



PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS REGARDING LACK OF INTEREST OF STUDENTS IN CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

Education in today's world is not just rote memory and listening to lectures from the teacher in the classroom. Instead, in the modern era, education is all those experiences and learning that a student gets in an institution. These experiences are in the form of curricular as well as co-curricular activities performed by the student on and off the school premises. Co-curricular activities are crucial for a student's development and grooming. This study was qualitative in nature and was limited to the secondary schools of the University of Peshawar Campus. A sample of thirty teachers was selected and a purposive sampling technique was used. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data, and thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. The study found major issues and problems faced by the students, due to which they mostly avoid participating in extracurricular activities. These problems were caused due to lack of funds and infrastructure, lack of guidance, parents' avoidance and restriction, family and society pressures, lack of incentives for their participation, study pressure, lack of time management, and some inner factors such as shyness, obesity, and laziness. The study has implications for students' better participation in co-curricular activities, such as proper time management, parent and teacher support and encouragement, and incentives given in the form of prizes and certificates, which have an imperative significance in the life of a student at the secondary level.

Keywords: Perceptions of Teachers, Lack of Interest, Co-Curricular Activities

INTRODUCTION

Prior to a century ago, education was primarily focused on theoretical information, so in-depth and practical knowledge was not given the weight they deserve. Both academic and practical knowledge are now included in the educational system in the current world. Education is crucial in transforming a child's manners and character to a productive side in order to make them a dynamic member of the social order. Activities that are not part of the curriculum are considered co-curricular. These extracurricular pursuits enhance the impact of the instructional process. (Bukhari, 2010).

Education is the umbrella term for all of a society's deliberate and carried out efforts made for the benefit of its next generation. The important purpose of education is to give a child the right kind of information in a way that changes their behavior in an unavoidable way. Therefore, by offering curricular and extracurricular activities to a student in a school, we can fulfill the fundamental goal of education (Amin, 2000).

Activities, which take place inside the class room under the guidance and supervision of a teacher, including course work, book materials, assignments, projects, tests and exams given to students, in order to attain learning objectives, are called as curricular activities (Ark, 2017).

Co-curricular activities are just activities of students which are publicized and structured by the institutions. These activities have given different names such as extra-curricular activities, non-curricular activities, informal-activities, un-curricular activities etc. A definition of any one of these terms can be applied to other as well (Dhanmeher, 2014).

The primary goal of education is to alter a child's behavior and character for the better. A child's physical and mental growth is essential for the development of his body and intellect. The physical and intellectual growth of the kid is stressed in all contemporary practices. The educational process is a never-ending process that involves a child working hard their entire lives. A kid receives formal education in a facility known as a school, and this formal education is made up of curriculum and extracurricular activities (Ismat et al., 2010).

Every school has included co-curricular activities besides the systematic program, to develop abilities among the students. Co-curricular activities also develop skills among teachers, and they can improve their teaching experiences. Co-curricular activities play an essential role in the school life of a student. These activities develop social skills, personality development, logical skills and ethical beliefs among the students. These activities include athletics, scientific societies, innovative art clubs, cultural events etc. These activities develop learning experiences of the students and their interest towards school. In this way, attendance rate also increases in the school. Thus, co-curricular activities develop co-ordination skills, leadership qualities, moral values and aesthetic skills among the students (Khan, 2019).

Rationale of the Research

At the secondary level, some changes such as puberty, emotional, and psychological, undergo in the life of the students, which constitute the personality of a student. This stage of life is very crucial for a child. In this stage students must involve themselves in different types of activities, to develop a positive change in their personality. Researcher herself remained involved in organizing different co-curricular activities for the students. While organizing such activities, researcher found that some students do not participate in many co-curricular activities. Researcher wanted to explore the causes, for lack of student's participation and involvement in co-curricular activities according to the perceptions of teachers about this important issue.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out the causes of the lack of secondary school student's participation in co-curricular activities.
- To explore the perceptions of teachers concerning lack of contribution of the students in co-curricular activities.
- To find out the ways of increasing attention, among students for cultivating their interest level and actively participation in co-curricular activities.

Questions of the Study

- Q1. What are the reasons for fewer or no concern of students while participating in co-curricular activities?
- Q2. What are perceptions of teachers about students, less or no involvement in co-curricular activities?
- Q3. How can be students motivated for their involvement in co-curricular activities.

