

THE EFFECT OF CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ON THE LEARNING OUTCOMES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN DISTRICT EAST OF KARACHI, PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the effect of co-curricular activities on the learning outcomes of secondary school students of Karachi, Pakistan. The nature of the study was mainly experimental. The population of the study was all secondary schools operating in district East of Karachi. Purposive sampling design was adopted. The subjects of the study were 240 students drawn from public and private secondary schools. The students were equally divided into experimental and control groups. To evaluate the effect of co-curricular activities on the learning outcomes of students, the pre-test (2013-2014) and posttest (2014-2015) scores were analyzed through 't' test. The results revealed that co-curricular activities had positive effects on the learning outcomes of students. It was found that students took active part in co-curricular activities had better academic scores than those who do not participate in these activities.

Keywords: Co-curricular activities, Learning, Outcomes and Secondary schools.

Introduction

Education became a fast growing business industry in urban areas of Pakistan. Karachi is one of the biggest cities consisting of almost 30 million populations, where public schools are quite insufficient to accommodate millions of students. Therefore, thousands of private schools have been established in various areas of the city and every year its nu-

number is increasing. Among these schools, some are well equipped and fulfilling the requirements but a large number of them is pitiable, congested and having no facility for the recreation of students. The parents are satisfied with academic results but there is no attention on the physical, psychological and social development of the students. Moreover,

parents do not send their children to public schools because the standard of these schools is quite deplorable. Ultimately, parents admit their children in private schools.

In the modern education system, such types of activities have got a central position in the school program in this era. It is no more considered to be wastage of time like in old days. In the past, traditionally the term extra-curricular was used which has been replaced by the term co-curricular activities (Sidhu, 2005). Mendez (1984) stated that in the early 1970s, the terminology "activity" now transformed from the extra-curricular into co-curricular activities these activities enrich the overall faculties of human personality. Co-curricular activities create an environment in which the students are challenged outside of the academic setting to help academic success (Feldman and Matjasko, 2005).

These activities discharge several useful functions, the first of which is to meet the psychological needs of early and middle adolescence, with reference mainly to the social demands of the student's nature. It has been observed that gregariousness is a

strong impulse in children, and that from the age of twelve, this tendency manifests itself in voluntary groupings under this leadership of the stronger spirits, among the students. This tendency expresses the adolescent's increasing desire and ability to behave socially, taking behaving in the broader sense of thinking, feeling and acting together. Whether we will it or not, students form spontaneous groups (Mohi-yuddin, 1952).

Therefore, both curricular and co-curricular activities are to be carried side by side in these days. An educationist says that the talent of the children should be released through co-curricular activities, so that to help them in becoming what potential they have to be in their real life. In similar way, they demonstrate and learn various things from the playground which are not possible to be taught in the classroom. Sidhu (2005) stated that education is the overall development of students' mental, physical, emotional, social, aesthetic, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of personality. The students get social and moral training through co-curricular activities. These activities have yet another function

from the individual point of view. Provided these are variety in regard to their character, so as to give scope for free choice according to individual interest, they provide opportunities for the individual to explore and discover his taste and aptitudes.

Literature Review

Modern education system lays more stress on the requirement of co-curricular activities, for instance emotional, moral, social, mental or intellectual and physical development based on such kind of activities. In the absence of these activities, students fail to face too many challenges in their practical life because they remain unfamiliar with defeat and win. According to the studies of experts, dynamic, inventive and creative activities support in the harmonious development of 4 "Hs"; head, heart, hand and health. Co-curricular activities augment the interest of students in different ways by developing many skills and hobbies among the learners which lead them to a successful life (Sidhu, 2005). Paul and Baskey (2012) concluded that there is positive connection between the academic achievement of students and co-curricular ac-

tivities. Similarly, Aggarwal (1994) defined in his study that co-curricular activities should be organized in a school, where every student can take part, and prepares himself to become a good citizen of the society. Kalim (1978) argued that co-curricular activities are directly related to training of character and personality development of students. His concept, which is universally accepted, is based on body-mind relationship. In the educational theory, Plato placed gymnastics and music at the Centre of his scheme for the training and development of body, mind and soul. "A sound body is likely to have a sound mind".

Finn (1989) concluded that the achievement level of students increases when they are actively participating in the various school based activities, for example games, quiz competition, drama, debates and speeches. Moreover, leadership skills among the students are developed and the sense of responsibility is incorporated in their behavior through these healthy activities. they perform their duties with great devotion and commitment.

