

Question: What is the relationship (if any) between academic performance and physical activity?

After researching this question through examination of various articles found on the PubMed (MEDLINE) database I believe that there is a correlation between academic performance and physical activity due to the positive extrinsic values of exercise. I think that the social benefits of exercise are what help lead to better academic performance.

Make your intro unique

The paper starts with the question you are researching. Nice intro with a simple answer to the question based on the authors reading of the research.

The leading position in this debate is that physical activity does relate to improved academic performance but it is the extrinsic values of physical activity that provide the scholastic benefits, not the athletic activity itself. Faulkner et. al. (2009) correlates school disconnectedness, physical activity, and academic performance saying that a lack of physical activity can lead to a feeling of school disconnectedness, which in turn negatively affects academic performance. This study supports the idea that due to the way physical activity can connect students to their teachers, classmates, and other resources, leads to better performance in school. Field et. al. (2001) reported similar findings in their study. They found that students who exercised frequently reaped a number of extrinsic benefits including better relationships with their parents and less frequent drug use. Their study gives evidence that these benefits of exercise, among others, are what lead to better academic achievements. The basis for both of these articles, and the numerous others that support this theory, is that the external benefits of exercise provide the academic benefits, not the activity itself, or the physiological results.

Nice use of resources. Author appropriately cites work

Few articles explicitly report that physical activity alone improves academic performance, which shows that as of right now this is not the popular stance in the broad field of Kinesiology. Taras' (2005) study coincides with this belief and concluded that the numerous physiological benefits of exercise such as increased blood flow to the brain and raised levels of norepinephrine and endorphins are what lead to better performance in school. This article supports the idea various biological effects caused by physical activity lead to better academic performance. These findings support the idea that by simply being active, a person can increase their performance in school. It does also mention, though, how more studies must be done before making any definite conclusions. Secondly, Hillman et. al. (2008) reported that aerobic exercise can improve cognition and therefore academic performance. This review agrees with the findings in Taras' study and supports other findings that show how the physiological benefits of exercise directly lead to improved academics. Although it

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is not the popular belief that exercise is directly and positively linked to academic performance, a select number of studies do support this idea and further studies must be done to help prove this belief.

There are also many people in the field of Kinesiology that believe academic performance and physical activity is not related at all. Fisher et. al. (1996) showed in their study of 838 gym students in an urban New York City High School that sports involvement had no effect on academic performance. These students were all involved in sports via the gym class and reported that they were all involved in sports outside of class in some way. Despite this active participation, more students got C's (38%) and D/F's (32%), than A/B's (30%). This study makes a strong case for exercise having no affect on academics due to the fact that it explicitly shows how despite athletic participation, over a third of the subjects were performing very poorly in school. Sigfusdottir et. al. (2007) set out to find if there was any relation between BMI (body mass index), diet, physical activity, and school performance. This study also supports the idea that physical activity and academics are unrelated, and noted that factors such as parental education, self esteem, and overall mental health play a much larger role in determining academic success. Both of these articles, along with many others, speak to the idea that physical activity is an insignificant, if not absent factor in academic achievement. They also support the idea that the relationship between athletics and scholastic achievement is extremely complex due to the innumerable variables that pertain to athletics and that athletic participation itself does not guarantee academic success.

This paper would benefit from a closing or concluding paragraph.

Works Cited

- Taras H. Physical Activity and Student Performance at School. *Journal of School Health*. 2005; 75 (6): 214-218.
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Good use of resources. Author does a nice job selecting primary sources. A primary source is original research done by the author or group of authors. Information cited by a paper that comes from other work is a secondary source. You are required to have five (5) primary sources. A review style paper is NOT a primary source – neither is a text book!

The format of these sources is good. Look at the AMA style link on your assignment for more details.