

DOES PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IMPACT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in two high schools located in suburban, Long Island, New York, with a predominantly White population. It consisted of 234, 11th grade students and the data was analyzed using the structural equation model.

Findings show that there is a correlation between percent of participation in organization and academic self-concept, a correlation between self-concept and academic self-concept as well as a correlation between self-concept and percent of participation in sports. An inverse correlation was found between the percent of participation in an organization and self-concept.

INTRODUCTION

Growing evidence demonstrates the overall value of participation in organized activities for positive youth development, including fewer behavior problems, improved academic self-concept, and increased educational achievement (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005). To date, there haven't been many studies to determine if various extracurricular activities in combination have a greater impact than one particular type alone.

Though there has been a great deal of research surrounding athletic extracurricular activities, there hasn't been much research comparing various types of extracurricular activities to determine if certain extracurricular activities have a greater effect on a student's overall grade point average or academic self-concept. The review of relevant literature indicated relationships among participation in extracurricular activities and academic achievement. Adolescent students' involvement in extracurricular activities, both athletic-based and academic-based, has shown to increase student achievement and increase academic self-concept. Researchers have essentially showed agreement throughout the review of literature.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study examined the effect and relationship of four variables (academic self-concept, self-concept, percent of participation in sports and percent of participation in an organization) on students' academic achievement. Academic achievement is measured by scores in ELA, Math, and overall GPA.

This study is important because it will help schools determine which type of extracurricular makes the biggest positive impact on academic achievement.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY (CONT.)

This study is important because much of today's research tend to support the academic and psychological development benefits of extracurricular involvement. Many think that by participating in a variety of different organized activities will bring higher grades motivation and a positive self-concept. What we fail to realize is that for some youth overscheduling them with extracurricular activities can bring about negative consequences academically and psychologically.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the relationship among the four variables (self-concept, academic self-concept, level of student participation in after-school sports and organizations) and the final Grade Point Average (GPA), English Language Arts (ELA) and Math scores for eleventh graders?
2. What is the impact, if any, of the four variables (self-concept, academic self-concept, level of student participation in after-school sports and organizations) on the Final Grade Point Average (GPA), English Language Arts (ELA) and Math scores for eleventh graders?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Participation in school-based extracurricular activities like sports, the arts, and academic clubs, provides opportunities for student growth both educationally and developmentally (Mahoney et al., 2006). There have been many studies that show a positive relationship between participating in after school sports or an organizational activity and a student's final Grade Point Average (GPA). Mahoney et al., (2005) stated activity participation by adolescents has been found, to be linked with higher educational attainment and achievement reduced problem behaviors and heightened psychosocial competencies (Mahoney et al., 2005). Astin (1984) and Tinto (1975) stated involvement helps students connect with their institution and develop attachment that encourages exploration and it facilitates social interaction by increasing peer friendships and time with faculty and staff (Astin, 1984; Tinto, 1975).

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

- Many researchers have hypothesized that there is a significant correlation between academic achievement and the level of extracurricular participation, marked by increases in students' academic achievement (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005).
- Early research reported mixed results as to the association between participation in extracurricular activity and academic achievement in the form of grade point average (Holland & Andre, 1987).
- Extracurricular activities are believed to influence academic self-concept (Jacobs, Vernon, & Eccles, 2004). Stakeholders are concerned about educational performance within the public school setting. Many school reforms have been based off of these concerns stemming from student's academic achievement.

