# The Connection between Pupils' School Success and Their Inclusiveness in Extracurricular and Out-of-School Activities in Croatia

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**Abstract**

The school, with its activities as an upbringing and educational institute, influences all segments of a pupil's effective development. Besides teaching as its basic activity, the school should take over part of the care and responsibility for the pupil's free time and "use" it for *prolonged* upbringing activity. Today children and young people *spend* their free time on the Internet and little or almost no time in the development of social competences. Confronted with technology as an inevitable challenge of the present day, we are also confronted with new issues in our upbringing and education practice. Due to unpreparedness in participating in joint activities and the impossibility of communication, pupils show numerous manifestations in behavioral disorder, which often determine school success. Participation in extracurricular activities reduces the action area of risk factor in children and youth in their free time, which effects school success in particular. Numerous researches have confirmed how the engagement of pupils in extracurricular activities is one of the factors that influences school success. In Croatia, extracurricular activities are quite neglected for numerous reasons. It is necessary to bring them back to the school and to modernize them and make them challenging and attractive for pupils.

Research results on 970 elementary school pupils of Zadar and Šibenik-Knin counties are elaborated in this work. Their participation in extracurricular and out-of-school activities and their conncetion to school succes was examined. The results confirm the presumption that children who participate in extracurricular and out-of-school activities achieve better school success.

**Keywords:** *school success (failure); extracurricular and out-of-school activities; social competences*

## 1. Introduction

The traditional school is characterized by its orientation towards cognitive development and acquiring knowledge in pupils. We do not thus observe school success in the context of connection with their social skills. However, the school as an upbringing and education institution very often "neglects" its upbringing function that is directed towards stimulating the personal and social development of pupils. In contrast to this, contemporary understanding precisely emphasizes social skills not only as the key to school success but to the entire development of pupils.

The best-known and most widespread manner of preparing children and youth for active and meaningful spending of free time is the organization and conduction of extracurricular activities in school whereby pupils, directed by individual interests and free choice, are offered the possibility of developing personal potentials through different activities. By participating in extracurricular activities, they enrich their social experiences through interaction with peers, making it especially possible for them to "get into social contact and relationships that build their universal personality (Previšić, 1987).

It is important to emphasize that extracurricular activities are firstly pupil activities where they can express to the fullest their freedom and creational roles. Numerous are the aims of extracurricular activities, and among them: intensifying pupils' social competences, making them fit for social life, and stimulating their creativity. Unfortunately, today goals are set that are not in line with pedagogic demands, and they are: pressing only the best ones and stimulating professionalism. Those are not demands to lay down in front of pupils for they estrange them from voluntary engagement in extracurricular activities. It is, therefore, significant for the teacher to accept the role

of leader and creator, direct it towards entertainment and meaningful organization of activities in free time. The pupil must not be denied participation in extracurricular activities due to poor results in learning. Success in extracurricular activities can be a stimulus for successful integration in the class group whereby failure in the social field can prevent emotional difficulties, and these are very often the cause for academic failure. No less important is the fact that participation in extracurricular activities reduces the space for risk factor to influence children and youth in free time.

Numerous studies show how risky behavior incurs far less often with pupils who are engaged in extracurricular activities. Dryfoos (1997) puts forward the results of national research conducted on the population of tenth grade pupils divided into two groups; those who participate weekly from one to four hours of school activities, and those who do not participate at all in activities. Results show that 57 % of pupils who do not participate in school activities show the possibility of giving up school, 49% of them indicate the probability of using drugs, 35% the probability of juvenile pregnancy, 35% the possibility of smoking, and 27% of being arrested.

Extracurricular activities in elementary school offer pupils the possibility of spending their free time with quality. Their aim is, therefore, to cover as many pupils as possible regardless of their capabilities. Characteristics of extracurricular activities differ from teaching in the organizational point of view insomuch as they are not conducted in classes but in specially formed groups of pupils from different classes, different age but connected by mutual interests in determined activities. This requires great engagement from the teacher, social, professional, and creative competences as well. However, the benefits of extracurricular as well as out-of-school activities are significant for the complete development making it possible for pupils to develop social competences, stimulate creativity, build values, and strengthen the feeling of unity and connection with the school, which has a preventive effect on the occurrence and development of behavioral disorders.

