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The Importance of Extracurricular Activities in Education

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to provide information on extracurricular activities and their potential benefits on students' educational development and to understand their importance in a wide range of educational settings by analyzing related works of literature. This study examines the impacts of ECA membership on various educational outcomes as well as the reliability of the measurements employed in earlier research, paying special attention to evidence of causal effects.

Keywords: interpersonal skills, schools' regular curriculum, social identities, socially and academically active, traditional academic institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is described as a deliberate and methodical endeavour to attain a quality of living or for improved advancement. It can be obtained formally through schooling or informally through education at home and in the community [1]. Everyone has the right to self-education, regardless of whether this is accomplished through societal support or officially through home education. For the people who want to educate themselves should be given a wide range of opportunities which can help them to gain a strong educational background.

A student-performed activity which is not part of the regular curriculum of a school, college, or university education is known as an extracurricular activity, extra-academic activity, or cultural activity. It is true that student performance at secondary school is the main determinant for enrolment in tertiary education. As part of their school day, many secondary school students take part in a wide variety of activities, over and above the core curricular teaching and learning classroom work, which is usually referred to as co-curricular or extracurricular activities (ECA). In addressing this demand, whether from students or other stakeholders, secondary schools allocate considerable resources to the extra curriculum [2]. Extracurricular activities are crucial in determining a student's overall growth in the modern educational environment. Even though academic achievement is important, extracurricular activities—from clubs and after-school programs to sports and the arts—offer substantial advantages that go beyond the classroom. These activities might be related to student's hobbies, interests clubs usually enrol in, or artistic and academic courses which direct them to spend time wisely outside of the regular educational curriculum. Most of the time these activities are attended by volunteers who want to be socially

and academically active in their fields. In addition, the students who have a strong willingness to gain every secret of knowledge even outside the realm of the curriculum, can also participate and show their intelligence, conceptual capacities and great passion to learn. Moreover, such activities are highly beneficial to making students intellectually curious with collaborative, communication and interpersonal skills. It is true that, in today's educational landscape, the importance of enrolling in extracurricular activities is gaining a crucial part in each academic setting, whether it is a primary school or a master's degree. Understanding its potential advantages can help educators to keep balanced development of student performance, providing opportunities to enrich their educational experience, explore interests and strengthen their soft skills that are not typically involved in traditional academic institutions.

METHODS

Extracurricular Primary and Secondary Education states that extracurricular activities are curricular activities carried out by students outside of study hours, extracurricular activities, and co-curricular activities under the guidance and supervision of the education unit, aimed at developing potential, talents, students' interests, abilities, personality, cooperation and independence optimally to support the achievement of educational goals. Extracurricular activities can take the form of individuals and groups that are structured around the needs for knowledge, development, guidance, and habituation of students so that they have basic supporting knowledge that the benefits of extracurricular activities include: (1) meeting the needs of the group; (2) channelling interests and talents; (3) develop and encourage motivation towards subjects; (4) binding students to school; (5) developing loyalty to school; (6) integrating social groups; (7) developing specific characteristics; (8) providing informal mentoring and service opportunities; (9) developing the public's image of the school [3]. Extracurricular activities or ECA can help students to discover their unknown abilities and talents which are critical thinking, analytical thinking, systems thinking, conceptual capacities and so on. Moreover, education helps people become more knowledgeable while simultaneously raising their social standing, which benefits the community in which they live [4]. When individuals engage in social activities in a way that is acceptable, a strong society can be formed. It is obvious that extracurricular activities make students respectable social beings by inviting students a great number of benefits beyond academic achievements:

- Civic Engagement: A lot of extracurricular activities urge students to get involved in their communities and cultivate a feeling of civic duty, such as service projects or volunteer work.
- Social Connections: Through these activities, children can connect with classmates who share the same interests, which helps them form friendships and a feeling of belonging.
- Stress Reduction: Participating in clubs, athletics, or the arts can offer a respite from the demands of school and a healthy way to release tension.
- Enhanced Academic Performance: According to numerous studies, involvement in extracurricular activities might boost academic achievement by encouraging students to learn improved time management and study techniques.
- Enhanced Engagement: Students' involvement in extracurricular activities can boost their academic performance, resulting in a more fulfilling and cohesive educational experience.
- Skill Development: Students can develop different abilities, such as problem-solving, creative thinking, and specialized technical skills associated with their passions (such as sports, music, or painting).
- College Applications: Participating in extracurricular activities can improve college applications by demonstrating a candidate as a well-rounded individual with diverse interests and community involvement.

