

Role of Co-Curricular Activities in School Effectiveness

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Abstract: This study attempted to explore and identify factors that promote effectiveness in schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The sample consisted of 30 principals/headmasters of schools from all the boys' high schools of Peshawar City, which included 26 principals from private and 4 from public schools respectively. 60 teachers two from each sample school from both public and private sectors (8 teachers from public and 52 teachers from private schools). Of those 30 schools, a sample of 600 students was selected, including 80 students from public and 520 students from private schools (26 from private sector and 4 from public sector). Three separate opinionnaires were used to gather data from principals, teachers and students. The opinionnaires contained items and statements which were structured around eliciting responses from principals, teachers and students about factors that contributed to school effectiveness. The interviews based on 10 items/statements which were held with 60 parents whose children were in 10th class of the sampled schools. The data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. In order to be logical and scientific in approach, the analysis was further made meaningful with the application of statistical measures. The data obtained from principals', teachers' and students' revealed a number of areas and factors that contributed to school effectiveness.

Key words: Community, Effectiveness, Factors, Opinionnaire, Parents, Public and Private, Principals, Relationship, Secondary schools, Students, Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Schools is a social organization by virtue of the fact that the principal, the teachers and the students have common interest involved in the school-based activities for which they coordinate their efforts for the welfare of the students. The objectives of the schools ought to be formulated on the basis of shared efforts of those forming an organization.

Co-curricular activities promote enthusiasm, vitality, positive thinking and team spirit which in turn, contribute to personality development. Co-curricular activities facilitate the development of various domains of mind and personality such as intellectual development, emotional development, social development, moral development and aesthetic development.

Schools are meant to provide quality education to all the students, irrespective of colour, caste and creed. Students coming from various backgrounds should not feel deprived at any stage during their school life. They all

should have an equal opportunity of acquiring education. To have such kind of environment; proper planning is needed every year. Effective schools promote the teaching learning process.

Communities demand quality education for their children. The school system should ensure holistic development of a child. He should not only have one skill required for joining a profession but rather he should be equipped with a member of skills that enable him take useful member of society, so that he play his role effectively in the development of his country. Effective schools meet the expectations of stakeholders in education. Both students and teachers at such schools work hard to meet the wishes desires of society, whereas teachers and students at the less effective schools do not go through such turmoil.

In an excellent school, the population including, among others, the principal, the teachers and the taught have a common cause. For them work has a significance and life is work. Both teachers and students have

effective interactions and they complete their different assignments in time with a spirit that shows their enthusiasm for achievement of the stated objectives of the school. Their individual and collective accomplishments are readily recognized. The excellence of effective schools does not solely emanate from a single factor of high morale, or of students' high achievements, or high pass percentage but it is the net result of all these and more.

Literature Review: According to Balls (2008)[1] the distinctive contribution of good schools is excellent teaching and learning, which help children to develop confidence, learn about teamwork, leadership, responsibility and successful relationships. As a vital community resource, schools could offer wider opportunities for children and their families to take part in sports and cultural activities. Good schools have an understanding of the child. They are places that could identify and address emerging problems before they become serious.

According to the National Education Policy (2009) of Government of Pakistan education systems enable students to promote their hidden talents and skills, facilitating them to play their effective roles in the development of society. Education should infuse in them the spirit of patriotism and build their character, quality of tolerance, social justice, democracy in order to know their culture and history. They should be well aware of the ideology of Pakistan.

A study conducted by a forum called Teaching and Learning Research Program (TLRP) in 2006 highlighted the most important purpose of learning and reported that it was to make a person able to unfold his internal qualities. While, on the other hand, required teachers to keep in mind previous knowledge of the learner. The study also reported that teachers should perform different activities in the class in order to make the environment of the class healthy by discussing and solving the pupil's social and emotional problems by which a teacher can make the learning effective.

According to Iqbal (2014)[2] excellent schools are recognized by the following characteristics:

- Significant work.
- Fruitful interaction between teachers and students.
- The acquisition of excellence in school is not dependent upon individual effort whether it is on part of school or student; but a collective endeavour leads to achievement.

- The society's higher anticipations are met through the best achievements of these schools.
- Having strong culture and clear sense of purpose are two main approaches.
- Regarding achievement of basic objectives of school, teachers and other staff are provided with appropriate aim.

