

A Case Study of Extracurricular Activities in Central Indiana

Aissata Bah, Sheila Dennis, Nicholas Hester, Andricus Hutcherson, Alexandra Kessler, Ariba Khalid, Umara Khalid

Although previous research noted that extracurricular activities are significantly associated with various students' outcomes, little research to date has explored their current conditions. This case study examined the status and quality of extracurricular activities in 11 public schools around Central Indiana. Two sets of data were combined and matched by each school's identification: the survey of extracurricular activities from schools and the schools' characteristics from Indiana Department of Education. Of the sample, 67% were elementary schools and 42% were relatively low SES schools with a larger number of students receiving free meals. Our study showed that on average, schools provided 21 different extracurricular activities for their students. Academic activities were most prevalent (100%), followed by performing arts activities (83.3%), sports activities (83.3%), prosocial activities (75%), and school involvement activities (66.7%). For the quality of extracurricular activities, about 12% of students in each school participated in at least one activity and spent an average of 2.6 hours a week on extracurricular activities. The mean number of staff and volunteers who administered activities was 5. Approximately 39% of activities in each school were delivered by community partnerships. Our study also found that elementary schools had the lower mean scores in most measures of the quality of extracurricular activities, such as the frequency of the activities, hours spent per week, and the number of staff and volunteers. Furthermore, low SES schools tended to have lower levels of students' participation in extracurricular activities, although they provided more frequent and diverse activities than high SES schools. These results may imply that more significant attention should be paid to elementary schools to improve the quality of activities as well as low SES schools to promote students' active involvement.

Mentors: Carolyn Gentle-Genitty, IU School of Social Work, IUPUI; Bessie House-Soremekun, IU School of Liberal Arts, IUPUI; Jangmin Kim, IU School of Social Work, IUPUI; Isaac Karikari, IU School of Social Work, IUPUI