.17	0.23**
5. SWBS - Affect toward school	0.10**	0.71**	0.52**	0.53**	—	0.25**	-0.27	0.48**
6. SWBS - Cooperation	0.18**	0.47**	0.27**	0.35**	0.19**	—	-0.16	0.21**
7. SWBS - Hostility	-0.11	-0.54	-0.22	-0.26	-0.30	-0.09	—	-0.18
8. SWBS - Subjective physical well-being	0.02	0.68**	0.32**	0.29**	0.33**	0.17**	-0.29	—
Disadvantaged Participants								
N	237	237	237	237	237	237	237	237
Mean	4.1046	2.9385	3.0540	2.5829	2.5881	2.6059	1.9262	3.6076
Median	4.2	2.96667	3	2.6	2.67	2.6	2	3.5
Mode	4	2.56667a	3	2.2	3	2.6	1.5	3
Standard Deviation	0.57	0.44	0.61	0.77	0.57	0.59	0.70	0.91

Skewness	-0.89	-0.21	-0.36	0.03	-0.16	-0.02	0.97	-0.22
Kurtosis	2.64	-0.36	-0.28	-0.53	-0.06	-0.09	0.81	-0.56
Minimum	1	1.81667	1.2	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	4.11111	4	4	4	4	4	5
Non-disadvantaged Participants								
N	281	281	281	281	281	281	281	281
Mean	4.3230	3.0203	3.1722	2.5642	2.6124	2.6975	1.7687	3.6619
Median	4.4	3.03333	3.2	2.6	2.67	2.8	1.5	4
Mode	5	2.90556a	3	2.20a	3	3	1.5	4
Standard Deviation	0.49	0.46	0.60	0.74	0.63	0.59	0.57	0.91
Skewness	-0.46	0.30	-0.46	0.04	-0.09	0.36	1.32	-0.50
Kurtosis	-0.46	-0.17	-0.13	-0.54	-0.26	0.09	2.35	-0.25
Minimum	3	1.66667	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	3.99444	4	4	4	4	4	5

Note 1: *p < .05 (2-tailed), ** p < .01 (2-tailed)

Note 2: For Variables, coefficients below the diagonal are for disadvantaged participants in activities, and those above the diagonal are for non-disadvantaged participants

One-way ANOVA results:
Academic performance and subjective well-being at school

Hypotheses 2 and 3 tested if school performance (GPA) and subjective well-being at school differed significantly for students of different profiles, according to their socioeconomic background and participation in extracurricular activities (ECA). Schoolchildren were divided into four groups: (1) Disadvantaged students who participated in ECA; (2) Disadvantaged students who did not participate in ECA; (3) Non-disadvantaged students who participated in ECA; and (4) Non-disadvantaged students who did not participate in ECA. An overview of the ANOVA results is available below (see also Table 4).

The academic achievement scores of the groups differed significantly ($F_{3, 750} = 24.206$, $p < .001$). Since the Levene's Statistic was not significant, equal variance was assumed. To check for individual differences between groups, post-hoc comparisons were assessed using the Bonferroni test. The test indicated that the mean score for disadvantaged students who participated in ECA ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.57$) was significantly different from the mean score of disadvantaged students who did not participate in any activity ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.58$). The mean difference was significant

at the .001 level. Furthermore, the mean score for non-disadvantaged schoolchildren who participated in ECA (M = 4.32, SD = 0.49) was significantly different from the mean score of non-disadvantaged students who did not participate in any activity (M = 4.11, SD = 0.53) and also from the mean score of disadvantaged schoolchildren who participated in ECA (M = 4.10, SD = 0.57) and the mean score of disadvantaged non-participants (M = 3.84, SD = 0.58). The mean differences were significant at the .05 level.

The subjective well-being at school scores of the groups differed significantly ($F_{3, 750}$ = 3.419, p < .05). The Bonferroni test showed that the mean score for non-disadvantaged students who participated in ECA (M = 3.02, SD = 0.46) was significantly different from the mean score of disadvantaged non-participants (M = 2.89, SD = 0.45). The mean difference was significant at the .05 level. Additionally, the cooperation scores of the groups differed significantly ($F_{3, 750}$ = 4.559, p < .05). The Bonferroni test showed that the mean scores for non-disadvantaged students who participated or not in ECA (M = 2.70, SD = 0.59; and M = 2.73, SD = 0.64, respectively) were significantly different from the mean score of disadvantaged non-participants (M = 2.49, SD = 0.65). The mean differences were significant at the .05 level. Finally, the hostility scores of the groups differed significantly ($F_{3, 750}$ = 3.298, p < .05). The Dunnett's T3 test showed that the mean score for non-disadvantaged students who participated in ECA (M = 1.77, SD = 0.57) was significantly different from the mean score of disadvantaged non-participants (M = 1.93, SD = 0.70). The mean difference was significant at the .05 level.

