

Impact of Extra-curricular Activities on Students' Academic Performance at Secondary Schools in Samdrup Jongkhar.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to find out the impact of extracurricular activities on the academic performance of student at secondary schools in Samdrup Jongkhar District. The sample consisted of 471 students from classes (IX-XII) from seven secondary schools in Samdrup Jongkhar. The classes were selected randomly. The study used a mixed method mode approach. The quantitative component comprises of 24 items of 4 Likert scale survey questionnaires categorized under three themes. The qualitative component incorporated students' perception on the impact of extracurricular activities in academic performance was collected through open-ended questions. The data were analyzed using descriptive analysis (means and standard deviation) and inferential t-test was use for analysis of hypothesis. The qualitative raw date was thematically analyzed (transcribed, coded and categorized). The study concluded that that student who participated in extra-curricular activities have positive influence on students' life with high academic performance, more regular attendance and better self image. It is recommended that the school should give opportunity to students to participate in extracurricular activities irrespective of the level that they study.

Keywords: Extra-curricular activities, Academic performance, perception, secondary schools

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Education aims to bring wholesome development of a child. Many see schools as an institution that can be used to achieve this wholesome development. However, in the school setting, there is always a debate between the importance academic performance and extra- curricular. Zaman (2017), notes, There are numerous types of extracurricular activities, for example, sports, clubs, administration, music, arts and dramatization. The ongoing debate on the importance of extra-curricular activities as opposed to academic learning is a catch phrase that is often heard in the schools, seminars and medias. According to (Saqib, Raheem & Salman, 2018) participation in extracurricular activities help youngsters learn important set of skill like team building and teamwork, and role-playing skills like leadership skill. All these skills help students prosper in their school life as well as in their professional life. The priority is not yet established. Research across the globe ascertains the importance of one over another but the clear demarcation of its supremacy over another is difficult to institute.

Although, extra-curricular are significant for enriching students on cognitive, physical, social and emotional level, academic learning gives the direct entry to the next standard at least in Bhutan. The subservient treatment of extra-curricular activities in Bhutan questions its importance. It is also a general believe that to have an access to the outside world, academic performance is preferred than co-curricular activities in Bhutan. In contrast, Chambers & Schreiber (2004) assert, “One research finding suggested that only an academic curriculum would enhance academic performance” (as cited in Leung et al., 2010, p.332). The school education encompasses to uphold the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domain gearing towards wholesome development. The holistic development of a student is complete with the nurturing of academic learning and enhancement of extra-curricular activities. This research was carried out to validate the hypothesis of its co-existence particularly targeting the students from the secondary schools with classes IX to XII under Samdrup Jongkhar District.

1.2. Problem statement

The researchers attempt to carry out the study to ascertain the impact of extra-curricular activities on academic performance of students in the secondary schools level. The researchers hold the view that such research would expose the ground reality existing across schools in Bhutan, where there is a existing belief of extra-curricular being a hindrance to students academic performance at the level of secondary schools and find ways to focus on the area of importance. A debate exists in our school

system about the impact of students' participation in extracurricular activities on academic performance. One situation is that participation leads to higher academic performance and increased possibility of post secondary education, while the other situation is that participation leads reduction of the amount of time a student can offer to schoolwork and results in lower academic performance and less opportunities for college. A very little study has been conducted on the impact of extracurricular activities on students at secondary level. One must go through many research studies in order to determine the benefits or disadvantage of extracurricular activities on academic performance. There is a knowledge gap and therefore there is a need to identify the benefits and detriments of extracurricular activity participation.

1.2. Situational Analysis

The situation analysis examines the credibility of extra-curricular activities in improving the academic achievement in students. In contrast, some are of the view that too much of extra-curricular activities proves disastrous for the learners in scoring good marks and many often some schools and parents does not allow their children to participate in extra-curricular activities especially when they are appearing board exam, This research is aligned in line with the above understanding.

1.4. Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to examine the impact of extra-curricular activities on students' academic achievement of classes, IX - XII under Samdrup Jongkhar District. In addition, the study also aims to find the academic performance (test score) relationship between participating students and non-participating students in extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, it redirects the educational leaders and the parents to review their existing prejudices about extracurricular practice at the secondary school level.

1.5. Research Question

- 1) What are the impacts of extracurricular activities on students' academic performance?
- 2) What is the students' perception on extracurricular activities in the school to the academic performance?