According to James and Pollard (2006)[3] "Promoting the learning and achievement of pupils is the main aim of school education. Teaching is the main way of achieving this. Teaching and learning are what ultimately make difference in the mind of the learner and thus affects knowledge, skills, attitudes and the capacity of young people to contribute to contemporary societies."

Ahmad (2011)[4] has listed number of values of curricular activities like educational value, psychological values, development of social values, development of civic values, physical development values, recreational values and cultural values, Elmore (2003) documented that knowing the right thing to do was the central problem of school improvement. Holding schools accountable for their performance depended on having people in schools with the knowledge, skill and judgment to make the improvements that would increase students' performance.

Khan (2014)[5] quoted Cotton (2003) and identified the following categories of principal's behaviour that positively affected the dependent variables of students' achievement, students' attitudes, students' behaviour, teachers' attitudes, their behaviors' and dropout rates.

- Self-confidence, responsibility and perseverance
- Positive and supportive climate
- Parent and community outreach and involvement

Hanson (2001: 641) Documented: Schools also have their own unique cultures that are shaped around a particular combination of values, beliefs and feelings. These school cultures emphasize what is of paramount importance to them as they strive to develop their knowledge base in a particular direction, such as producing outstanding football teams, high SAT scores, disciplined classrooms and skilled auto mechanics, or sending kids to college who come from inner-city urban schools. Although the culture of a school is not visible to the human eye, its artifacts and symbols reflect specific cultural priorities.

An accepted aspect of instructional leadership was to provide teachers with tranquility. Elmore (2000) explained that school leaders were hired and retained

largely on the basis of their capacity to buffer teachers from outside interference. Buffering consisted of creating structures and procedures around the technical core of teaching.

The act of 'Visibility' of school leadership addressed itself to the extent to which the school leader had contact and interacted with teachers, students and parents. Fink and Resnick (2001) documented that effective principals were in teachers' classrooms every day, and it was difficult to draw the line between observations that had an evaluative intent and those that were part of the professional support system.

According to Tooley and Howes (1999)[6] good schools had the following characteristics:

- They had few permanently excluded children, indicating high standards of order and discipline;
- They made substantial efforts for extra-curricular activities including sports, the arts, voluntary activities and after-school activities.

Khan (2014) quoted Blase and Blase (1999) reported that highly effective principals were in classrooms on routine basis. The proposed effect of 'Visibility' was twofold: first, it communicated the message that the principal was interested in the daily operations of the school; second, it provided opportunities for the principal to interact with teachers and students regarding substantive issues. Specific behaviours and characteristics associated with this responsibility were found in the meta-analysis by making systematic and frequent visits to classrooms; having frequent contacts with students and being highly visible to students, teachers and parents.

According to Covington (1992) students were motivated to engage themselves in academic tasks from both external and internal perspectives. Different theories (Drive theory, attribute theory, and self-worth theory) provided some guidance regarding ways to motivate students via external sources. One technique was to provide students with feedback regarding their knowledge gain. When students perceived that they had progressed in the acquisition of knowledge or skill, they tended to increase their level of effort and engagement regardless of their relative standing compared with other students. Another external approach to motivation was to involve students in game like tasks that focused on academic content, because games and game like activities were inherently interesting.

Teddle *et al* (1989a)[7] mentioned that an integral part of effective classroom was that all staff expected the highest level of behaviour and achievement from students. Armor *et al* (1976), Levine and Lezotte (1990) generally supported parental involvement but it was discouraged in certain contexts. It could have positive impact when parents assisted in school trips, classrooms but negative when no Parent Teacher Associations were made. Parent's direct involvement could affect school-based co-curricular activities in the following ways:

- Synchronizing school and home demands on students;
- Reducing class size as taught by acting as unpaid teacher assistants;
- Raising resources for the school;
- Assisting with homework for school students;
- Feeding back information on pupil progress and problems to the school;
- Liaising with their children's individual teachers.

Importance and Benefits of Co-Curricular Activities: Gyanunlimited. (2011-2014)[8] enlisted the following importance and benefits of co-curricular activities:

- Co-curricular activities stimulate playing, acting, singing, recitation, speaking and narrating in students.
- Activities like participation in game debates, music, drama, etc., help in achieving overall functioning of education.
- It enables the students to express themselves freely through debates.
- Games and Sports help to be fit and energetic to the child.
- Helps to develop the spirit of healthy competition.
- These activities guide students how to organize and present an activity, how to develop skills, how to cooperate and co-ordinate in different situations-all these helps in leadership qualities.
- It provides the avenues of socialization, self-identification and self-assessment when the child comes in contact with organizers, fellow participants, teachers and people outside the school during cultural activity.
- Inculcate the values to respects other's view and feeling.
- It makes you perfect in decision making.
- It develops a sense of belongingness.