Significance of the Study

The study will be significant for students as they will be able to recognize that how much important co-curricular activities are, for their whole development. The study will be helpful for the teachers as they might know, how to organize the co-curricular activities and manage their workload in accordance. It will give assistance to curricular designers, as they can propose such type of curriculum, which may give due importance to co-curricular activities and would plan, how to make co-curricular activities an essential part of student's education at secondary level. It will also give help to policy makers as before making educational policy they will plan such a policy, having co-curricular activities, a compulsory ingredient of educational process.

Research Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature and deals with the evaluation and analysis of the data gathered by semi structured interviews. A descriptive survey method was used for gathering information, through observations and interviewing by means of semi structured interview from teachers related to co-curricular activities at secondary level.

Target Population

The population of the study included the secondary schools of Peshawar University Campus. Total secondary schools in Peshawar University Campus are about six in numbers, out of which, three schools are of girls and three schools are of boys. Teachers teaching to secondary classes in these schools are about 150 in number. Researcher personally visited these schools and collected data about the strength of the teachers. As the number of the schools is limited so researcher decided to collect data from all of these schools.

Sample size and sampling techniques

Purposive sampling technique has used for the selection of teachers i.e. only those teachers had included in the study, who used to organize co-curricular activities. In this way thirty teachers (05 from each school) have been selected as sample.

Research Instruments

For this study semi-structured interview was considered suitable, as it revealed thoughts and opinions of respondents in depth, regarding participation of students in co-curricular activities and reasons for their avoidance.

Data Analysis

In qualitative research studies data analysis begins early during data collection with developing themes. The audio recorded interviews were interpreted usually on the same day. As the respondents were non -native speakers of English language so interview was conducted in their national language. Data analysis process was done in the following steps.

Step1: Translation and Transcription of the data

Step 2: Initial Coding

Step 3: Identifying themes

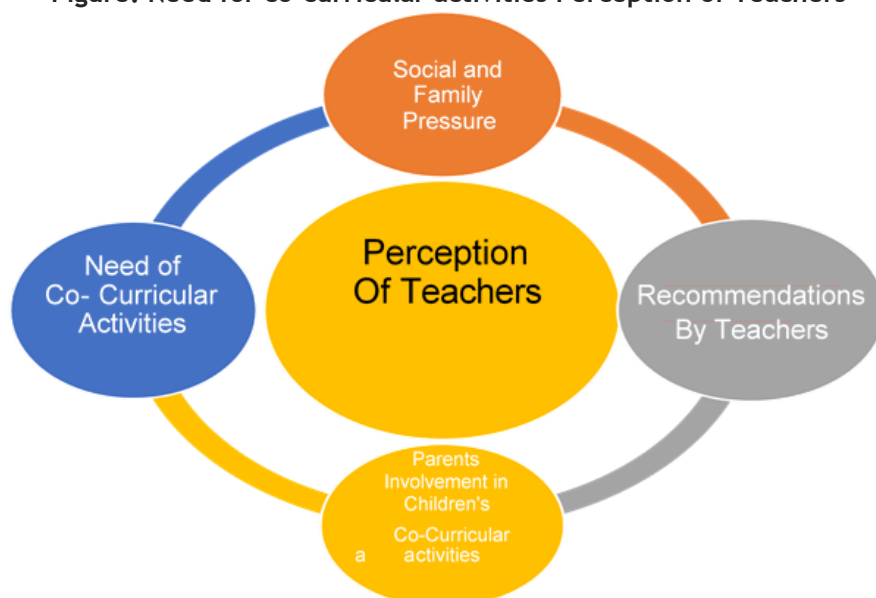
Step 4: Refining themes and developing explanations.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

Interviews from Teachers

Interviews with teachers from the selected schools were conducted. Their views and responses were studied again and again. After an analysis of the perceptions of the teachers, various themes and sub-themes were analyzed. Main themes of their perceptions emerged, such as the need for co-curricular activities, parent involvement etc.