1.6. Hypothesis

Null hypothesis (H_0): there is no impact of extracurricular activities on students' academic performance.

Alternative hypothesis (H_1): there is impact of extracurricular activities on students' academic performance.

1.7. Significance

This study had been undertaken to ascertain the impacts of extracurricular activities on academic performance in school under Samdrup Jongkhar Dzongkhag and to establish its effectiveness for class IX - XII at the secondary level. The researchers found out that the extra-curricular activities have positive impact on academic performance of students at secondary school under Samdrup Jongkhar. Therefore, the results from the research may have the potential to add to the existing literature on extracurricular activities. In addition, the result helps to enlighten some parents and educational leaders who believe it is a hindrance to the academic learning of the children.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. What are Extracurricular Activities?

Extra Curricular activities are defined as the activities are performed by the students outside the realm of normal curriculum or school. These activities are voluntary and offered after the class hours within the school settings. Extracurricular activities provide students with a genuine chance to develop their social identities and skills. High schools in Bhutan provides platform to showcase their talents to hone their skills in games and sports ranging from ball games to athletics. Moreover, it opens the child's world to various career options and experiences. According to Hills (2010) "High school is a time in a student's life to experience a variety of educational opportunities that can provide emotional, mental, physical, and social experiences that last a lifetime". (p.1). He furthers his stand by clarifying how administrators, teachers, counselors, and coaches continually encourage students to become involved in activity or athletics during their high school career (Hill, 2010). The students perform these activities voluntarily instead of being mandatory.

2.2. Importance of extracurricular activities

Extra-curricular activities allow children to learn about themselves and their interest. They also help them develop their social skills that will help them in their future career and life. According to Wilson (2009) “Youth who participate in activities can learn important skills, such as team work or leadership skills, and these skills may help them in other parts of their lives. When furthering their education, those participated in activities are more likely to make friend easily, and show leadership based on prior experience in extra-curricular activities”.(p.12)

Bhutanese students in the schools across the country participate in various extracurricular activities ranging from football, volleyball, basketball, athletics and field events amongst others. In doing so, children remain engaged and disruptive behavior can be minimized. In this connection, Ahmad, Mushtaq & Rahman (2015) confirmed, “Students often learned skills such as teamwork and leadership from college club activities while decreasing the likelihood of different problem behaviors”. Their study not only suggests an academic benefit associated with extracurricular participation, but also a positive sense of school connectedness. For instance, students who participate in extracurricular activities have greater academic success, greater character development, especially in the areas of time-management and leadership skills, more positive social development, and greater interest in community involvement hours in leisure activities (Christison, 2013). Interestingly, another study by Joekel RG showed that achievement in extracurricular activities is a factor that can predict success in life beyond college (Ahmad et al., 2015).

2.3. Impact of extracurricular activities on academic performance

Children tend to remain focused and their academic achievement is positive as noted by Hass (2004) who claimed, “Participation in extracurricular activities has a positive impact on student achievement by teaching the students discipline and a strong work ethic”(as cited in Craft, 2012). Further, Hass is supported by Kirsch (2013) almost all the respondent thought that socialization, school connectedness, esteem-building, leadership skills, and academic motivation were important aspects of participation in extracurricular activities” proving positive impact of extracurricular activities on academic performance.

The positive impact is evident in the result that they display which (Ahmad, Mushtaq & Rahman, 2015) noted, “ Students who participate in extracurricular activities generally benefit from having

better examination results, having higher standardized test scores and higher educational attainment, attending class more regularly and having higher self-concept” (p.45). A study conducted by Whitley (1998) indicated that participation in extracurricular activities had a positive impact on student achievement. Furthermore, Furda & Shuleshi (2019) found a positive relationship between extracurricular and success in high school.

2.4. Student’s view on ECA and Academic performance

Although there are difference of views, one of the most denying negative impact of participation in athletics is wounds or injuries (Furda & Shuleshi,2019). Saqib, Raheem & Salman,(2018) disprove the statement. They further negate, sometimes injuries are so serious that they last for a life-time, such injuries mostly occur in sports like football, soccer and hockey etc. Apart from this, the study has also found out that most students like to spend their free time resting instead of spending it on extracurricular activities. On the contrary, Saqib et al. (2018) claimed, There are two school of thoughts, one who support of participating and other in support of not participating in extracurricular activities. He further his claimed as a great interest to determine that how participating in different kinds of activities effects the students, both in academics and as well as in their future professional life The school of thoughts which supports is evident in the words of Saqib et al. (2018) who notes participation in extracurricular activities provide students with greater opportunities to interact with people outside their current social circle thus contributing to increased friendship and social confidence development . In the views of Wilson (2009) participants in extracurricular activities are also found to be less involved with the usage of illegal drugs and liquor, less drop-out rate and less suicide cases.