*1.1 On Extracurricular and Out-of-School Activities and the Areas of Their Realization*

According to Cindrić (1992) extracurricular activities are "different organization forms of pupil gatherings during free extracurricular time in school that have mainly cultural, artistic, sporting, technical, recreational and scientific (educational) features. Through these, pupils satisfy their creative and recreational needs, and particularly acquire the culture of free time". They make the creative activity of pupils and teachers possible and contribute significantly to the entire upbringing and education task. Unlike regular lessons, extracurricular activities offer the possibility of respecting the pupil's interests and needs, freedom of creative activity and open the road to the pupil's individual development and initiative.

Out-of-school activities are based on the same principles as extracurricular activities. "Out-of-school activities consist of various organization and program forms of pupil gatherings in societies, clubs and other institutions outside school" (Cindrić, 1992, 51). An important determinant in defining out-of-school activities is that they are activities organized and performed by another institution, society or club, independently or in partnership with the school. They represent the link between the school and the social environment and engaging in them additionally affects the affirmation of pupils since the their activity out-of-school activities are recognized as being performed in school. Out-of-school activities realize certain work programs whereby they achieve a pedagogic influence on children and youth who in return satisfy their needs and interests.

In literature, we come across different ways of classifying extracurricular activities. Previšić (1987) classified them according to the frequency of the pupil's commitments on the following: sport and recreation, culture and art, science, expert technical field, and production and economy. According to Cindrić (1992) extracurricular activity programs are realized in the following: a) pupil's cultural and artistic activities, b) physical and health education activities c) technical education activities d) pupil activities in cooperatives, e) activities connected to teaching subjects or areas, and f) social and humanitarian activities. It is possible to see how the classification stated by Cindrić is not essentially different from that of author Previšić, except that he adds the category of social and humanitarian activities.

The variety of content and field of work of extracurricular activities is evident in the Elementary School Curriculum (2006). The following fields of realizing extracurricular activities are stated: linguistic-artistic, scientific-mathematical, sports and health recreation, care for national and cultural heritage, protection of nature and the environment in promoting healthy living, social and humanistic projects, pupil cooperatives and technical creativity. Extracurricular activities can be more specifically connected to single teaching subjects and global educational projects. They can have an interdisciplinary character with social learning purpose, promotion and stimulation of children's games.

In contrast to regular teaching, extracurricular activity programs are not strictly structured whereby they make it

possible for pupils to bring new themes and contents into their work that teachers did not foresee or "see" them in a different manner. Creative processes that take place within single groups contribute to their recognition not only in the school itself but also in interschool, local and wider level of the social community.

Out-of-school activities where pupils can engage outside the school: art schools (music and ballet), foreign language schools, various sport clubs, cultural and artistic societies, scientific societies, young technicians' clubs, workshops and similar. Among the gladly chosen activities they engage in outside school, the most frequent ones are sports activities (47%), learning foreign languages (19%), music activities (16%), literary and drama activities (5%),and other activities (26%) (Ilišin, 2001).

*1.2 Legal School Obligations Related to the Organization of Extracurricular Activities*

The possibility of organizing extracurricular activities is provided by the Upbringing and Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools Act (OG no. 87, 2008), while the long-term and short-term plan and program of extracurricular activities is established by the school curriculum. The school curriculum is founded on the provisions of the National Framework Curriculum (NFC) and guidelines of the Croatian National Education Standard (CNES). These refer to the offer of optional teaching subjects, modules and other upbringing and education programs, realization of additional and/or remedial class, school and class projects, pupil group projects, excursions, trips, extracurricular and out-of-school activities, workshops, summer and winter schools and clubs where children and pupils attend programs adapted to their special fields of talent, gift and tendency. The school ensures pupils' inclusiveness in extracurricular activities according to their level, type of talent and gift stimulating not only their capacity and creativity but also their interests.

Article 35 of the Act states that in order to satisfy different pupil needs and interests, the school institution organizes special extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities are planned in the school curriculum and yearly work plan and program of the direct bearers of the upbringing and education activity in the school institution. Extracurricular activities are not an obliging part of the pupil's burden but can be acknowledged as the pupil's fulfillment of school obligations. Article 36 of the Act states that a pupil can be included in out-of-school activities and that work can be recognized as the pupil's fulfillment of school obligations.