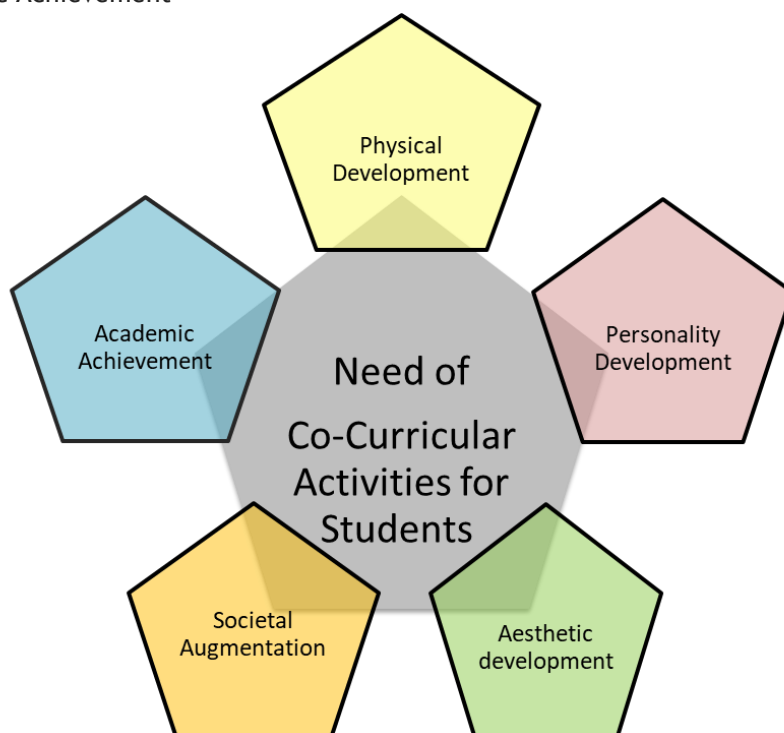
Figure: Need for co-curricular activities Perception of Teachers



Need of co-curricular activities for students

1. The first main theme that emerged from the responses and views of teachers was the need for extracurricular activities for students. This theme is expanded into five sub-themes, which are as follows:

1. Physical development
2. Personality development
3. Aesthetic development
4. Societal Augmentation
5. Academic Achievement



When asked by teachers about the need and importance of co-curricular activities, they replied that;

"Co-curricular activities are an integral part of education these days because they increase the inner abilities of students and prepare them to be successful members of society in their future lives." (Respondents-2 and 4)

One of the teachers viewed:

"Students' participation in co-curricular activities is an essential part of the educational system because, in this way, students develop their inner talents and creativity, which become useful in their future." (Respondent- 5)

Some of the teachers replied:

"In today's life, when there is advancement in each and every field, how can we deny it in education? We are still following the same old education system, which is just theoretical and gives no importance to the mental and physical development of students. "For the overall development and grooming of a child, co-curricular activities in the education system are necessary." (Respondents: 4 and 7)

According to the replies and perceptions of teachers, the following sub-themes emerged from the main theme: the need for co-curricular activities.

The first sub-theme emerged from the answers of the teachers when asked why co-curricular activities are needed for students at the secondary level. According to their replies, they expressed that co-curricular activities are needed for students according to their physical development. So the first sub-theme was physical development.

Physical Development:



Many teachers were in favor of extracurricular activities for students, according to their physical points of view.

Some of them stated:

"Co-curricular activities such as games and physical activities are essential for students as these make them strong and fit. By participating in different games, they make use of their bodies and become more energetic, active, and ready for their studies." (Respondents 12 and 14)

Some of the teachers enunciated:

"Physical activities such as morning drill and exercises make students use of their lungs; they have fast breathing due to which blood circulates more vigorously. Waste products in the form of sweat are expelled from the body. Thus having better use of their lungs and respiratory organs." (Respondents 15 and 16)

One of the respondents articulated:

"Normally, students at the secondary level, due to their heavy load of studies, do not exercise regularly. Due to which they feel lazy and dull. It's due to their participation in physical activities and games that make them active." (Respondent-18)

Most of the teachers liked physical activities for students.

