

The Relationship Between Life Satisfaction, Social Interest, and Frequency of Extracurricular Activities Among Adolescent Students

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The relationship between life satisfaction, social interest, and participation in extracurricular activities was assessed among adolescent students. A total of 321 high school adolescents (Grades 9–12) were administered a multidimensional measure of life satisfaction and a scale that assessed social interest. Adolescents were also asked to list the number of extracurricular activities that they participated in since their enrollment in high school. Higher social interest was significantly related to higher levels of overall satisfaction, as well as satisfaction with friends and family. Significant race differences were noted. Adolescents who participated in greater numbers of structured extracurricular activities reported higher school satisfaction. The relationship between social interest and actual participation in extracurricular activities was negligible. Implications of these findings, as well as suggestions for future research are provided.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past 3 decades, scientific interest has focused on the psychological mechanisms and correlates of happiness (i.e., subjective well-being (SWB)) within specific groups and at the individual level (Argyle, 1987; Diener, 2000; Diener *et al.*, 1999; Lu and Shih, 1997). Research in this area is particularly interested in how people experience their lives in positive ways (DeNeve and Cooper, 1998). To this degree, a proliferation of SWB studies has recently occurred, primarily as

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