Table 4. One-way ANOVA results for academic achievement and subjective well-being at school for different groups of students, according to their socioeconomic background and participation in extracurricular activities (N = 754)

Dependent Variables	**Independent Variable levels**				**Test of Homogeneity of Variances**		**ANOVA**	
	ECA selection	**N**	**M**	**SD**	**Levene's Statistic**	**Sig.**	**F**	**Sig (2-tailed)**
1. Academic achievement (GPA)	Disadvantaged ECA participant	237	4.10	0.57	2.499	0.059	24.206	**<001**
	Disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	129	3.84	0.58				
	Non-disadvantaged ECA participant	281	4.32	0.49				
	Non-disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	107	4.11	0.53				

2. Subjective well-being at school (SWBS)	Disadvantaged ECA participant	237	2.94	0.44	0.190	0.903	3.419	**0.017**
	Disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	129	2.89	0.45				
	Non-disadvantaged ECA participant	281	3.02	0.46				
	Non-disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	107	3.02	0.48				
3. SWBS - Satisfaction with school	Disadvantaged ECA participant	237	3.05	0.61	0.329	0.805	1.857	0.135
	Disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	129	3.08	0.58				
	Non-disadvantaged ECA participant	281	3.17	0.60				
	Non-disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	107	3.12	0.58				
4. SWBS - Satisfaction with school environment	Disadvantaged ECA participant	175	2.58	0.77	0.513	0.673	0.908	0.437
	Disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	102	2.55	0.73				
	Non-disadvantaged ECA participant	201	2.56	0.74				
	Non-disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	82	2.71	0.83				
5. SWBS - Affect toward school	Disadvantaged ECA participant	237	2.59	0.57	0.881	0.451	0.261	0.854
	Disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	129	2.56	0.62				
	Non-disadvantaged ECA participant	281	2.61	0.63				
	Non-disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	107	2.60	0.61				
6. SWBS - Cooperation	Disadvantaged ECA participant	237	2.61	0.59	0.820	0.483	4.559	**0.004**
	Disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	129	2.49	0.65				
	Non-disadvantaged ECA participant	281	2.70	0.59				
	Non-disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	107	2.73	0.64				
7. SWBS - Hostility	Disadvantaged ECA participant	237	1.93	0.70	3.554	0.014	3.298	**0.020**
	Disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	129	1.89	0.62				
	Non-disadvantaged ECA participant	281	1.77	0.57				
	Non-disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	107	1.76	0.74				

8. SWBS - Subjectivephysical well-being	Disadvantaged ECA participant	237	3.61	0.91	0.360	0.782	1.781	0.149
	Disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	129	3.43	0.96				
	Non-disadvantaged ECA participant	281	3.66	0.91				
	Non-disadvantaged non-participant in ECA	107	3.61	1.00				

Discussion

The study investigated the links between involvement in extracurricular activities (ECA), academic achievement, and subjective well-being at school (SWBS). Educational attainment and SWBS were positively associated for schoolchildren who participated or not in organised activities ($r = .19$, $p < .01$; and $r = .29$, $p < .01$, respectively). Moreover, there was a positive correlation between the two concepts for students from both disadvantaged ($r = .14$, $p < .05$) and non-disadvantaged backgrounds ($r = .21$, $p < .01$). Despite conflicting findings in the literature, these results indicate that an increase in school performance would likely be associated with higher SWBS and vice versa. However, conclusions from longitudinal research suggest that this result should be interpreted with caution; competitive educational environments are successful in raising student achievement, but they are not always effective in promoting school-related well-being (Klapp et al., 2024).

Four groups were used to compare the effect of student profile (participation in ECA, disadvantaged status) on school performance as well as on SWBS: (1) Disadvantaged ECA participants; (2) Disadvantaged non-participants in ECA; (3) Non-disadvantaged ECA participants; and (4) Non-disadvantaged non-participants in ECA. Disadvantaged students who were engaged in ECA scored significantly higher in academic achievement than disadvantaged students who were not involved in organised activities ($p < .001$). The third student group appeared to benefit the most, with non-disadvantaged participants in ECA scoring higher for school performance than the first, second, and fourth groups ($p < .05$). These results suggest that schoolchildren's participation in out-of-school activities has a beneficial effect on academic outcomes (GPA) for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students.