Article 39 states that the school can found a pupil's cooperative as a form of extracurricular activity in line with the school Statute and special provisions.

The Strategy of Education, Science and Technology (2014) also determines the organization of extracurricular activities. Chapter 6.2 thus states: "Establish an integral system of support to pupils whereby it is necessary to ensure that all schools systematically organize, among other things, additional classes and extracurricular activities for pupils who show an interest in determined subjects, themes or activities, all in line with the real needs of pupils. One of the measures stated is that pupils need to participate in additional, remedial classes and extracurricular activities in the teaching norm of direct upbringing and educational work with pupils." It is established in the laws and bylaws, and valid documents of the Republic of Croatia, as we have earlier pointed out, that schools can organize extracurricular activities. As it has been shown in practice that the organization of extracurricular activities has not been given the deserved attention they deserve, in the following part we will present the research results on presence of extracurricular activities in the schools of Zadar County. In Chapter 2, we will show the research results on pupil inclusiveness in extracurricular and/or out-of-school activities and establish whether there is a difference among the examinees with reference to their school success. Even though the research covered a high number of variables, the school success variable has been separated here, as well as the correlations of the influence of pupils' inclusiveness in extracurricular activities on school success.

*1.3 The Presence of Extracurricular Activities in Zadar County Schools*

The testing covered all elementary schools (central and regional) of Zadar County (36) in conversations with educationists and in the analysis of data given by the Zadar County State Administration Office. The results show that in small communities more pupils participate in activities (81.24%), while in the city of Zadar less pupils (52.57%) participate. The reason could be the offer of extracurricular activities and also some contents that include only entertainment lacking in small communities.

Therefore, athletics is organized in 4 schools, in 1 there are little lace makers, in 25 drama groups, in 17 eco groups, in one a film group, in 7 folklore, in 3 geographers, in 1 glagolitics, in 4 schools computer science, in 2 a-capella singing groups, in 6 librarians, basketball training in 8 schools, visual art groups in 34, literary in 21 schools, puppet groups in 2 schools, embroiderers and knitters in 3, reciting groups in 26 schools, little choirs in 30 schools, little historians in 5, little gardeners in 4 (olives, flowers), model makers in 3 (ships and planes), football training in 21, journalists in 10,

volleyball in 10 (m+f) hikers in 1, traffic wardens in 5, rhythmic in 19, handball (m+f) in 8, chess in 4, school orchestra in 7, religious prayer in 4 and in 1 school native speaking is additional (according to the alphabet).

In most schools, there are drama, literary, reciting, rhythmic and dancing groups, choirs and visual art groups. Sport is less represented than expected, besides football (21 clubs). Only 8 schools have basketball clubs, 9 volleyball clubs and 8 handball clubs. The choice of out-of-school activities is mainly directed towards tennis, football, basketball, meaning profitable sports. Furthermore, a small number of pupils is included in these activities. The goal of extracurricular school activities is the inclusion of as many pupils as possible, and it is, therefore, needed to offer even more sports. Pupils' statements of being heavily burdened by the program is not, according to their opinion, a reason for not being into sport. Researches (Bjelajac, 2005) indicate that companionship with friends and watching TV take first place with pupils. Teachers should start the initiative for activities, creating them as entertainment and association. Musical activities in which children participate are mainly choirs and much less school orchestras. In the elementary schools of our county, there are block flute, tamburitza and mandolin orchestras. According to the elementary school curriculum, music classes are only 1 lesson per week, and through such a fund of lessons it is very difficult to fulfil the goal and tasks of music teaching. Therefore, extracurricular music activities are a great occasion for teachers to introduce the music culture and thus develop not only the componence of the musical hearing but also pupil creativity. The number and type of extracurricular activities depends firstly on the teacher's competences, and on their personal preferences. Activities that preserve heritage and the cultural tradition need special praise. Even so, few pupils participate in them and they are present in small communities, lace making and native speech from Pag, little embroiderers and knitters (in 3 schools), glagolitic groups, Dalmatian acapella groups (2) and 7 folklore groups mainly in village communities deserve attention. It has unfortunately been noticed that some of the interests stop when pupils continue in higher grades (native speech and embroidery). These activities require the full engagement of the teacher and special competences as well.