ACADEMIC SELF-CONCEPT

- Conventional wisdom suggests that academic performance should be related to general self-esteem. According to Goodman and Young (2006), the higher the student's academic performance, the higher their self-esteem should be and vice versa.
- According to Holland and Andre (1987), all students start school being identified with academics, meaning their academic performance is relation to how they feel about themselves. Self-esteem, however, is only one of several predictors of academic performance (Steele, 1992).
- Being that many prior studies have shown that academic self-concept is significantly related to academic performance, further studies have been conducted to isolate the affect of academic self-concept between various ethnicities, and between genders.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- In Mahoney et al., (2006), recent national survey showed that more than 80% of children and youth participated in extracurricular contexts (Mahoney et al., 2006). Eccles and Gootman (2002) and Holland and Andres (1987), also stated there is an increasing awareness that participation in organized activity contexts offers valuable opportunities for growth and positive youth development (Eccles & Gootman 2002; Holland & Andres 1987). Participating in extracurricular activities becomes increasingly important during adolescence, as youth explore their emerging interests and identities, make friends with others, and strive to fit in with their peers.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Participation in school-based extracurricular activities, like sports, the arts, and academic clubs, is a normative and important part of the school experience for many youth (Fredricks, 2012). In Fredricks and Eccles (2006), “adolescents participating in a greater number of activities in 11th grade obtained a higher grade point average and had greater point average and greater expectations about their educational attainment during and after high school” (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006, p.12). Prior research tends to support the developmental benefits of extracurricular involvement; participating in a range of organized contexts is related to higher grade, motivation, and school completion rates (Fredricks, 2012).

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- *Self-concept* is a “self-procured idea of something formed by mentally combining all aspects of the student’s being. This may include and be expressed as psychological well-being, mood, and general confidence” (Hamachek, 1995 as cited in Maser, 2007, page 11).
- “*Academic self-concept* is the perception that students have about themselves regarding their academic performance, abilities, and achievement” (Marsh & O’Neill, 1984 as cited in Maser, 2007, page 11).
- “*Extracurricular activity* is any structures, school-sponsored activity which falls outside the normal school day. The activities are limited to non-credit sports teams and organizations” (Conners-Harris, 1999 as cited in Maser, 2007, p. 11)

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- *The level of participation* in “extracurricular activities for the 2005-2006 school year will identify the level of students’ participation. The minimum numbers of hours required by faculty to supervise students in their particular activity, as identified in the School District’s Collective Bargaining Agreement, will be used to identify the students’ *level of participation* in extracurricular activities (Maser, 2007, page 10).
- As identified in the School District’s Collective Bargaining Agreement, the students’ *level of participation* in extracurricular activities will be identified by the minimum numbers of hours required by faculty to supervise students in their particular activity.

METHOD

- The total combined 11th grade population of both schools was essentially
 - 1,284 students that were predominantly
 - White with a population of 88.5 percent.
 - 4.0 percent Asian
 - 0.9 percent Black
 - 6.2 percent Hispanic
 - 0.4 American Indian, Alaskan or Pacific Islander.
- Eligibility for free or reduced lunch comprised 8.2 percent of the student population.

METHOD (CONT.)

- Demographics
- Self-reported grades
- List of extracurricular activities

TABLE 1.1

Grade Ranges and the Corresponding Number Values Used to Calculate the Final English Grade Rank, Final Math Grade Rank, and Final Grade Point Average (GPA) Rank

Grade Range	Corresponding Number Value
Below 50%	1
50% - 55%	2
56% - 60%	3
61% - 65%	4
66% - 70%	5
71% - 75%	6
76% - 80%	7
81% - 85%	8
86% - 90%	9
91% - 95%	10
96% - 100%	11
Higher than 100%	12