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The research design is described as a plan of how a researcher aims to carry out the research in order to tackle the research questions. Whereby, it is the overall plan for connecting the conceptual research problems to the pertinent empirical research. It is basically a blueprint aimed at enabling answers to be obtained from the research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2009). In this study, mixed method research design was used.

3.2. Research method

According to Schwarzt (2007), it is a theory of how an inquiry should proceed. It involves analysis of the assumptions, principles, and procedures in a particular approach to inquiry. The study is to determine the impact of extracurricular activities on students' academic performance. Therefore, the study used a mixed method research approach involving the use of quantitative and qualitative data collection, separate qualitative and quantitative analysis and merge the two data sets (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Generally, mixed methods research represents research that involves collecting, analyzing and interpreting qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or in a sequence of studies that explore the same underlying phenomenon (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2008). The quantitative component incorporated was survey questionnaires and the qualitative element incorporated was through open-ended questions to find the impact of extracurricular activities on students' academic performance. To obtain the appropriate answer for the research questions, the researcher visited schools to gather data from students of grade IX to XII.

3.3. Research Tools

In the study, to collect the primary sources of data, two instruments were used: 1. Student Perception Survey Questionnaires (SPSQ) 2. Open-ended questions to obtain the necessary data to test the hypothesis.

The survey questionnaires consist of 24 statements related to students' perception towards impact of extracurricular activities on students' academic performance. Questionnaires are a useful option to consider when conducting a postal survey and increased the speed of data collection if the sample is large and widely dispersed, low or not cost requirement, and higher levels of objectivity compared to many alternative methods of primary data collection (Mathers et al., 2010). The SPSQ is built using a four-point Likert scale i.e., Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The reliability coefficient of 0.60 (N=471) was obtained. Therefore, the SPSQ was a reliable instrument to use in the study.

There are three sets of Open-ended questions which offer respondents an opportunity to provide a wide range of answers. In addition, open-ended questions are used so that the respondents can answer the question in their own way and in their own words. The open-ended question is supposed to catch information that is not seized by a closed question. An open-ended question in a survey or public opinion poll is a question in which possible answers are not suggested, and the respondent answers in his or her own words

3.4. Sample

Sampling can be explained as a specific principle used to select members of the population to be included in the study. For the selection of participants, the researcher adopted purposeful sampling. The purposive sampling method is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight from participants. The sample used for data collection were among the students of Classes IX,X, XI & XII studying in seven different secondary schools under Samdrup Jongkhar.

The random sampling method was adopted for the selection of the sample from each standard. The sample consisted of a total 471 students, in which 241 were boys and 230 were girls

Table 1. Shows the 471 participations by grade level for the 2021 school year. The students in each grade level are selected randomly.

Table 1 *Participation by Grade Level for the 2021 School Year.*

Class	Frequency	Boys	Girls
XII	150	100	50
XI	120	40	80
X	100	70	30
IX	101	30	71
Total	471	240	231

3.5. Data analysis

This study includes both qualitative and quantitative data. Marshall & Rossman (1999) described that data analysis as the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data. Data analysis was the process “of making sense out of the data” (Merriam, 1998, p.178). The researcher examined the data in an attempt “to understand the essence of what is being expressed in the raw data” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.160). The analysis of data obtained in the study was done in two areas: (i) Students’ perception analysis (ii) Open ended question analysis.

The researcher has used SPSS 22.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) to analyze the quantitative data. The significance level was set to 0.05. For students’ perception analysis, mean, standard

deviations, percentage and frequency on SPSQ were computed and calculated while T-test analysis was used to identify mean and statistical significance of academic performance of students' participation in extracurricular activities.