Even though, based on these analyses, we can conclude that extracurricular activities are quite well represented in schools. It is to be said that some are only sporadic and gatherings have been reduced to a minimum. However, this is only to fulfill the teachers' timetable. It must be added here that some educators did not even know the activities organized in schools and neither who the teachers leading them were. The fact is, therefore, that extracurricular activities are not given the importance they deserve to have. In the introduction, we pointed out how useful they could be to pupils, first of all as protective factors to numerous negative consequences of free time spent unorganized, and in the development of a child's creativity, self-confidence and social competences. Significant results were acquired by author Dautović (2007) in the research conducted from the presumption that successful pupils' attitudes are close to the desired compromised and cooperative model of waiting, "mending" and winning. The author explains the results connected to pupils' poorer school success as a closed circle that includes the following; poor school success leads to weak motivation in making efforts in solving conflicts that are again the result of poor school success. The same author then advocates the need for systematic training, especially of less successful pupils, on the desired patterns of behavior in social conflicts (Dautović, 2007). Brajša-Žganec et al. (2009) find stronger feeling of school competence and less negative feelings towards school as significant predictors of school success.

In order to elaborate these results, further research is needed, which would lead to the connection of frequently inacceptable behavior in school and the engagement of pupils in extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities might thus acquire the right place and importance in the upbringing of pupils. The initiative to affirm extracurricular activities remains on the teacher, as well as the possibility of implementing interesting contents to pupils.

## 2. Methodology

### *2.1 Research Goals and Hypothesis*

The goal of the research is to acquire an insight into the pupil's inclusiveness in extracurricular activities and to establish whether there is a difference among the examinees considering their school success. The research started from the starting presumption:

(H0) There is no difference in academic achievement between students who participate and do not participate in the extracurricular and out-of-school activities

(H1) Pupils who participate in extracurricular activities realize better school success than their peers who do not participate in them.

### *2.2 Examinees*

The sample consisted of pupils from higher grades of elementary school, a total of 970 pupils of which 477 (49.3%)

boys and 491 (50.7%) girls. Due to the impossibilioty of questioning all elementary school pupils, the method of samples was applied. Considered the attended grade, 322 (33.2%) sixth grade pupils were covered, 313 (32.3%) seventh grade, and 335 (34.5%) eighth grade pupils. The difference among the examinees, with refernce to their grade, was from a minimum of 0.9% to a maximum of 2.2%, and it might have been conditioned by numerous factors such as the number of pupils in a class, school absence during testing or parent (dis) approval in participating in the testing.

*2.3 Instrument and Procedure*

A survey questionnaire was drawn up for the needs of the testing and it consisted of questions on socio-demographic characteristics of the examinees. Furthermore, the questionnaire asked whether pupils participated in the work of organized free activities in school and outside school, the type of activities and the time spent in activity work, and school success achieved at the end of the previous school year. The research was anonymous and performed in nine elementary schools in the Zadar and Šibenik-Knin counties. The acquired information was processed using statistic programs for computer data processing.

*2.4 Results and Discussion*

Free time is a field of different activities with rich upbringing and education potential, and as such an important factor in the entire pedagogic effect. The upbringing of the young generation is a social process in the real and widest sense of the word, and as such is a social concern for the organization and implementation of free extracurricular and out-of-school activities. Essential features of free activity were detected through the theoretical part of the work such as one's own free choice in line with interests and existing circumstances. The factor of freedom, responsibility and non-obligation is that part in children that brings up spontaneity, activity and self-activity, awareness, initiative, self-expression, creativity and cheerful mood. These are the qualities of a very strong driving force in positive development and character affirmation (Barber, Stone, Eccles, 2003). In further data processing, basic descriptive characteristics were established in pupils in organized free activities in school and outside school.