FIGURE 1.1- DEPENDENT VARIABLE: ENGLISH

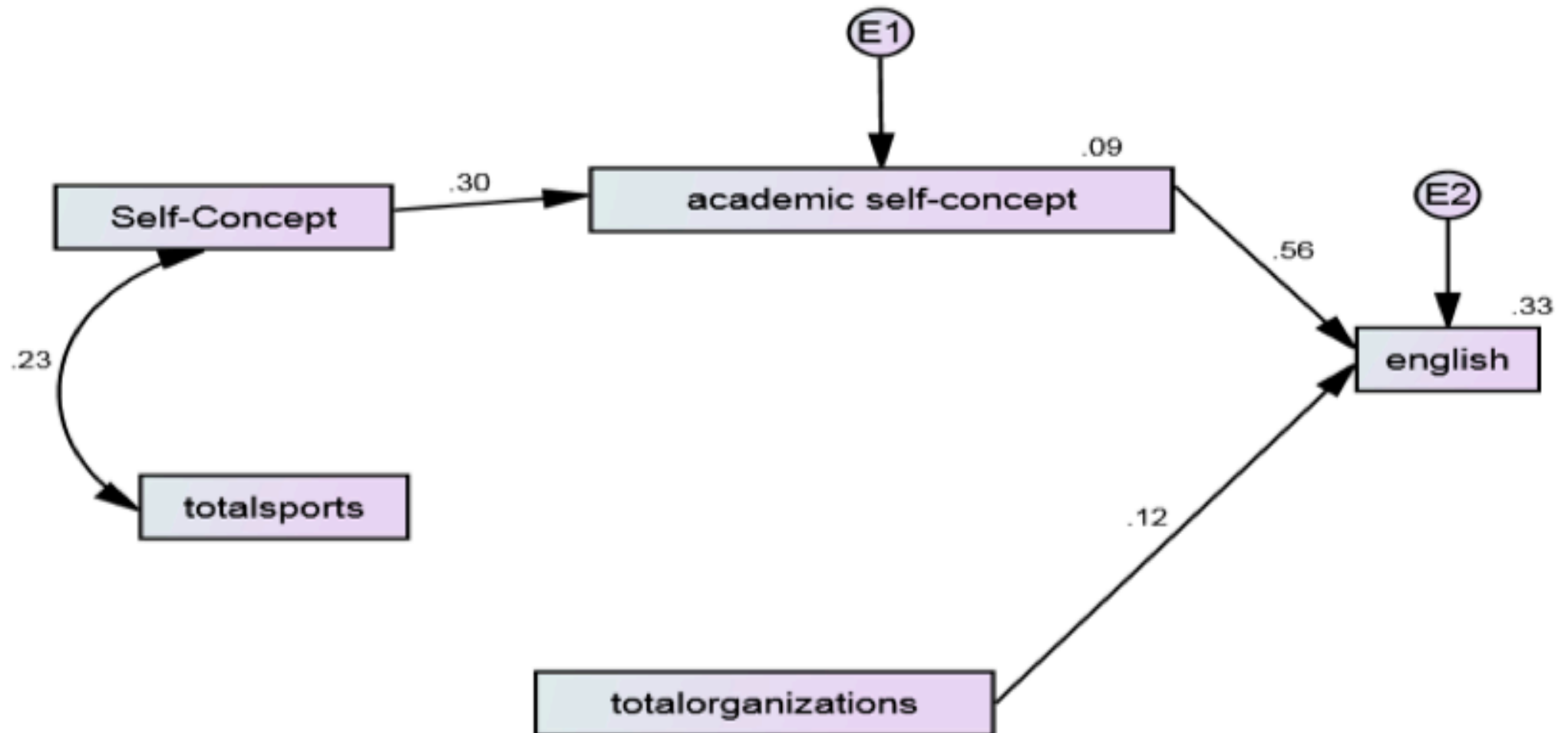


FIGURE 1.2- DEPENDENT VARIABLE: MATH

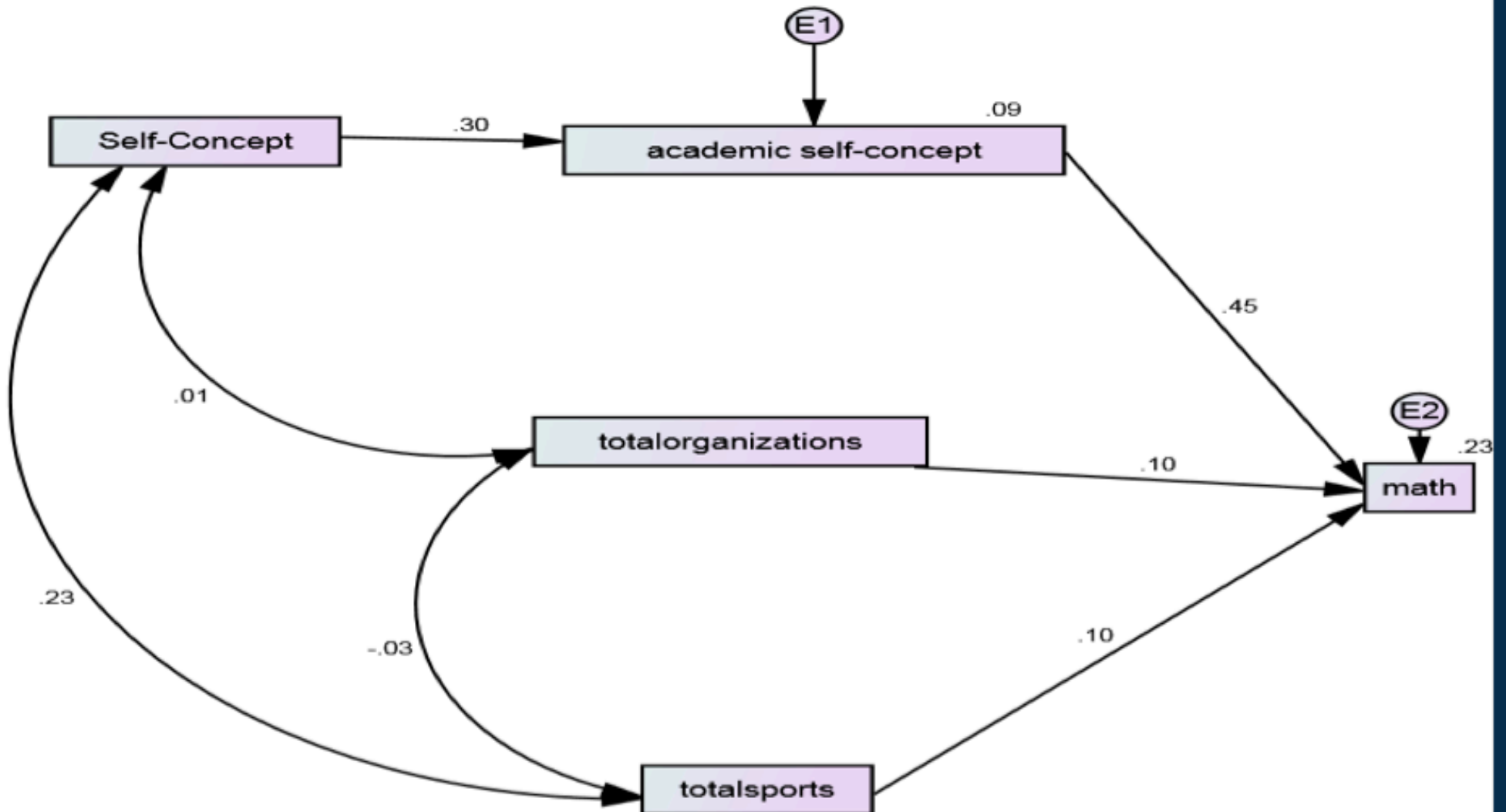
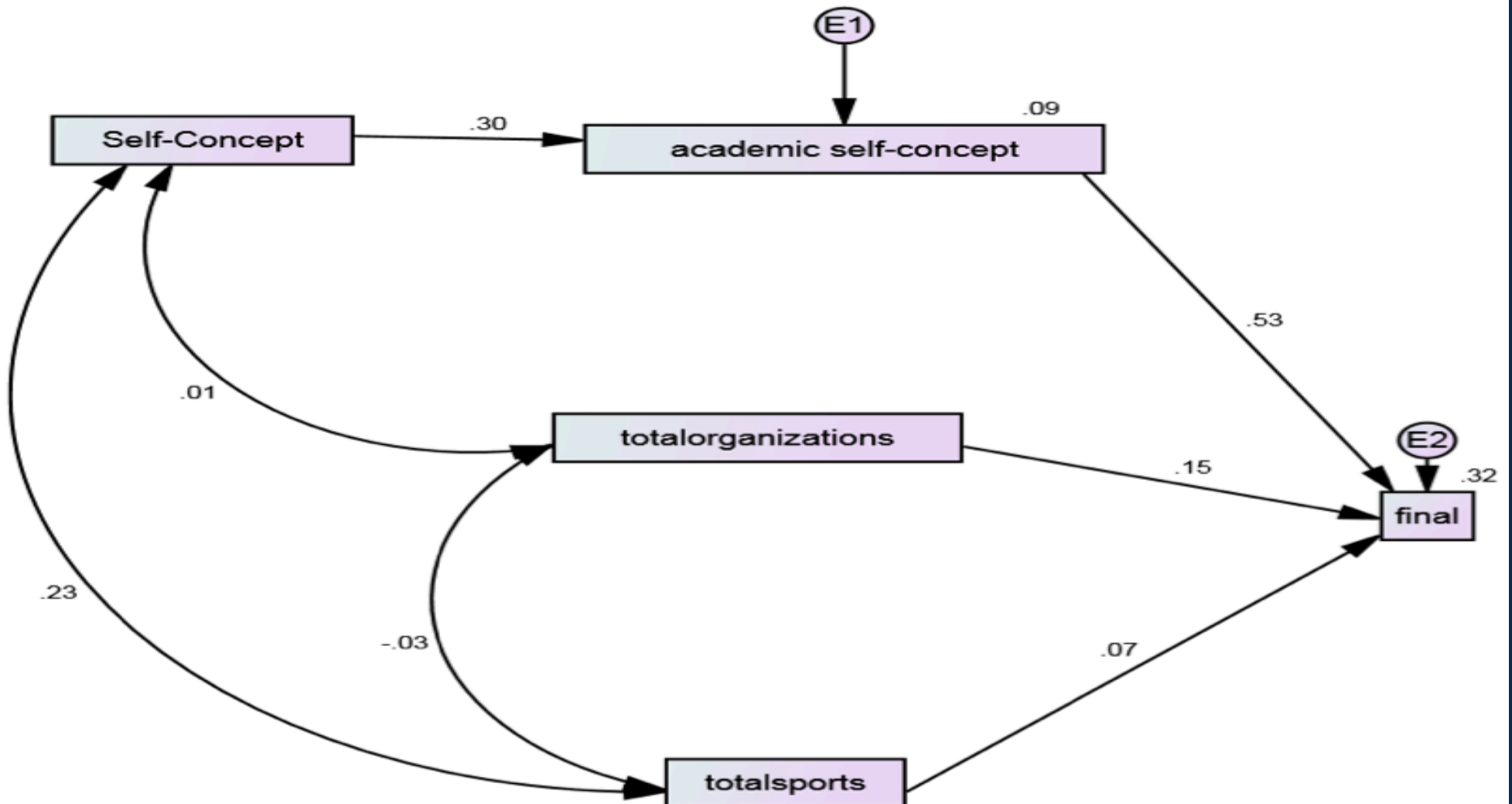


FIGURE 1.3: FINAL GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)



CONCLUSION

- This study indicated that there is a correlation between self-concept and academic self-concept as well as a correlation between self-concept and percent participation in sports.
- This study further examined how participating in after school sports or in an after-school organization impacts self-concept and academic concept and determined the effect they had on students' Math scores, ELA scores, and overall GPA.

CONCLUSION

- Students who participate in academic extracurricular activities are stronger performers academically, and typically report higher GPA's than non-involved peers or students who participated in other types of out-of-district extracurricular activities.
- Findings show that a student's positive self-concept about themselves will definitely show in their academics, which agreed with McCarthy's findings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- We recommend the after-school organizations would be separated into categories: Athletic, academic, interest-based, and service-based.
- The study would have a larger sample size for example to include or contrast suburban minority schools vs. suburban white schools.
- The survey could include questions regarding reasons students would not participate in after-school activities.