Some of them stated:

"Co-curricular activities such as sports and games make students more energetic. Due to this, they become more active in their studies and show their performance in academics in a better way." (Respondent 18)

Two teachers viewed:

"Physical activities such as gardening, swimming, gymnastics, athletics, camping, and scouting make students use their arms, hands, and other body parts; due to this, their body muscles and bones become active and strong." (Respondents 12 and 14)

One of the respondent teachers explained:

"When students are involved in physical activities such as games, athletics, and gymnastics, their body muscles work properly, due to which they sweat. In this way, they become more healthy and fit." (Respondent-6)

Some of the respondents mentioned:

"When students participate in physical activities, they can utilize their time in a better way, which they might spend on useless things if they are not busy with co-curricular activities." (Respondent-8)

Personality Development:

Co-curricular activities, with their many other benefits, make the students psychologically sound and give them peace and calmness. Many respondent teachers favored extracurricular activities for students at the secondary level.

Some of the teachers stated:

"When students participate in co-curricular activities, they make use of their time in positive activities, which help them control their anxieties and pressures. Due to which they feel mentally calm, peaceful, and psychologically sound. In this way, they show progress in their personality development." (Respondents 16 and 18)

One of the teachers responded:

"Most of the students face different family problems and pressures, but when they participate in different co-curricular activities, they forget their problems for the time being. In this way, they feel relaxed from their inner anxieties. Thus, they become psychologically sound." (Respondent-13)

One of the respondent teachers stated:

"Students came from different social statuses, and when they observe other students of upper class level, they feel inferiority complexes, thus coming under mental pressure and stress, feeling disappointment and frustration. But when they participate in co-curricular activities and prove themselves better as compared to other students, their stress, depressions, mental pressures, frustrations, and anxieties are removed." (Respondent-9)

One of the teachers replied:



"When students, especially boys, don't participate in co-curricular activities, they utilize their time in negative activities, such as gambling, smoking, watching cinema, etc., to remove their inner stress. In this way, they increase their anxiety level and create problems for themselves and their family." (Respondent-2)

A few teachers stated:

"By participating in co-curricular activities, students become psychologically sound and mentally strong. They show their academic performance more effectively." (Respondents 12 and 15)

Aesthetic Development:

Co-curricular activities develop aesthetic sense and creativity among students.

Most of the respondents replied:

"When students participate in activities like painting, drawing, flower-making, singing, etc., they enhance their inner talents and feel self-satisfaction." (Respondents: 10 and 11)

One of the teachers enunciated,

"Activities like singing, music, and flower arrangements improve the creativity and aesthetic level of the students." (Respondent-12)

Many of the respondent teachers mentioned:

"Activities such as painting, class decoration competitions, and chart-making competitions develop a sense of creativity among students." (respondents-11 & 12)

One of the respondents replied:

"We organize competitions in card making, chart making, drawing, painting, and class decoration. Through these activities, students come to know about their hidden talents and aesthetic abilities." (Respondents-8 & 9)

Some teachers stated:

"Activities like music, singing, and art and craft competitions develop an aesthetic sense among students and turn their energies towards positive activities." (Respondents 2 and 3)

Another teacher articulated:

"Students' participation in activities like flower making and dry and fresh flower arrangement competitions increases their creativity and aesthetic sense." (Respondent-14)

One of the respondent teachers stated:

"For the development of creativity and aesthetic sense in students, co-curricular activities like drawing, painting, decoration of class and school, flower making and their arrangement, music, drama, etc. are very necessary in their school life at the secondary level, which may help them in their future lives." (Respondent-17)

Societal Augmentation:

When students participate in extracurricular activities, they do so in collaboration with other students and their teachers. In this way, they have social contact with other students and their teachers. This makes them more socially organized.

Some of the respondents stated:

"Co-curricular activities such as inter-house competitions make students work together in collaboration with other students other than their class mates. This develops their social contacts with other students." (Respondents-14 & 15)

Another teacher viewed:

"When students participate in interschool competitions, they make new networks and social contacts in society." (Respondent-16)

Some of the teachers stated:

"For good social interaction, interhouse and interschool competitions are very necessary." Respondents (99 and 10)

One teacher respondent viewed:

"When students participate in interschool competitions, they meet with new people and thus have new contacts in society, which can be helpful to them in the future." (Respondent-20)

A few teachers replied:

"Students happily participate in scouting, summer camps, and interschool competitions because, in this way, they meet new people, make new friends, and have new social interactions with society." (Respondents- 17&19)

Academic Achievements:

When asked by teachers about the effect of co-curricular participation by students on academic achievements, the majority of the teachers responded positively.