Non-disadvantaged participants in ECA scored higher in SWBS ($p < .05$) and cooperation ($p < .05$), and lower in hostility ($p < .05$) than disadvantaged non-participants. Finally, non-disadvantaged schoolchildren who did not engage in ECA scored higher in cooperation ($p < .05$) than

disadvantaged non-participants. These results indicate that students' socioeconomic vulnerabilities may have a stronger or more complicated effect on SWBS compared to their involvement in organised activities. Further analysis will explore more closely the role of risk factors and specific demographic characteristics.

As highlighted by earlier studies that applied a Self-Determination Theory (SDT) perspective, need-support teaching can facilitate motivation, learning, and well-being (Howard et al., 2021; King et al., 2024). In line with the SDT principles, participation in extracurricular education might play a positive role in students' optimal performance and well-being. Participants' autonomy can be facilitated when leaders of organised activities are flexible, engage with schoolchildren using an informational rather than controlling manner, and demonstrate an understanding of their interests, preferences, and goals. Furthermore, when educators establish and convey clear guidelines and expectations, and offer assistance in meeting those, competence is promoted. Additionally, instructors or coaches may foster relatedness by treating their students with respect and empathy and by supporting positive social interactions between members of activity groups. When these basic needs are nurtured in extracurricular environments, children and adolescents may reap benefits that extend to their school life as well.

Overall, the study contributed to a better understanding of the role of ECA in the contemporary Russian context. It provided initial insights into the positive effects of ECA participation on academic achievement and offered considerations for further research on its potential associations with student well-being. It is important to explore the impact of involvement in specific ECA, such as athletic activities, which have been linked to improved well-being for children from disadvantaged backgrounds (Kennewell et al., 2022). According to Fredricks and Eccles (2008), different categories of ECA are ecological contexts with characteristics that encourage distinct interaction patterns. Thus, they offer possibilities to develop a range of abilities and social relationships, and might influence school performance and student well-being in complex ways.

Conclusion

The results of the study help advance the field of extracurricular research in various cultural contexts. The findings support the positive effect of participation in extracurricular activities on academic performance and offer guidance for further research on its potential influence on subjective well-being at school. It is important to consider ways to enhance not only

students' academic achievement but also their well-being in different settings (Ling et al., 2022) and through effective interventions (Cefai et al., 2021).

Limitations

The cross-sectional design of the study cannot fully explain the causal relationship between the variables of interest. Future studies could benefit from experimental and longitudinal approaches to inform the design of extracurricular programmes. The use of self-report survey measures may have limitations; incorporating other data collection methods could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effects of organised activities.

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Роль внеклассной деятельности в успеваемости и субъективном благополучии в школе

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Актуальность. Участие во внеклассной деятельности (ВКД) связано с положительными академическими результатами и улучшением благополучия детей и подростков школьного возраста. Понимание факторов, влияющих на взаимосвязь между участием в ВКД, академическими результатами и благополучием, может расширить преимущества этих видов деятельности для учащихся.

Цель, методы и респонденты. Целью данного поперечного исследования было изучение взаимосвязей между участием во внеучебной деятельности (ВУД), учебными достижениями и субъективным благополучием в школьной среде. В исследовании приняли участие 754 учащихся российских общеобразовательных школ и их родители. Школьники заполнили «Анкету субъективного благополучия в школе» и предоставили информацию о своем участии в различных видах деятельности. Кроме того, они сообщили об итоговых оценках за предыдущий учебный год по шести основным школьным предметам и ответили на вопросы демографического характера. Родители предоставили данные о семейной ситуации, а также о стратегиях и мотивации, связанных с участием в организованных формах деятельности.

Результаты. Академическая успеваемость и субъективное благополучие в школе демонстрировали положительную, хотя и слабую, корреляцию вне зависимости от участия школьников в ВУД. Также была выявлена положительная взаимосвязь между этими двумя теоретическими конструктами как среди учащихся из социально неблагополучных, так и из благополучных семей. В отношении учебных достижений было установлено, что социально неблагополучные учащиеся, принимающие участие в ВУД, показали значительно более высокие результаты по сравнению с их сверстниками, не участвующими ни в одной форме деятельности. Более того, учащиеся из социально благополучных семей, участвующие в ВУД, набрали значительно больше баллов, чем все остальные группы школьников (неучаствующие благополучные, участвующие неблагополучные, неучаствующие неблагополучные).

В дальнейшем планируется провести углубленный анализ, учитывающий особенности конкретных видов деятельности, структурные характеристики ВУД, а также индивидуальные особенности учащихся, с целью уточнения и расширения полученных предварительных результатов.

Ключевые слова: внеучебная деятельность, академическая успеваемость, субъективное благополучие, школьное благополучие, дети из неблагополучных семей

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