

## EFFECT OF CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ON THE HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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### Abstract

School going children are not simply students; they are individuals with unique talents, interests and potential. Co-curricular activities recognize and nurture this individuality, providing them a platform for their holistic development. As children engage in diverse activities, they learn more about themselves, find an opportunity to discover their passions and develop a sense of identity beyond academic achievement. Participation of children in co-curricular activities has been linked to improved academic performance. The skills as time management, discipline and critical thinking acquired by children often translate into better academic outcomes. These activities complement the formal education system, providing them a more engaging educational experience. The school's commitment in providing a holistic learning experience should align with the evolving trends in the educational landscape. The teacher plays a significant role in developing interest among students towards co-curricular activities for their holistic development. The teachers should possess a positive attitude and right perceptions towards integrating co-curricular activities in school curriculum. The present study is an attempt to understand the attitude of secondary school teachers towards integration of co-curricular activities in school curriculum for the holistic development of students in secondary schools. The researchers used a well developed and standardized questionnaire as the tool for collection of data from a sample of 120 teachers (20 Headmasters and 100 School Assistants selected from 20 secondary schools located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh using Stratified Random Sampling technique. Mean score values, standard deviations and independent t-tests were used for analysis of data. The findings of the study revealed that the demographic variables – Gender and age of teachers has no influence on their attitude towards integration of co-curricular activities in school curriculum for the holistic development of students in secondary schools. However, the location of the school has a significant positive influence on the attitude of teachers towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students. The study suggested that the schools should provide opportunities for students to participate in co-curricular activities.

**Key Words:** Co-curricular activities, Holistic development, Attitude, Secondary school

### Introduction

Education is a multifaceted process involving systematic instruction, teaching and learning of knowledge, skills, values and habits. It is the process of facilitating learning. It cultivates social, moral and spiritual values among people. Education aims at developing the all-round personality of the child. It seeks to develop the innate capacities of the individuals. It develops critical thinking, creative thinking and problem-solving skills; and the ability to adapt to various situations. It also helps in socializing the individuals and preparing them for discharging their duties effectively in the society. The schools are institutions providing formal education to students, wherein they follow a definite curriculum prescribed by the Government or the Board to which the schools are affiliated. The curriculum in a school programme comprises of scholastic or academic as well as non-scholastic or non-academic activities to be conducted in formal, informal and non-formal settings during the academic year. These activities should not be like water tight compartments; they should go hand-in-hand, keeping in view the child's overall growth and development. They should complement each other.

Within the framework of holistic education, curricular and co-curricular activities play a pivotal role in shaping the child's overall learning experiences. While the curriculum provides the foundation for academic learning, co-curricular activities, with their practical applications, complement it by offering opportunities for students to apply theoretical knowledge in the real life situations and thereby develop essential life skills. Co-curricular activities such as music, debate, drama and athletics have been an inherent part of education since ancient times. However, their significance was somewhat overshadowed by the emphasis on academics at various points in history. It became evident that a purely academic approach led to an asymmetrical personality, hindering the achievement of holistic development of students. All-round or holistic development of personality of students, which refers to the balanced growth of a child in all aspects of life including mental, physical, psychological, spiritual and vocational facets, cannot be achieved through academics alone. Today's schools recognised the importance of addressing students' health, hygiene, sanitation and safety, alongside promoting recreational games and activities for physical development, character building and good citizenship. Co-curricular activities encompass a wide range of pursuits aimed at enriching students' educational experiences and fostering holistic development.

### CONCEPT OF CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Co-curricular activities are essential part of the educational experience, designed to complement and enhance the academic curriculum. Co-curricular activities can be understood as the activities that fall outside the regular academic curriculum but are recognized as important for the holistic development of students.

Co-curricular activities are the components of non-academic curriculum that helps to develop various facets of the personality development of the child. Today, there is need for the all-round development of the child—emotional, physical, spiritual and moral development which is complemented and supplemented by co-curricular activities.

According to **The International Dictionary of Education (1977)**, “Co-curricular activities are those activities sponsored or recognized by a school or college which are not part of the academic curriculum; but are acknowledged to be an essential part of the life of an educational institution”.

In the words of **Bhatia (1996)**, “Co-curricular activities may be defined as the activities undertaken to strengthen the classroom learning as well as other activities both inside and outside the classroom to develop the personality of the child”.

“Co curricular activities were mainly organized after school hours and so were the co-curricular; but they are not an integral part of the activities of the school as its curricular work” (**Aggarwal, 2000**).

From the above definitions, it is understood that co-curricular activities refer to the activities, programmes and learning experiences that complement, in some way or the other, to what the students learn in a school or a college, i.e. experiences that are connected to or mirror the academic curriculum.

### TYPES OF CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The teachers in secondary schools can encourage students to participate actively in different types of co-curricular activities being provided by the schools as part of the school curriculum.

The following are some of the important types of co-curricular activities which play a key role in the development of the child – physical, mental and spiritual.

