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DOES IT PAY TO BE A HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE?

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This paper is designed to investigate the effect participation in high school athletics has on a student's labor market success. Conventional wisdom suggests that participation provides athletes with valuable human capital skills which may not be attainable to those who chose not to participate in athletics. Through regression analysis of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, evidence is found in support of the idea that participation in high school athletics yields a wage premium for both men and women. In addition to this wage premium, participants in athletics also receive a greater amount of educational attainment on average. Additional regressions show that a sizeable portion of the wage premium to athletes is a result of educational attainment and indirect characteristics which can be attributed to human capital skills specific to athletic participation.