**Table 1.** Pupils' Participation in Extracurricular and Out-of-School Activities

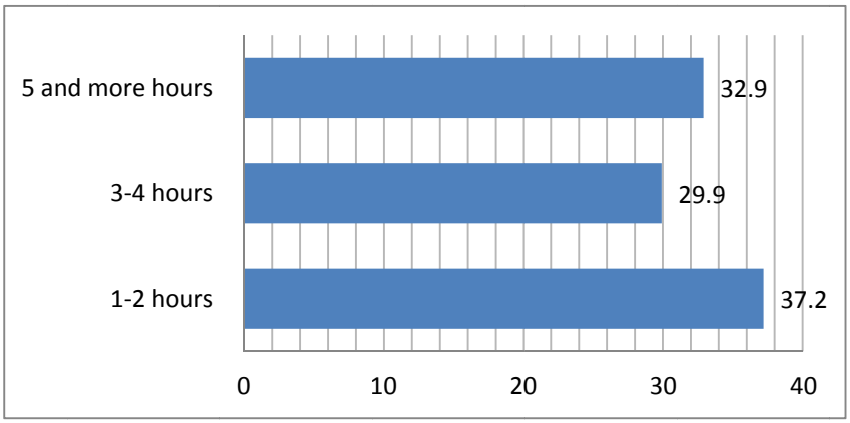
| | **Extracurricular activities** | | **Out-of-school activities** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Participation in activities** | Frequency (N) | Percentage (%) | Frequency (N) | Percentage (%) |
| **Yes** | 336 | 34.6 | 514 | 53.0 |
| **No** | 634 | 65.4 | 456 | 47.0 |
| **Total** | 970 | 100% | 970 | 100.0 |

Table 1 shows that of the 970 examinees 34.6% (N=336) participated in extracurricular activities in school, while a much greater number of 65.4% (N=634) did not participate in the work of the mentioned activities. The results indicate a relatively low percentage of pupil inclusiveness in extracurricular activities organized by the school. Beside the extracurricular activities organized by the school, pupils spend their free time in out-of-school activities organized by sport clubs, cultural and art societies, music schools and similar organizations in the local surroundings. 53% pupils (N=514) participated in the work of extracurricular activities while 47% (N=456) did not participate. If we compare the showed results with pupil participation in the two mentioned categories, we can conclude that a significantly higher number of pupils participated in the work of out-of-school (53%) with reference to extracurricular (34.6%) activities.

Out-of-school activities, along with the extracurricular ones, are surely the best way of spending free time. To serve its purpose, an out-of-school activity must be entertaining for the child and he/she is the one to choose it. Parents can help children insomuch as to propose activities and stimulate them in choosing which out-of-school activity to engage in. However, the opposite often happens, and parents decide which activity is best for their child and expect top competition results from them.

2.4.1 The Time Students Spend Weekly in Extracurricular and Out-of-School Work

The time students spend during the week in extracurrivcular activities is relatively standardized. 37.2 % pupils (N=238) weekly spend one to two hours in free time activity work, three to four hours weekly 29.9 % (N=191) of them , while five or more hours weekly 32.9 % (N=210) pupils "spend" in free time.

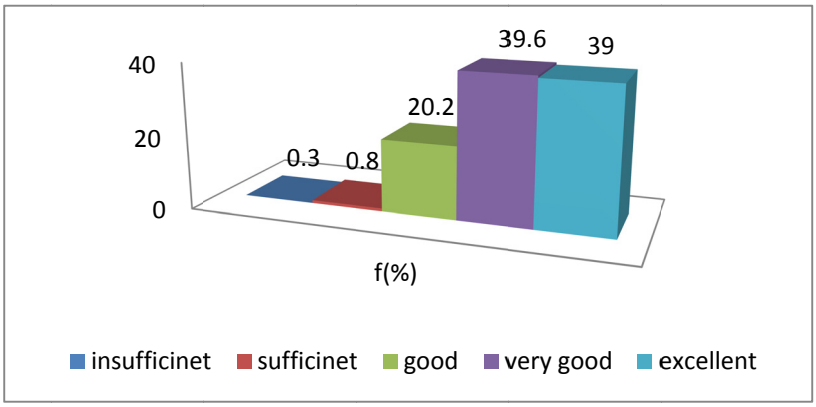



**Graph 1.** Time Spent in Activity Work

The weekly number of hours that pupils spend in activity work refers to extracurricular and out-of-school activities for some pupils participate in activities in school and outside school. Out-of-school activities can have an influence on the level of hidden talent of a child that can have a substantial influence on his later life. Of course, one should always be careful that the daily schedule of a pupil is not burdened by additional contents and activities that would not have a favorable influence on his/her entire health condition. Besides school and activities, children must have some free time to be in the company of peers, family and other activities that fulfill them.