In order to further validate the finding, the three sets of open-ended questions were developed to support the quantitative outcomes by examining related literature and textbooks. The students' answers to open-ended questions help to uncover their in-depth feelings towards the effectiveness of extracurricular activities on students' academic performance. They were explanatory in nature, meaningful and culturally salient to the participants. Open-mindedness allows the participants to contribute as much detailed information as they desired (Turner, 2010). The raw data obtained from open-ended questions of 200 students were transcribed and categorized under themes.

DATA ANALYSIS

The qualitative study was analyzed using descriptive statistics based on mean and standard deviation-SD using SPSS 22.0 software. In addition, the inferential statistics t-test were used to analyze the statistical significance of students' academic performance, participation and their perception on extracurricular activities. Paired sample t-test was used to examine the statistical significance of students' academic performance those who involved in extracurricular activities.

The results of the qualitative study obtained from open-ended questions of 200 students randomly picked were transcribed and categorized. Then students' responses to each question were examined to ascertain the similarities and differences. Responses that were similar in meaning were combined under a theme or category. The themes or categories developed were the units of analysis. The categories were abbreviated as codes and were written next to the appropriate segment of the text. A code was given to each theme (Creswell, 2003). Text segments belonging to each theme were cut out and displayed on the wall. The researcher analyzed the themes or categories identified and the meanings derived from the data were reconstructed. The keywords or typical quotations from participants were used to justify conclusions. To obtain quantitative data it was determined by the frequency of the themes.

4.1. Quantitative Analysis—Survey questionnaires

4.1.1. Analysis of Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities

Table 2 *Statistics of Paired Sample T-test*

Class	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Participation in Extracurricular Activities	2.04	.736	0.00
Students' Perception on Extracurricular Activities	1.78	.649	0.00
Impact of Extracurricular Activities on Academic Performance	2.08	.665	0.00
Total	1.95	.683	0.00

From the comparative analysis of the themes. The Table 2 shows the impact of Extra-curricular activities on academic performance has a highest mean (M=2.08, SD.665, N=471) while the lowest mean is the students' perception on extra-curricular activities (M=1.78, SD=.649, N=471) . The overall finding of survey questionnaires revealed with mean of (M=1.95, SD=.683, N=471). In addition, it was depicted that statistically significant value (p) was 0.001 which is lower than the significant value $p < 0.05$. Since the computed $p < 0.05$ level of significance, the null hypothesis of no significant effect is rejected by researchers. . In terms of reliability the cronbach's alpha is 0.845 which means the reliability of the data is good. The finding entails the reality that students have better academic performance after participating in extracurricular activities.

Table: 3 *Students' participation in extra-curricular activities*

Statement	N	SA	A	DA	SDA	Mean Std. Deviation	
						Mean	Std. Deviation
I participate in the extra-curricular activities in school always	471	94	305	60	12	1.97	.655
I prefer playing indoor/outdoor games	471	142	247	71	11	1.89	.732
Most students participate in ECA	471	138	265	62	6	1.86	.676

Participation is mandatory	471	124	231	89	27	2.04	.825
I participate under compulsion	471	31	199	160	81	2.61	.844
School has enough extra-curricular facilities	471	95	262	93	21	2.08	.755
School provides enough time to engage in ECA	471	105	265	87	14	2.02	.726
School has a schedule to engage students in ECA	471	140	270	52	9	1.85	.680
Subtotal	3768	869	2044	674	181	2.04	.736

Level of Opinion: 1-1.75: Strongly Disagree (SDA) 1.76-2.50: Disagree (DA) 2.51-3.25: Agree (A) 3.26-4.00: Strongly Agree (SA) (Harpe, 2015; Best & Kahn, 2006).

The analysis of students' participation in extracurricular presented in Table 4 depicted that 23.06% (N=869) of students responded with "Strong Agree" and 54.24 % (N= 2044) of students responded with "Agree". However, about 17.88% (N=674 and 4.82% (N=181) of students responded with "Disagreed and "Strongly Disagree" respectively. The subtotal mean was 2.04, the standard deviation was .736 with level of opinion "Agree". The results signifies that students' participation in extracurricular activities is more in the school than those students who do not participated.