Griffith (2007) noted that there is remarkably less studies

on the relationship of sports and academic outcomes. This idea struggles to prove the basic belief that participation in sports can improve non-cognitive areas of student's personal growth, self-motivation and certainly have a strong positive impact on learning outcomes as well.

Daniyal, Tahir, Hasan, and Mubeen (2012) revealed that the students who participate in co-curricular activities would certainly perform well in their studies. But teachers and parents both should intelligently choose co-curricular activities for the students which positively effect on their learning outcomes. Moreover, they suggested that parents should encourage their children to take part in such activities because these activities develop social skills, discipline, sportsman spirit and ethics among them. Co-curricular activities enable the students to excel individually and gain the real-life lesson about the significance of teamwork, commitment, responsibility and hard work (Educational Research Service, 1999). Co-curricular activities reduce absenteeism. Gilman (2004) found in his study that co-curricular activities attract the students to

be more regular as compare to those children who do not show any interest in these effective activities. In the similar study it was revealed that co-curricular activities keep the students away from drug use and other immoral activities. Olson (2008) described that participation in these healthy activities, the students are more active and regular which results a greater grade point average in their academic out-comes. Allison (1979) analyzed that those children who actively participate in co-curricular activities produce better results in academics conversely, those children who do not take part in those activities. In addition, other facets of their personalities are developed, such as self-confidence, social cooperation, self-esteem and leadership skills.

Similarly, the teaching of language can be supplemented by the literary society activities, dramatic club, school magazine, wall magazine, etc. Apart from these, the teaching of history, geography and civics can be supplemented by educational trips, excursions, students' council activities and social services (Sidhu, 2005).

Zill and Loomis (1995) stated that co-curricular activities deve-

lop skills in young soul and foster positive character among them. Individual as well as group activities teach the students vigilance, practice, hard work, patience and persistence. These activities inculcate the importance of teamwork, empathy and personal sacrifice for collective goals. Moreover, students are benefited in their studies, jobs and personal lives. Basher (2012) found that co-curricular activities are necessary for mental and physical development of students because both facets of development are the major objectives of education.

Khan and Iqbal (2014) concluded that in Pakistani school system, mostly co-curricular activities are not applied because of narrow mindedness and less education of people as they consider it just wastage of time and they are worried about their children's results. Though, another major reason in these schools is lack of resources and other facilities because some private schools have no playground in their schools and they make efforts to show good result to parents. Reeves (2008) concluded that students who participated in three to four co-curricular activities during the entire academic session would

achieve better grades than those who have not taken part in these activities at all.

Raves (2008) stated that both parents and teachers should be watchful and worried about the academics of students whether they may lose their attention on learning progress and keep themselves busy in too many rehearsals, meetings and practices. But left to themselves they are likely to develop wrong scales of social values and to direct their energies and enthusiasms towards ends that will be harmful and even disastrous, to them and to the society at large. As a result, the aim of education neglect and misdirection is adopted (Mohiyuddin. 1952). In addition, some negative effects of co-curricular activities occur when the students hanging out from their classes. Astin (1993) found that the excess involvement in these activities hindrance in the cognitive development. As several studies revealed negative relationship between the involvement and development of critical thinking, reading comprehension and mathematic skills.

Hypotheses

- There is no significant difference in the learning outcomes of public secondary school

students participated in a pre-test from experimental and control group.

- There is no significant difference in the learning outcomes of private secondary school students participated in a pre-test from experimental and control group.
- There is no significant difference in the learning outcomes of public secondary school students participated in a post-test from experimental and control group.
- There is no significant difference in the learning outcomes of private secondary school students participated in a post-test from experimental and control group.

Methodology

The nature of the study was mainly longitudinal in which the subjects were examined over time with continuous experiment. Therefore, the pre-test data was obtained in 2013-2014 from 240 students, of 4 government and 4 private secondary schools in district East of Karachi. Thus, the post-test data was acquired in 2014-2015 from the same schools and subjects. In the present study, the population of the study

was all the public and private secondary schools of district East of Karachi. For drawing a sample, purposive sampling design was adopted. In fact, the students of all these public and private secondary schools were divided into two major groups, which were experimental and control. In the second phase, the academic score of the pre-test and post-test of students were collected separately. The data was obtained from the school management in raw form which was presented in tabular composition for the purpose of interpretation. The data was analyzed through 't' test.

Analysis of the Pre-Test and Post-Test about the Learning Outcomes of Students

The effects of co-curricular activities on the learning outcomes of students who did not take part in these activities were tested at the pre-test results and the post-test of that group who took part in co-curricular activities.