2.4.2 Pupils' School Success and Participation in Extracurricular and Out-of-School Activities

Bašić and Kranželić-Tavra (2004) observe school success through two perspectives: outer and inner. The outer perspective refers to academic success, i.e. school grades, while the inner perspective refers to children's inner experience, i.e. subjective evaluation of one's success in the academic, personal and interpersonal plan. The mean success of the previous school year was used as measure of success in school.




**Graph 2.** Examinee School Success at the End of the Previous Year

In the total number of examinees (N=970), 966 pupils answered the question on success. According to data shown on Graph 2, we see that the number of pupils who finished their preceding year with very good results (39.6%) is equal to those with excellent results (39%), while good results were achieved by 20.2% pupils. A small number of pupils had poor results, sufficient 0.8% and insufficient 0.3%.

The sought differences were examined in one-way analysis of variance. In variance analysis, differences are examined between the arithmetic mean of examinee sample. The goal of univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) is to establish the differences between groups of examinees in determined features: the greater the difference, arithmetic mean distance of samples, the greater are the expected sample differences. Variance analysis for the calculation of the difference between arithmetic averages uses the ratio of two types of variances: variance between groups and variance within groups, testing whether the variance between groups is greater than the variability

(variance) within the group. Taking into consideration (non) participation in the work of extracurricular activities, ANOVA results are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Participation in the Work of Extracurricular and Activities and School Success (ANOVA)

| | Sum of squares | df | Square average | F | Stat. relev. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Between groups** | 26,087 | 1 | 26,087 | 43,403 | ,000 |
| **Within groups** | 579,397 | 964 | ,601 | | |
| **Total** | 605,483 | 965 | | | |

The implementation of ANOVA requires the fulfilment of basic pre-conditions on homoscedasticity, variance homogeneity respectively. Levene's test is used to test variance homogeneity and shows that the expected homogeneity has been fulfilled (Levene statistics: 0.51, df1:1, df2:964, stat. relevance: 0.822). Therefore, as shown (Table 2), there is a statistically significant difference between those who participate and those who do not participate in extracurricular activity work considering their school success achievement ($p \leq 0.05$). The difference direction is visible in the arithmetic mean values (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Descriptive School Success Indicators of Pupils Who (not) Participate in Extracurricular Activities

| Participation | N | Arithmetic mean | Standard deviation | Standard error |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 335 | 4.39 | .691 | .038 |
| No | 631 | 4.04 | .816 | .032 |
| Total | 966 | 4.16 | .792 | .025 |

Those pupils who participate in extracurricular activity work achieve better school results ($\bar{x}$ =4.39) from those who do not participate in extracurricular activity work ($\bar{x}$ =4.04). The high arithmetic mean value (AS=4.39) for 335 pupils who participate in the work of some extracurricular activities in school indicates that they realized better success at the end of the previous school year compared to those pupils (N=631, AS=4.04) who do not participate in extracurricular activity work. We can presume that the difference in school success among those pupils who participate and those who do not participate in extracurricular activity work can be connected to better-developed social competences of those who participate in the work of some activities.

Buljubašić-Kuzmanović and Botić (2012) did research on the relationship of school success and school skills on a sample of 211 pupils of 5$^{th}$ and 7$^{th}$ grade elementary school and found a connection between the development of social skills and school success. Namely, pupils who estimate their school skills positively and consider them to be desirable and properly developed have better school success. The research of author Bilić (2001) showed how excellent and very good pupils are extroverted, well adapted and motivated in research and achievement. On the other hand, pupils with sufficient and poor success show anxiety and undeveloped motivation in research and achievement. The school success of pupils is conditioned by numerous factors from personal to environmental support they get from their parents, teachers, peers, and school atmosphere. We can now confirm that pupils' engagement in out-of-school activities is one of the factors that influences school success. The reasons may be developed social competences of pupils, self-respect and the feeling of self-efficiency as well, which pupils acquire based on adopted new knowledge and skills through extracurricular activity contents and through interaction with the participants.