4.1.2. Analysis of Students' perception on Extracurricular Activities

Table: 4 *Students Perception on extra-curricular activities*

Statement	N	SA	A	DA	SDA	Mean	Std. Deviation
I like/prefer engaging myself in Extra-Curricular Activities	471	124	285	57	5	1.87	.642
ECA keeps our body physically and mentally sound	471	229	228	9	5	1.55	.591

I can actively engage in the class	471	134	287	45	5	1.83	.623
ECA helps me to be punctual in most of the school activities	471	119	282	66	4	1.90	.646
Students enjoy participating in ECA	471	180	250	37	4	1.71	.642
I am an active participant in most of the Extra-curricular activities conducted in the school	471	69	247	138	17	2.21	.732
I suggest the schools to continue engaging students in ECA	471	200	233	34	4	1.66	.647
ECA provides enriching experiences and values	471	219	238	12	2	1.56	.567
Subtotal	3768	1274	2050	398	46	2.04	.736

The analysis of students' perception on extracurricular presented in Table 5 revealed that 33.81% (N=1274) of students responded with "Strong Agree" and 54.40 % (N=2050) of students responded with "Agree". However, about 10.50 % (N=398) and 1.20% (N= 46) of students responded with "Disagreed and "Strongly Disagree" respectively. The subtotal mean is 2.04, the standard deviation is .736 of opinion level "Agree". The statement "ECA helps to keep our body physically and mentally sound" had highest respondent of 229. The results indicated that students have positive perception towards extracurricular activities in the school.

4.1.3. Impact of Extracurricular Activities (ECA) on Academic Performance

Table: 5 *Impact of extracurricular activities on academic performance*

Statement	N	SA	A	DA	SDA	Mean Std. Deviation	
						Mean	Std. Deviation
ECA refreshes and helps me to study better	471	122	291	52	6	1.87	.637
Participating in ECA has improved my academic score	471	59	249	142	21	2.26	.731

ECA has improved my concentration in the class	471	58	266	137	10	2.21	.670
ECA helps to actively participate in the class activities	471	85	288	86	12	2.05	.680
I participate in ECA to broaden my knowledge	471	99	309	52	11	1.94	.641
ECA has guided me to improve my academic skills	471	102	282	80	7	1.98	.668
Participating in ECA has improved my retention power	471	55	321	87	8	2.10	.599
Participation in ECA has enhanced my mood to study	471	91	282	85	13	2.04	.695
Sub Total	3768	677	2288	721	88	2.04	.665

The analysis of impact of extracurricular on academic performance presented in Table 5 depicted that 17.96% (N=677) of students responded with “Strong Agree” and 60.72 % (N=2288) of students responded with “Agree”. However, about 19.13% (N= 721) and 2.33% (N=88) of students responded with “Disagreed and “Strongly Disagree” respectively. The subtotal mean was 2.04, the standard deviation was .665 with level of opinion “Agree”. The study indicates that 78.68% of the respondents believe that ECA helps to improve their academic skills which signifies that students' academic performance was enhanced by their participation in extracurricular activities in the school.

4.2. Qualitative Analysis

4.2.1. Open ended question analysis

In order to enhance confidence in ensuring quantitative data results, qualitative data collected through open-ended questions were analyzed. The findings of the open-ended questions supported that participating in extra-curricular activities enhance the students' academic performance. The three open-ended questions were used to get the impact of extracurricular activities in students' academic performance. An examples of the open-ended questions findings are as follows :

4.2.1.1. Do Extracurricular Activities (ECA) have effect on your studies? Why or why not?

From the random sampling of 200 out of 471 students' response were analyzed. 96.53% of the students have responded that Extra-Curricular Activities (ECA) have positive effect on their studies. In this connection, they affirmed that ECA helps in improving their concentration in the class, helps in engaging themselves in class activities, broaden their skills and perform better in the class. This study reveals that ECA has positive effect on students' academic performance, notwithstanding the response given by the students.

The study found out that 60.57 % of the students participating in ECA has enhanced their concentration in the class and could perform better in their studies. In the words of (C248), "Yes, it helps me to enhance our creativity and skills, it helps us to keep our body fit and healthy whereby it can avoid dullness and laziness within our body so that we can perform well in studies and have a productive learning." In the same line (C437) states " it helps to develop my concentration on studies by refreshing me and keeping my body healthy, when I am healthy I am to able study for longer period of time".