- Co-curricular activities provide motivation for learning.
- Co-curricular activities develop the values like physical, psychological, Ethical, academic, civic, social, aesthetic, cultural recreational and disciplinary values

Parental Involvement in constructive areas proved better for schools whereas visits to school to complain or criticize just for the sake of criticizing did not produce positive results. It was noted from review of literature that student's involvement in school clubs, societies etc promoted values, commitment and responsibility. Giving students responsibility for their work had positive results. The crux of the review of the aforementioned studies boiled down to indicate that there was positive relationship in different school activities and all of them collectively improved school effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

It was a descriptive study consisting of three opinionnaires through which data were collected from principals/headmasters, teachers, students. A close-ended interview schedule was used to collect data from parents. It attempted to identify factors of co-curricular activities which help promoting effectiveness in 30 boys' public and private high schools. For principals/headmasters, an opinionnaire containing 60 items/statements was fielded to 30 participants. Another opinionnaire was given to 60 sampled teachers that contained 20 items/statements. The data from the sampled 600 students were gathered using an opinionnaire containing 20 items/statements. The interviews containing 10 items/statements were held with 60 parents whose children were in 10th class of the sampled schools. Their responses obtained were quantified and analyzed for drawing inferences and results. Data collected from principals', teachers' and students' were statistically analyzed using Krushkal Wallis test, through minitab to explore in depth the experiences of principals and teachers and views of students in regard to school effectiveness.

Research Questions: The following key questions were examined in the study:

- Which co-curricular activities help promote effectiveness in boys' public and private high schools?

- How co-curricular activities are helpful in improving/producing students' balanced personality?
- To what extent these activities are being applied in school system and how they contribute to school effectiveness?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings show that the perceptions of the majority, of principals' and teachers' were aligned with those factors and process that promote effectiveness in schools by the application of various co-curricular activities in their schools. The students' expectations were in line with the statements provided that they wanted their schools to support their learning with curricular and co-curricular activities by providing every possible help and motivation among the students and producing a caring and nurturing environment aimed at overall development of students' personality. Parents emphasized that arranging various activities and programs along with co-curricular activities including dramas, speeches, debates, games and other healthy competitions in disciplined manner, to a large extent, only promoted the school environment.

Analysis of Principals Responses: The responses obtained from 30 principals on the basis of opinion naire regarding factors creating effectiveness in schools through co-curricular activities were subjected to statistical analysis by using a non-parametric test, i-e- Krushkal Wallis test, through Minitab to test the similarities in the principals' responses. The principal responses about related subjects with five choices (Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)) are given in Table 4.1.

A look at the principals' responses in Table 4.1 above shows that, for most statements, almost all the respondents responded positively to the given statements i.e. they expressed themselves by 'agreeing' and 'strongly agreeing' with the statements. For statements 1 and 2, most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that co-curricular activities were there in their schools. Two respondents ticked 'undecided'. Five respondents ticked 'disagree'. For statements 3 and 4, most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that there was proper monitoring of co-curricular activities.

Table 1: Principals' responses about Co-curricular activities for School Effectiveness

S. No.	School Effectiveness	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Have you applying co-curricular activities in your school	13	10	2	5	0
2	You are satisfied with co-curricular activities in your school	13	10	2	5	0
3	Proper monitoring of progress of students compels the students and creates competition among them.	18	11	0	1	0
4	Curricular and co-curricular programs of school promote sustainable commitment to educational outcomes, which are not restricted to test scores only.	18	11	0	1	0
5	Teachers supervise co-curricular activities of students.	16	13	1	0	0

Table 2: Testing of Statistical Hypothesis of Principals' Responses

S. No.	Statements	N	Median	Ave Rank
1	Have you applying co-curricular activities in your school	5	5.000	166.3
2	You are satisfied with co-curricular activities in your school	5	5.000	166.3
3	Proper monitoring of progress of students compels the students and creates competition among them.	5	1.000	150.5
4	Curricular and co-curricular programs of school promote sustainable commitment to educational outcomes, which are not restricted to test scores only.	5	1.000	150.5
5	Teachers supervise co-curricular activities of students.	5	1.000	151.2