- Personal Development: Students gain valuable life skills including communication, teamwork, leadership, and time management by taking part in extracurricular activities.
- Career Exploration: By creating organizations centred around particular fields, extracurricular activities can provide early exposure to possible career choices while cultivating longer-term interests.
- Cultural Awareness: Engaging in a variety of activities can help students better appreciate and value other cultures, which will help to increase their awareness of the world.
- Physical Health: Participation in sports and physical activities fosters physical fitness, healthy habits, and general well-being.
- Gaining Self-Esteem and Confidence: As students face obstacles and recognize their accomplishments, achieving success in extracurricular activities can develop self-confidence.

Students who actively participate in extracurricular activities benefit from higher grades, test scores, educational achievements, more regular attendance, and increased self-esteem. Engaging in such activities enhances students' leadership, decision making and teamwork skills, and eliminates behavioural and disciplinary issues associated with drug and alcohol use. Engaging students in a wide range of volunteering works or giving them a chance to do what they admire can rescue them from wasting their free time. Additionally, it is necessary for a person to be involved in their hobbies and interests since it saves them from different unpleasant situations including bullying and various types of crime (such as drug dealing, stealing, smoking and etc). Participating in sports - athletics and gymnastics - can give students special developmental opportunities that positively impact the student's social self-concept. This may lead them to higher academic standards and hence better academic results for student-athletes and gymnastics. Adolescent students who do not have opportunities to identify with a particular group or who are affiliated with delinquent social groups are more likely to experience poor outcomes including substance addiction, dropout, suicide, or discipline issues [5].

RESULTS

Students' brains develop through involvement in out-of-school activities, which improves their mental health. Moreover, it sustains their academic performance over an extended period of time by reducing the level of disciplinary and behavioural issues. Daley and Leahy conducted research that examined the enhancement of self-concept. As a result of engaging in physical activities, students lower their stress levels which arise from overscheduling curriculum of school. Due to these activities, students maintain overall well-being and fresh minds that lead to being active and efficient in their both academic and social lives. In addition to this, their body is in good shape which gives them self-confidence and a better view of their appearance, whereas those who are not involved in any sort of physical activities in general do not possess these attributes. In the study by Daley and Leahy, the first group consisted of 126 randomly selected children between the ages of 8 and 9. Each child took part in physical activities such as sports, gymnastics and athletics. Once a week they were regularly involved in those exercises, in the end, participants were found that they improved their self-concept and conceptual capacity. By contrast, in the second study, 63 students who did not participate in any physical extracurricular activities were observed and it was found that these students lacked some abilities like self-esteem and a refreshed mind.

Accordingly, Delay and Leahy came to the conclusion that involvement in physical extracurricular activities and self-perception were directly related. It's also suggested that this type of engagement helps kids feel more confident about their physical and social identities. Social skills are an essential component of a student's character since socialization and camaraderie are also important aspects of a student's existence. Participation in extracurricular activities provides

students with enhanced opportunities to engage with individuals beyond their existing social circles, thereby facilitating the development of friendships and social confidence.

Daley and Leahy found a direct relationship between self-perception and participation in physical extracurricular activities. It is also proposed that such kind of investment also gives children a sort of certainty about their social and physical selves. Socialization and fellowship are also a crucial part of a student's life thus it makes social skills a necessary part of a student's character. Students who participate in extracurricular activities have more opportunities to socialize with people outside of their present social circle, thereby facilitating the development of friendships and social confidence. Engaging in these activities helps children develop self-discipline and maturity. It was also determined by this study that students who actively participated felt more committed and responsible. Consequently, it was determined that students who participated in physical extracurricular activities had a higher level of self-confidence than those who did not [6].

DISCUSSION

According to research and its results which were mentioned above, it can be believed that extracurricular activities play a crucial role in the education system. This essay sheds light on the importance of extracurricular activities in different educational institutions and the benefits which students can get by enrolling in such activities. By thoroughly analyzing the result of the study, it should be stated that children tend to achieve success when they are mainly involved in out-of-school activities. It is true that actively participating in such activities provides a student a sense of belonging to society which in turn motivates him to be more engaged in social occurrences. Additionally, this can have a positive impact on their personal and professional lives as they become better equipped to make immediate decisions and take responsibility for their actions in a community. However, there might be controversies such as some people saying that spending students' leisure time on co-curricular activities can not benefit their development and achievements, it may be a waste of time, while others believe that encouraging children to take part in sports, music and gymnastics is possibly helpful to make them better citizen for the society. it is observed that participators of extracurricular activities are not only socially active but also better at their academic life, with achievements in each educational discipline.

CONCLUSION

By implementing extracurricular activities in each sector of education, schools and other institutions give their candidates a valuable chance to enhance their essential life skills like critical, analytical and systems thinking, in addition, provide them with possible opportunities to perform their theoretical knowledge in the real-life situations which in turn allow them to strengthen what they learn in classes. By incorporating ECA to education, participating in various clubs or community engagement activities, and incorporating ECA to out of school practices, educators can help students develop the skills and values they need to succeed in their personal and professional lives.

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