Moreover, 42.34% of the respondent revealed that ECA engages them fruitfully with highest respondent amongst others. About 32.68 % of the respondent responded that ECA makes them attentiveness in the class and 22.13% of the students are of views that it broadens their skills respectively. However, 7 respondents are of the view that participation in ECA makes them sleepy and tired in the class. The children shared that, "too much of extra-curricular activities makes them tired, sleepy and exhausted in the class." (C101)

4.2.1.2. How will ECA boost your academic performance?

During the analysis of 200 respondents for the open-ended questions, 73.56 % implored that ECA boost their mood, which would further heighten academic performance of students. The question on whether or not ECA boost academic performance was administered during the survey to ascertain its reliability. One of the respondents is of the view that, "ECA boost our academic performance in a way it refresh our mind and do away with tiredness, whereby while studying we could comprehend abruptly and hence we can perform well in academics." (C435). Similarly (C223) states, "ECA can boost our academic performance by keeping our mind broad and making our thinking capacity even more knowledgeable. It helps us to keep our mind fresh, so that whatever things we study we can easily catch up with this." The study found out that confident level physically and mentally, refreshing in the class and activeness boost academic performance which together compounded to

30.28%. Differing from the above view, about 2.36% responded that it does not boost academic performance.

4.2.1.3. What positive effects have you got from participating in the ECA?

Out of 200 respondent, 178 responded that there is positive impact on them in terms of academic learning. Some of the positive effects of participating in the ECA are: improve retention power with (46.5%), active participation in the class (72.34%), gain experience and behavioral change with (13.79%) and maximum students responded as helping in academic score with (80.48%) . A student (C112) noted, “the positive effect I have got from participating in the ECA are: helps to concentrate in the class, helps to participate in class activities, keeps body healthy and improve my academic scores.” The study indicates that participating in ECA would definitely enhance the students’ academic score as specified above. Most of the students believed that extra-curricular activities would improve their physical and mental domain and keep them healthy which improves their academic performances, as evident, “it improves academic score, class concentration and improves in studies,” (C303) .

FINDINGS

5.1. Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are presented in three major categories: i) participation of students in extracurricular activities. ii) students’ perception on extracurricular activities. iii) impact of extracurricular activities on students’ academic performance.

5.1.1. Findings of Students’ participation in extracurricular activities

The findings of the study revealed that the students’ participation in extracurricular activities is more in the school than those students who do not participated. As Feldman & Matjasko (2005) declared that there is a significant correlation between academic achievement and the level of extracurricular participation, marked by increases in students’ academic achievement. The study also confirmed their findings on the positive correlation between students’ participation in the school and their academic performance, in consonance to those students who do not participate and who participate in ECA.

The study found that 23.06% (N=869) of students responded with “Strong Agree” and 54.24 % (N=2044) of students responded with “Agree” that they participate in extracurricular activities provided in the school. Apart from this, Ahmad etal (2015)asserted that students who participate in

structured activities are more likely to respect diversity, play by the rules and contribute as a member of a team whether it is sports, scouting or clubs than those who do not participate in the ECA at schools. Furthermore, a respondent (C202) had the view that participation in the ECA helps him to improve concentration, engage actively in the class activities which promotes to perform better in academics. Similarly Craft (201) states “ Children who participate in team sports typically do better in school, have better interpersonal skills, are generally healthier, and are more team oriented.”(p.26)

5.1.2. Findings of Students’ perception on extracurricular activities

The results indicated that students have positive perception towards extracurricular activities in the school. A study conducted in Lucknow, the capital of the state Utter Pradesh, showed a positive effects on student’s lives by improving behavior, school performance, school completion, positive aspects to make successful adults, and social aspects (Annu & Sunita, 2005). This study discovered that 33.8% (N=1274) of students responded with “Strong Agree” holding the opinion that extracurricular activities has positive impact on their academic performance. They have the view that ECA nourished their brain and raised their confidence level unlike 54.48 % (N=2050) of students responded with “Agree” pointing to: refreshed their mind, augment both physical and mental activeness. The positive perception on extracurricular activities is authenticated in the study conducted by Saqib et al. (2018), “The most people realize the importance of participation in extracurricular activities when they go into professional life as it helps develop social and personal skills and increases self-perception and confidence, professional advice students to be involved in extracurricular activities while at the same time keeping it at balance with their academic performances”.(p.126). The recent study to find the perception of students on extracurricular activities is congruent the findings of Saqib and his team. This understanding is furthered by Wilson (2009) who established that students who participated in extracurricular activities generally benefit from the many opportunities offered to them thus confirming the opinion of the current research.