- (i) **Literary Activities:** These activities focus on nurturing language and communication skills, critical thinking, and creativity. They include debates, discussions, subject-wise clubs, school magazines, dramatizations, study circles and story-writing sessions.
- (ii) **Physical Development Activities:** Aimed at promoting physical fitness, teamwork, discipline, and leadership, these activities include various sports such as games, indoor and outdoor

athletics, mass drills, parades, scouting, and participation in organizations like the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and Army Cadet Corps (ACC).

- (iii) **Aesthetic and Cultural Development Activities:** Activities like music, drawing, painting, sculpture, exhibitions, fancy dress events and folk dance performances aim to cultivate an appreciation for arts, culture and creativity.
- (iv) **Civic Development Activities:** Focused on instilling a sense of civic responsibility, leadership, and community engagement, these activities include participating in assemblies, serving on students' councils, managing canteens, and organizing and participating in celebrations of religious, national, and social festivals.
- (v) **Social Welfare Activities:** These activities aim to promote social awareness, empathy, and community service. They include organizing and participating in fairs, festivals, community service projects, and cultural programs, as well as involvement in scouting or guiding activities.
- (vi) **Leisure Time Activities:** Designed to encourage personal interests and hobbies, these activities provide students with opportunities for relaxation and self-expression. They include stamp and coin collecting, photography, reading clubs, as well as pursuits like needlework and knitting.
- (vii) **Excursion Activities:** These activities involve educational trips and visits to places of interest outside the classroom. They include picnics, museum visits, zoo trips, and other excursions that offer students opportunities for hands-on learning and exposure to new environments and cultures.

The above activities help to improve the academic performance, aid in achieving educational goals, influence behavior positively, increase knowledge and nurture a competitive spirit of the students in schools. These activities are not just about the present; they are investments in a child's future – meant to develop their character and skills, increase their social and emotional intelligence, help them perform better in academics and instill confidence and self-esteem with a view to make them grow as individuals with holistic development. The co-curricular activities help the children in the process of socialization. Further, they develop leadership qualities among the students.

### **CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN THE HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS**

Students get several benefits by their participation in co-curricular activities. They help the students in their holistic development. Co-curricular activities support and complement the academics in the school programme. They play a crucial role in the all-round development of personality of the children. The following are some of the advantages of co-curricular activities:

Co-curricular activities:

- a) provide motivation for learning.
- b) help to develop the spirit of healthy competition among students
- c) stimulate the skills of playing, acting, singing, speaking and narrating among students.
- d) enable the students to express themselves freely and confidently.
- e) develop leadership qualities among students by making them understand how to organize and present an activity and how to co-operate and co-ordinate in different situations
- f) develop in the students physical, psychological, ethical, social, aesthetic and disciplinary values
- g) help to make the students participate in games, music and drama

### **ROLE OF TEACHERS IN ORGANIZING CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The teacher should have to perform multi-dimensional function in organizing and executing co-curricular activities. It is the teacher who should finally take the responsibility of proceeding with the activities further.

- a) The teacher must be a good planner so that different co-curricular activities can be carried out systematically throughout the year.
- b) The teacher should take the responsibility of providing more and more opportunities to the student while conducting co-curricular activities.
- c) The teacher should act like evaluator and decision maker to the students in order to make them get a chance to prove themselves the best with a fair competition spirit

- d) The teacher should act as an innovator by introducing some innovative programmes and practices
- e) The teacher should be a good communicator so that students feel free to share problems and difficulties in completing the activities.
- f) The teacher must be a good organizer and manager so that the students would experience and gain maximum from the activities.
- g) The teacher should be a good recorder so that students could gain maximum of finer aspects of co-curricular activities

### LETERATURE REVIEW

The studies carried out earlier by the other researchers that aim at finding out the factors affecting teachers' attitude towards in-service training programmes for quality improvement in teaching have been examined; and a brief review of the same is provided in the following paragraphs.

**Sami, Laraib and Irfan (2020)** highlighted that Better and satisfactory performance can easily be managed with the help of excellent, praising, and nature communication strategies to ensure student academic and overall achievements in life.

**Ritchie (2018)** described that student participating in co-curricular activities are confident and have become good speakers in the school as well as the surrounding areas around them.

**Singh (2017)** asserted that co-curricular activities enable students to optimistically interact with others, show better gestures, and skillfully express other non-verbal communication such as sending messages and emotions, keeping eye contact and other such notions while dealing others in society.

**Venugopal (2016)** found that co-curricular activities promote the communication skills of students with positive effects on their academic achievements.

**Ogoch and Thinguri (2016)** explained that effective communication develops students' multifarious skills by promoting their ideas; polishing their concepts through their verbal communication and presenting their educational views in a technical way.

**Chudgar et al. (2015)** stated that students can polish and express their concise and clear ideas through best mature communication as co-curricular activity.

**Blomfield and Barber (2010)** pointed out that besides the verbal communication, non-verbal communication among students is also developed through co-curricular activities in diverse leading circumstances.

