

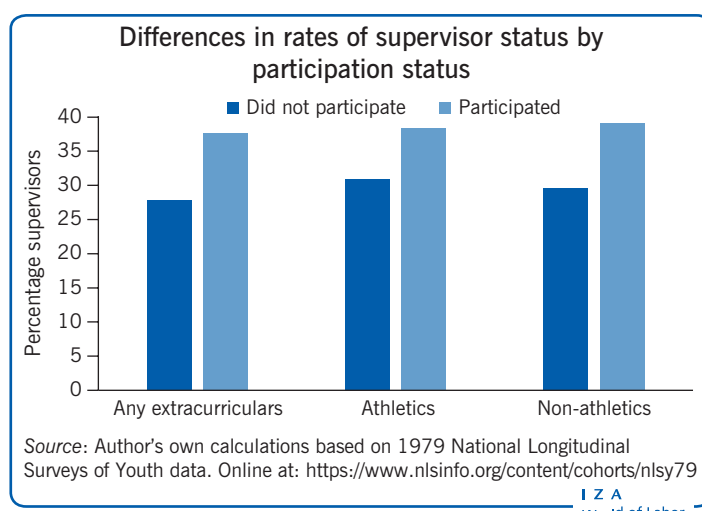
Youth extracurricular activities and the importance of social skills for supervisors

Social skills developed during extracurricular activities in adolescence can be highly valuable in managerial occupations

Keywords: noncognitive skills, extracurricular activities, supervisors

ELEVATOR PITCH

Youth participation in extracurricular activities is associated with a variety of benefits, ranging from higher concurrent academic performance to better labor market outcomes. In particular, these activities provide avenues through which youth can develop the interpersonal and leadership skills that are crucial to succeed as a manager. A lack of opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities for many youths, particularly those from lower-income backgrounds, may have negative consequences for developing the next generation of managers and business leaders.



KEY FINDINGS

Pros

- + Developing social skills during youth can pay dividends later during an individual's career.
- + Strong social skills are important for performing in managerial occupations.
- + Participation in extracurricular activities during secondary school is associated with greater sociability and leads to a higher likelihood of holding supervisory responsibilities later in life.

Cons

- Research has not clearly established a causal link between extracurricular activities and development of social skills.
- It is not clear which activities best develop social skills.
- Little is known about the relative impact of participation in extracurricular activities at different ages.

AUTHOR'S MAIN MESSAGE

Participation in extracurricular activities during youth provides individuals an opportunity to build the social and leadership skills required to become successful managers later in life. Research indicates participation leads to a greater likelihood of becoming a supervisor during adulthood, though it is unclear if this is indeed due to development of social skills, nor which activities best develop these skills. Policymakers should include support for youth extracurricular activities as part of their education and workforce development plans. Employers can also help by increasing sponsorship of these activities and providing incentives for employees to volunteer.