5.1.3. Findings on impact of extracurricular activities on students’ academic performance

The results suggested that students' academic performance was enhanced by their participation in extracurricular activities in the school. According to Akos (2006), “Participants in extracurricular activities are positively correlated with academic achievement. Students who participated in extracurricular activities were associated with higher test scores, higher class grades, and greater academic achievement partially due to peer pressure to get work done and to keep grades up (as cited

in Kirsch, 2013). In the recent study, it was depicted that 17.96% (N=677) of students responded with “Strong Agree” and 60.72 % (N=2288) of students responded with “Agree”.

Similarly, in the words of Wilson (2009), those students who participated in extracurricular activities scored better grades, higher standardized test scores and higher educational attainment, They also attended school regularly and developed higher self-concept. However, about 19.13% (N=721) and 2.33% (N=88) of students responded with “Disagreed and “Strongly Disagree” respectively. The overall finding of survey questionnaires also revealed with mean of (M=1.95, SD=.683, N=471) that statistical significance value (p) was 0.001 which is lower than the significant value $p < 0.05$. Whereby, the null hypothesis of no significant effect is rejected by researchers.

The finding of study entails the reality that students have better academic performance after participating in extracurricular activities. A study conducted in 1996 involving 126,700 students in 133 high schools looked at academic performance, graduation rates, school behavior, and absenteeism rates (Whitley, 1998). This study reported that there was a positive impact on student achievement when students participated in extracurricular activities. By the same token, Ahmad et al (2015) confirmed that students who participate in extracurricular activities generally benefit from having better examination results, having higher standardized test scores and higher educational attainment, attending class more regularly and having higher self-concept. Further in the same line Rees (2008) states “the participation in school based extra- curricular activities had stronger effect on academic achievement than other activities outside of school. The ability to excel at secondary level paves to way for students to experience success in college, in their professional lives and within the social circle.” (p.9) stands in consonance to the findings of the recent study conducted at in the seven secondary school of Samdrup Jongkhar, Bhutan.

CONCLUSION

The study examines the positive impact of extracurricular activities on academic performance of students of secondary schools ranging from classes IX to XII. The result indicated that extracurricular activities have significant influence on students and their academic performance. Firstly, it was also noted that respondents are of the opinion that participation in the Extra-curricular Activities definitely improved their academic performance. Apart from this, Kirsch (2013) confirms, “Studies have shown that students who participate in extracurricular activities often have greater academic achievement, score higher on standardized tests, attend school more regularly, have more socializing opportunities,

have higher self-esteem, and show more school connectedness”. In the same line Seou & Pan (2014) “ECA participation provides students with greater interaction with fellow students and the school thereby building social ties and developing social capital. This social capital then act as a form of social control that encourages students to follow school norms and attain academic success.” (p.7)

Secondly, the respondents perceived that ECA helped them to engage themselves, keep body physically fit and provided them experience and values. Finally, the findings indicate that there is positive relationship between ECA and academic performance.

In addition to this, Kirsch (2013) further acclaimed, participation in extracurricular activities not only has positive influences in students’ academic achievement, behavioral and social lives, but it also teaches important life skills, such as teamwork, leadership skills, and time management. These extra-curricular activities enhance the students’ participation, perception and academic performance. ECA play important role in students’ lives such as school performance and positive aspects to become a successful student.

The outcomes of the study suggest that the schools and other educational institutions that currently lack extracurricular activities, should arrange extracurricular activities for students to engage and allow them to discover their learning to the external world, and pursue activities to create a positive environment in the school for students to grow and thrive. In the words of Yadav (2016), “ Extra-curricular involvement allows students to link academic knowledge with practical experience, thereby leading to better understanding of their own abilities, talents and career goal. Future employers seek individual with this increased skills level making these involve students more viable in job market.” (p.104)

RECOMMENDATION

The present study encompasses both quantitative and qualitative methods in order to know student's opinions on the impact of extracurricular activities. First, it is also recommended that parent, student and teacher's perceptions are also examined to further validate the role of extracurricular activities on students. Second, the school must ensure continued research of school extracurricular activities and the role they play in the lives of students at the secondary level. Third, we must strive to learn more about how extracurricular activities encourage a healthy school learning environment. Finally, teachers, parents and school authority need to continue to learn and help students develop extracurricular skills and areas of the progress. In essence, it projects those extracurricular activities play an important role on student's life and future career.

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