**Moriana, Alós, Alcalá, Pino, Herruzo and Ruiz,et (2006)** found that most of students, who actively participate in the co-curricular activities, are the best and brilliant presenters. Most of them give interesting and good presentations in the class. Thus, they get special prizes and positions in speech competitions too.

### NEED FOR THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION

The all-round development or holistic development of an individual is only possible through balanced development of scholastic or academic as well as non-scholastic or non-academic aspects in the formal, in-formal and non-formal educational settings in the society. In the modern era, the students are subjected to undue anxiety and over-stress in securing grades and ranks in the examinations. Sometimes, it leads to various types of depression on the part of the students. In such cases individual's involvement in the co-curricular activities becomes more significant because these activities help to relieve them of their anxieties and stress. Co-curricular activities help to enhance social interaction, healthy recreation, self-discipline and self-confidence among the students.

These activities instill in the students moral values, leadership qualities and the spirit of team work; and prepare them to face the challenges in their life courageously. It is the responsibility of teachers to conduct co-curricular activities along with academics in the secondary schools. The teachers are expected to have a positive attitude towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students in secondary schools. The researchers thought that it is relevant in this context to explore the attitude of teachers towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students in secondary schools. The present investigation is an attempt in this direction.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of the present investigation is to study the attitude of teachers towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students in secondary schools.

The study also aims at finding out the influence of certain demographic variables – gender, age and location of the school on the attitude of teachers towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level.

### **HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the present investigation:

- (i) There is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female teachers towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level.
- (ii) There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers aged below 40 years and those aged 40 years and above towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level.
- (iii) There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers working in rural and urban schools towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study is limited to find out the influence of three demographic variables, viz., gender, age and location of the school on the attitude of teachers towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level. Further, the study is confined to 120 secondary school teachers (20 Headmasters and 100 School Assistants) working in 20 secondary schools located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **(a) Method of Research**

Since the present study involves collecting data with the help of survey, the investigators used 'Descriptive survey' method for the present investigation.

#### **(b) Sample**

The sample of the study consisting of 120 teachers (20 Headmasters and 100 School Assistants) working in 20 secondary schools located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh using 'Stratified Random Sampling technique'.

#### **(c) Research Tool**

The researchers used a well developed questionnaire consisting of 35 items as the tool of research for the present investigation.

#### **(d) Administration of the Tool**

The tool was initially administered to 20 teachers (5 Headmasters and 15 School Assistants) working in 5 (five) secondary schools in and around Visakhapatnam city under Pilot study. The measures of reliability, validity and objectivity of the tool have been calculated. Further, the researchers conducted item analysis for the items included in the tool. Out of 35 items selected for the tool, the discriminating power of 30 items has been found positive and is negative in respect of 5 items.

The items whose discriminating power is negative have been removed; and the final tool consists of 30 items, which are pool proof in all respects. The final tool has been administered to 120 teachers (20 Headmasters and 100 School Assistants) working in 20 secondary schools located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh.

### **Statistical Interpretation of Data**

The duly filled-in questionnaires have been collected from 120 respondents – both the Headmasters and the School Assistants for purpose of tabulation of data.

The data collected has been analyzed and interpreted using different statistical techniques such as Mean score values, Standard Deviations and t-ratios; and are presented in the following table.

**Table showing t-values of different variables relating to the attitude of teachers towards Co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level**

S. No.	Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio	Result
1	Gender	Male 70 Female	50 102.10 70 103.07	27.38 26.82	0.19*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
2	Age	Below 40 yrs 40 yrs. & above	90 30 100.94 101.83	25.99 25.26	0.17*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
3	Location of the school	Rural Urban	80 40 91.50 105.00	28.79 30.16	2.35*	*Significant at 0.05 level

### Findings of the Study

On the basis of the analysis and interpretation of data, the researchers have arrived at the following findings and drawn the conclusions.

1. There is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female teachers towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level.
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers aged below 40 years and those aged 40 years and above towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level.
3. There is significant difference in the attitude of teachers working in rural and urban schools towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level. Teachers working in urban schools exhibited better attitude towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level as compared to their rural counterparts.

### Conclusions

From the findings of the study, it is concluded that gender and age have no influence on the attitude of teachers towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level. However, teachers working in urban schools have exhibited better attitude towards co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students at secondary level as compared to their rural counterparts.

### Educational Implications

- (i) The study helps teachers identify the difficulties, if any in conducting co-curricular activities
- (ii) The present study helps the teachers develop a positive attitude towards conducting co-curricular activities in the schools.
- (iii) The study helps Headmasters to plan and organize co-curricular activities for their students during the academic year.
- (iv) The study would help the teachers to take necessary steps for conducting co-curricular activities in the school for the benefit of their students
- (v) The study would develop leadership qualities among the students.

- (vi) The study would help the Academic Organizations like SCERTs, IASEs and the State Departments of Education to take necessary steps for planning and implementing co-curricular activities in the schools apart from their regular academic activities.

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