



# How Motivation Affects Extracurricular Involvement

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## Abstract

This study sought to determine what role motivation plays in an undergraduate student's decision to participate in extracurricular activities. There has been little research on what motivates students to participate in extracurricular activities, but some research suggests that a student's motivation can increase if they believe an extracurricular activity improves their knowledge or skill set (Dawes & Larson, 2011). Researchers gave subjects (N = 59) a list of either motivational quotes or unrelated facts before subjects were asked if they wanted to join an extracurricular activity. Researchers also asked subjects to rate their interest level in several extracurricular activities. It was predicted that a student would express more interest in joining an extracurricular activity if that student had listened to several motivational quotes before being asked to indicate their interest level because motivation has been shown to increase interest in school (Mahoney, Cairns, & Farmer, 2003). Motivation did not have a significant effect on extracurricular participation, however something which warrants further study is how extracurricular involvement increases the likelihood of a student participating in additional extracurricular activities.

## Introduction

- Literature suggests that there is a strong positive correlation between academic success and extracurricular involvement (Mahoney, Cairns, & Farmer, 2003).
- A second study indicated that two traits commonly associated with student retention at the university level are a student's ability and motivation in their academics (Alaroon & Edwards, 2013).
- Previous research conducted mostly on high school students, however this study focused on community college students. This study examined if a student could be motivated to join an extracurricular activity.
- For the purpose of this study an extracurricular activity is defined as a sport or club on campus.
- Hypothesis: It is expected that subjects who listened to motivational quotes will join more extracurricular activities than participants that listened to unrelated facts.

## Materials and Methods

- Participants
  - N = 59
  - Mean age of 24
  - 43 females and 13 males
- Materials
  - Consent Form
  - List of Motivational Quotes (Experimental Group)
  - List of Unrelated Facts (Control Group)
  - Manipulation Check
  - Extracurricular Activity Selection Form
  - Interest Level in Extracurricular Activities Questionnaire
- Procedure
  - Between-subjects design
  - Motivational quotes read aloud to experimental group (n = 31)
  - Unrelated facts read aloud to control group (n = 28)
  - Subjects given questionnaire given with different extracurricular activities to select if interested.
  - Five-point Likert scale used to rate level of interest in different types of extracurricular activities.
- Results
  - No significant difference between the group that received motivational quotes and the group that received unrelated facts.
  - Experimental group showed interest in joining 2.16 extracurricular activities.
  - Control group showed interest in joining 2.57 extracurricular activities.
  - Control group had higher level of interest in joining special interest clubs (e.g. Anime Club, Christian Students).
  - Subjects already participating in activities were more likely to show interest in joining another activity.

Levels of Interest in Extracurricular Activities (1.00 = 5.00)

Group	Interest in joining Educational Club	Willingness to attend Educational Club meetings	Interest in holding position in Educational Club	Interest in joining Special Interest Club	Willingness to attend Special Interest Club meetings	Interest in holding position in Special Interest Club	Interest in joining a sport	Willingness to attend sport practice
Motivational Quotes	3.633	3.533	2.967	2.903	3.067	2.667	2.967	3.400
Unrelated Facts	3.577	3.346	2.615	3.429	3.286	2.714	2.9231	3.179

## Discussion

- Hypothesis not supported.
- Could gain internal validity if repeated as a within-subjects design.
- Possible leading question in manipulation check may have introduced bias to answers.
- The method of motivation may have been too weak in the current study.
- Students may not want to take on new responsibilities toward end of semester.
- Future studies could use a motivational speaker instead of motivational quotes.
- Effect may be seen with larger sample size.
- Students may be more susceptible to motivation at beginning of semester with fewer assignments.

## References

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