Pre-test

In the following tables the public and private secondary school students' t-test scores including the calculated mean and standard deviation at the pre-test is shown.

Table: 1
Comparison of Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Group of Public School Students 2013-2014

Group	Sample	Mean	S.D.	t	Probability	df
Experimental	60	40.15	5.50	0.28	0.05	118
Control	60	39.83	6.48			

The test results showed that the calculated value of 't' is less than the tabulated value of $t=1.98$ with $df=118$ at $\alpha=0.05$. Therefore, a slight dissimilarity is found between mean and standard deviation. It is concluded that null

hypothesis is upheld demonstrating that no significant difference is found in the learning outcomes between experimental and control group of public secondary schools students.

Table: 2
Comparison of Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Groups of Private School Students 2013-2014

Groups	Sample	Mean	S.D.	t	Probability	df
Experimental	60	41.91	15.99	0.19	0.05	118
Control	60	41.50	16.73			

The test scores showed that the calculated value of 't' is less than the tabulated value of $t=1.98$ with $df=118$ at $\alpha=0.05$. Therefore, a slight dissimilarity is found between mean and standard deviation. It is concluded that null hypothesis is upheld demonstrating that no significant difference is found in the learning outcomes between experimental and control group of private secondary schools students.

Post-test

In the following tables the estimated value of 't', mean and standard deviation of the experimental and control groups of students depicted a significant variation which showed that co-curricular activities play a major role in the learning outcomes of students.

Table: 3
Comparison of Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Groups of Public School Students 2014-2015

Groups	Sample	Mean	S.D.	t	Probability	df
Experimental	60	88.66	15.05	2.38	0.05	118
Control	60	70.13	13.4			

According to table t, it is found that the tabulated value of $t=1.98$ with $df=118$ at $\alpha=0.05$ is less than the computed value of $t=2.38$. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is stated that there is a significant difference between the experimental and control group of students. The above table shows that there is a

positive influence of co-curricular activities on the learning outcomes of public secondary school students of Karachi. The students who took part in co-curricular activities (experimental group) obtained better results in their academics as compared to those who did not participate in these activities (control group).

Table: 4
Comparison of Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Group of Private School Students 2014-2015

Groups	Sample	Mean	S.D.	t	Probability	df
Experimental	60	63.33	11.85	2.48	0.05	118
Control	60	58.33	10.23			

According to table t, it is found that the tabulated value of $t=1.98$ with $df=118$ at $\alpha=0.05$ is less than the computed value of $t=2.48$. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is stated that there is a significant difference between the experimental and control group of students. The above table shows that there is a

positive influence of co-curricular activities on the learning outcomes of private secondary school students of Karachi. The students who took part in co-curricular activities (experimental group) obtained better results in their academics as compared to those who did not participate in these activities (control group).

Conclusion

The study determines the role of co-curricular activities in the learning outcomes of students at secondary level in district east of Karachi. It is concluded that a considerable association was found between the learning outcomes of students and co-curricular activities. The results of pre-test of experimental and control group of students both in government and private secondary schools showed a slight variation in the mean scores and standard deviation. The results of post-test further specified a significant difference in the learning outcomes between the experimental and control group of students both in government and in private secondary schools. The experimental group of students was found more sociable, famous, confident, and determined to be good citizen as compared to control group of students. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that the experimental group had better academic performance than the control group of students.

Recommendations

1. After reviewing the literature, if the aim of education is to produce good leaders, writers,

scientists, thinkers, social workers, skilled citizen and athletics then it is strongly recommended that a proper space should be given in the curriculum.

2. To ensure the proper organization and conduct of student-activities, there should be provision for the direct association of members of the staff as advisors because the students are immature and stand in need of guidance and advice, in order that their organizations should be animated by a healthy spirit and they should work consistently for the achievement of the educational objectives in view. Therefore, every school must ensure that co-curricular activities should be given space in its yearly planning or in syllabus. The curriculum designers should also incorporate these activities in school curriculum.
3. Parents or guardians of students should be educated regarding the significance of co-curricular activities which are essential for skills development. Similarly, each student has to be left entirely to himself in regard to the choice of the form of activity according to his interest.

4. It should be the core responsibility of every school to arrange various kinds of co-curricular activities, so that every student can take part.
5. More and more opportunities should be provided in schools under the guidance of trained counselor that maximum students can participate in these activities that would benefit the individuals in their practical life.

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