ANOVA was also applied in testing sub-sample differences – pupils who participate and those who do not participate in extracurricular activities with reference to school success. Levene's test was used to test homogeneity variance and showed that the demanded homogeneity had been fulfilled (Levene statistics: 0.102, df1:1, df2:964, stat. relevance: 0.749). ANOVA results are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Participation in the Work of Extracurricular and Out-Of-School Activities and School Success (ANOVA)

| | Sum of squares | df | Square average | F | Stat. relev. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Between groups** | 39,984 | 1 | 39,984 | 68,160 | .000 |
| **Within groups** | 565,500 | 964 | .587 | | |
| **Total** | 605,483 | 965 | | | |

It has been established that there is a statistically significant difference between pupils who participate and those who do not participate in extracurricular activity work and achieved school success ($p \leq 0.05$). The difference direction can be seen in the arithmetic mean value shown in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Descriptive Success Indicator of Pupils Who (not) Participate in Out-of-School

| Participation | N | Arithmetic mean | Standard deviation | Standard error |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Yes** | 510 | 4.35 | .716 | .032 |
| **No** | 456 | 3.95 | .818 | .038 |
| **Total** | 966 | 4.16 | .792 | .025 |

The arithmetic mean values obviously show that pupils who participate in extracurricular activity work ($\bar{x}$ =4.35) achieve better school results from those who do not participate ($\bar{x}$=3.95). Fujita (2006) showed how participation in extracurricular activities improved academic success. Gost (2003), who informed on the positive connection between participation in extracurricular activities and academic achievement, came to the same conclusion. Marsh and Kleitman (2002) also supported the earlier said, claiming that numerous extracurricular activities proved to be useful in building and strengthening academic achievements, even when these activities were not directly connected to the academic contents of determined subjects. Activities determine the structure of peer groups whereby pupils who participate in activities have more academically oriented peers, have a lower tendency of dropping out from school and consuming drugs compared to pupils who do not participate in activities (Eccles and Barber, 1999).

Research conducted by McHale, Crouter and Tucher (2001) on free time adolescent activities and their connection to school success showed that there was a positive correlation between school success and the choice of free time activities. Adolescents who achieve better school results read more in their free time and participate in organized sports activities, unlike those adolescents who spend their free time disorganized and without supervision in the social context resulting in poor school grades.

Based on the here mentioned researches made by other authors and in line with the presented results, we can come to the conclusion that the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected in favor of alternative hypothesis which entirely confirmed and that pupils who participate in extracurricular and out-of-school activity work realize better school success from those who do not participate in such activities.

## 3. Conclusion

The acquired results indicate a relatively low percentage of pupil inclusiveness in extracurricular activities organized by the school. A significantly higher number of pupils spend their time in out-of-school activity work whereby the conclusion is that they are more attractive to pupils than extracurricular activities. The reason why pupils participate in extracurricular and out-of-school activity work is firstly due to interest in the activity, feeling of satisfaction, acquisition of new knowledge and the fact that they like to spend their time in such work. The results indicate the difference among pupils with reference to gender, age and participation in some type of extracurricular and out-of-school activity. Pupils who participate in extracurricular and/or out-of-school activity work realize satisfactory relationships with peers and teachers/leaders of activities, receive satisfactory support on the part of parents in performing these activities, and realize better school success as well. Pupils who participate in extracurricular activity work express less forms of behavioral disorder connected to disruption of school rules and aggressively dependent behavior, which does not refer to the expression of passive forms of behavioral disorder. Those pupils who participate in out-of-school activities show lower performance of all types of behavioral disorder.

The participation of pupils in extracurricular activities has a completely positive effect of their perception of self-respect, while the difference in the evaluation of self-respect is not visible among pupils who do (not) participate in extracurricular activities. Pupils voluntarily participate in extracurricular activity work. They are given the

possibility of free choice of activities that are interesting, attractive, and will fill them with delight. The voluntary participation of pupils is that common denominator under which we can put extracurricular activities and free time. When participating in extracurricular activities, pupils decide to spend one part of their free time in school, which the school should recognize this as a possibility of additional upbringing activity (Martinčević, 2010).

Pupils who participate in extracurricular activities have a high social and academic evaluation but not that of emotional self-efficacy, while pupils who participate in out-of-school activities have a higher evaluation of total self-efficacy. In participating in extracurricular and/or out-of-school activities, pupils use their free time substantially, establish quality social relationships with peers and strengthen their link with the school reducing the probability of behavioral disorder occurrence.

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