H = 4.77 DF = 59 P = 1.000

H = 5.15 DF = 59 P = 1.000 (adjusted for ties)

Table 3: Teachers' Responses about Co-curricular activities for School Effectiveness

S. No.	School Effectiveness	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Co-curricular activities are being held in your school	6	27	13	9	5
2	You are satisfied personally with co-curricular activities in your school	6	27	13	9	5
3	You are properly educating students through co-curricular activities	12	32	13	2	1
4	Curricular and co-curricular programs of school promote sustainable commitment to educational outcomes.	22	29	3	4	2
5	You are supervising co-curricular activities in your school.	32	21	4	1	2

Curricular and co-curricular programs of school promoted sustainable commitment to educational outcomes, which were not restricted to test scores only. 1, 1 respondent were against the statement. For statement 5, most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that teachers supervise co-curricular activities of students'. Only one respondent has ticked 'undecided' which may be due the unavailability of such type of activities in that school or area.

Testing of Statistical Hypothesis of Principals' Responses: The responses of principals were tested through Krushkal Wallis to see whether their responses were the same or not about various questions. Null hypothesis for this purpose was "the responses of all principals were the same at the average". The results obtained through minitab are given in Table 4.2.

From table 4.2 mentioned p-value it revealed that the statistical hypothesis of the study was insignificant. Conclusively, the responses of all the principals were the same at the average.

Analysis of Teachers' Responses: The responses obtained from 60 teachers on the basis of opinionnaire regarding factors creating effectiveness in schools through co-curricular activities were subjected to statistical analysis by using a non-parametric test, i-e-Krushkal Wallis test, through Minitab to test the similarities in the teachers responses. The teachers' responses about related subjects with five choices (Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)) are given in Table 4.3.

A look at the teachers' responses in Table 4.3 above shows that, for most statements, almost all the respondents responded positively to the given statements i.e. they expressed themselves by 'agreeing' and 'strongly agreeing' with the statements. For statements 1 and 2, most respondents (33 out of 60) agreed or strongly agreed that co-curricular activities are being held in their schools. Thirteen respondents ticked 'undecided' while nine ticked 'disagree' and five ticked 'strongly disagree'. There may be no application of such

Table 4: Testing of Statistical Hypothesis of Teachers' Responses

S. No.	Statements	N	Median	Ave Rank
1	Co-curricular activities are being held in your school	5	9.000	59.8
2	You are satisfied personally with co-curricular activities in your school	5	9.000	59.8
3	You are properly educating students through co-curricular activities	5	12.000	53.4
4	Curricular and co-curricular programs of school promote sustainable commitment to educational outcomes	5	4.000	56.1
5	You are supervising co-curricular activities in your school.	5	4.000	51.9

H = 4.07 DF = 19 P = 1.000

H = 4.10 DF = 19 P = 1.000 (adjusted for ties)

Table 5: Students' Responses about Co-curricular activities for School Effectiveness

S. No.	School Effectiveness	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Co-curricular activities are being held in your school	206	201	77	47	69
2	You are satisfied personally with co-curricular activities in your school	243	237	22	56	42
3	You are taking part in co-curricular activities held in your school.	191	209	69	50	81
4	You are being educating through co-curricular activities.	193	252	35	60	60
5	Are these activities wasting your learning time.	51	70	45	207	227

Table 6: Testing of Statistical Hypothesis of Students' Responses

S. No.	Statements	N	Median	Ave Rank
1	Co-curricular activities are being held in your school	5	77.00	53.3
2	You are satisfied personally with co-curricular activities in your school	5	56.00	47.4
3	You are taking part in co-curricular activities held in your school.	5	81.00	54.2
4	You are being educating through co-curricular activities.	5	60.00	49.3
5	Are these activities wasting your learning time.	5	70.00	51.3

H = 3.35 DF = 19 P = 1.000

H = 3.35 DF = 19 P = 1.000 (adjusted for ties)

type of activities or no facilities there due to which teachers are not satisfied personally with co-curricular activities in their school. For statements 3, 4 and 5, most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that students are being properly educated through co-curricular activities. Curricular and co-curricular programs of school promote sustainable commitment to educational outcomes and teachers are supervising co-curricular activities in their schools. Thirteen teachers in statement no: 3 ticked 'undecided'. They are not sure that co-curricular activities are educating students. While in statement 4 three teachers ticked 'undecided' four 'disagree' and two 'strongly disagreed' that curricular and co-curricular programs of school promote sustainable commitment to educational outcomes. For statement 5 four respondents ticked 'undecided', one 'disagree' while two 'strongly disagreed' that they are supervising co-curricular activities in their schools [8-11].

From table 4.4 mentioned p-value it revealed that the statistical hypothesis of the study was insignificant. Conclusively, the responses of all teachers were the same at the average.

A perusal of students' responses in Table 4.5 indicated that for most statements, almost all the respondents replied positively to the given statements. They expressed themselves by 'agreeing' and 'strongly agreeing' with the statements. For statements 1 and 2, most respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that co-curricular activities were held in their schools. Seventy seven and twenty two respondents have ticked 'undecided' while forty seven and fifty six ticked 'disagree' and sixty nine and forty two ticked 'strongly disagree' There may be no application of such type of activities or no facilities due to which teachers were not satisfied personally with co-curricular activities in their schools. For statements 3 and 4, most respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that students took part in co-curricular activities held in their schools and they were being educated through co-curricular activities. Respondents who ticked 'undecided' were sixty nine and thirty five, disagree respondents were fifty and sixty while 'strongly disagree' eighty one and sixty, they were either not sure or were not taking part in such type of activities and were the view that students are not educating with

such type of activities. For statement 5 most respondents 'disagreed' and 'strongly disagreed' those co-curricular activities are wastage of learning time, forty five respondents have ticked undecided either they were not sure or fifty one respondents 'agreed' and seventy 'strongly agreed' with the statement that co-curricular activities are wasting students learning time[12-14].

From above mentioned p-value it revealed that the statistical hypothesis of the study was insignificant. Conclusively, the responses of all students were the same at the average.

Crux of Parents' Interviews: Many parents considered co-curricular activities very useful for their children. Healthy competitions and co-curricular activities should be given importance due to which students learnt a lot. While some parents considered them wastage of time as they were concerned more about results only as it was generally believed that those schools were successful where most students had better gains as compared to some other schools. Majority parents viewed co-curricular activities as good results, healthy curricular and co-curricular activities, arranging activities including dramas, speeches, debates, games and other healthy competition in disciplined manner, to a large extent, promoted the school environment and community involvement.

CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that a number of factors contribute to school effectiveness. Interpretation of the principals', teachers' and students' responses and interviews of parents revealed that school effectiveness consisted of multidimensional factors such as high staff morale, students' academic achievement, high pass percentages, proper curricula and well-trained teachers. It came to light that better relationships amongst principal and teachers and between teachers themselves improved school climate, staff morale and public confidence in schooling. Arranging various healthy activities for better learning of students must be needed. For students' betterment there should be healthy competitions like inter-school competition, debates, study tours, blood donor societies, parents' visits and other community involvement.

To parents good results were important because they were the ultimate outcome of the school efforts. Other factors for promoting effectiveness in schools included (a) Efficient and dutiful administration. (b) Devoted and

well-trained teaching staff. (c) Conducive environment for learning. (d) Parents' intervention. (e) Participation of community. (f) Needed facilities for students.

In Pakistani school system, majority of co-curricular activities are not being applied because of less education and narrow mindedness as some people consider it wastage of time and some parents are worried about their childrens' results as it was generally believed that those schools were successful where most students had better gains as compared to schools where emphasis is laid on co-curricular activities. Another big problem in this regard is lack of resources and other related facilities because in some schools they were deficient either in financial resources or human resources or they have no grounds and other related facilities. Some schools especially private schools have no play grounds and they are trying their best to show only good results to parents. Another problem is law and order situation due to which parents are reluctant to permit their wards to take part in such type of activities.

Similarly, curricular and co-curricular programmes of school promote sustainable commitment to educational outcomes. Effective principals discuss with the teachers the areas that need improvement. Effective principals identify administrative problems and take necessary corrective measures. Arranging co-curricular activities in schools form important learning and recreational components of school activities and students expect their continuation and variety. When an appropriate environment is provided to students, it also leads to cooperation of students among themselves; thereby leading to effective learning experiences for students. All these contributing factors lead to ensuring that students stay in school, come well motivated and are able to devote their time and energy for ensuring maximum learning.

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