Most of the teachers replied:

"By participating in co-curricular activities, students feel satisfied and improve their self-confidence; they do their course work more willingly and show better performance in their academics." (Respondents: 16 and 18)

Some of the teachers stated:

"We observed that students who participate in co-curricular activities show better grades in their examinations because they become mentally sound and self-satisfied." (Respondents-15 &16)

One of the respondent teachers articulated:

"Participation of students in co-curricular activities is beneficial for their academic grades because most of the co-curricular activities are also helpful in their studies, such as study trips, debates, writing competitions, etc." (Respondent-23)

The second area that emerged from the views of the respondent teachers was parent involvement and support for their children's participation in co-curricular activities. Teachers replied differently.

Special period for co-curricular activities:

When probed by teachers about the specific time for co-curricular activities in the time table, they replied as follows:

Most of the teachers answered:

"No proper period is arranged in the time table for co-curricular activities, and students have to leave their classes for their contribution in co-curricular activities, or they have to remain in school after school time for their participation, so mostly students at the secondary level avoid taking part in co-curricular activities." (Respondents 20 and 21)

Teacher's Perceptions regarding parent's Involvement in the Participation of Their Children in Co-Curricular Activities

Parental involvement has a great influence on the participation of their children in extracurricular activities. When parents are non-involved in their children's participation in co-curricular activities, their children also show less or no willingness to participate in co-curricular activities. Student involvement in co-curricular activities depends on parents' support, both materially and spiritually, as it does not fall under the formal curriculum and requires extra expenditure (e.g., application fees, transportation, costumes, time, etc.) (Ashbourn, Andres, 2015 & Shannon, 2006).

When asked by teachers about parents' roles and involvement in the participation of their kids in co-curricular activities, they gave their views differently.

Some of the teachers stated:

"In our community, people have different income levels; students who come from low-income families, usually their parents, can't afford the expenditure of different co-curricular activities, so they do not allow their children to participate in co-curricular activities." (Respondent 17 and 19)

One of the respondents answered:

"Most of the parents want their children to focus only on their academics. They want better grades for their children in examinations. To them, the participation of their children in different extracurricular activities is a waste of time. They want their children to devote this time to their studies, especially at the secondary level. So they don't allow their children to participate in co-curricular activities." (Respondent- 20)

Another teacher replied:

"Mostly parents are narrow-minded; they do not allow their children to participate in activities such as dance, physical activities, etc." (Respondent- 15)



Few of the teachers articulated:

"Parents who are religious minded put restrictions on their children, especially girls at the secondary level. To them at this age, girls are grown up, so they should not participate in activities where they have to perform on stage in front of people, as girls should be in hijab at this age." (Respondent 13 and 14)

Some of the teachers replied:

"Students who come from rich families have no restrictions from their parents about their participation in co-curricular activities as they can afford different items (costumes, etc.) required for different co-curricular activities. So they allow their children to take part in co-curricular activities." (Respondents-16&18)

One of the respondent teachers enunciated:

"Parents of those students, who belong to well-off families, willingly allow their children to participate in co-curricular activities." (Respondent-13)

Two of the teachers stated:

"Those parents who are educated know well that co-curricular activities are beneficial in the education system, so they have no objection to the participation of their children in co-curricular activities." (Respondents 19 and 20)

The data revealed that the majority of the respondents made remarks about parents' unwillingness and cold behavior towards the participation of their children in co-curricular activities. This is the major barrier to students' avoidance of participation in co-curricular activities. On the other hand, very few parents who are educated and well-off in their status willingly allow their children to participate in extracurricular activities.

Perception of teachers regarding family and Society Pressure on Students:

When asked by teachers about family and society's pressure on students while they participate in co-curricular activities,

Many of them replied;

"In our society, parents mostly don't allow their children to participate in extracurricular activities due to fear of other people in society and their family pressures." (Respondents 8 and 10)

Some of the teachers stated:

"Students who live in joint families mostly do not participate in co-curricular activities, as their parents do not allow them to participate in co-curricular activities due to their family constraints." (Respondents: 7 and 10)

One of the teachers replied with the same views:

"Students who live in joint families often have their grandfathers or elder uncles living with them, who have a hold on the whole family. Due to their fear, they don't participate in co-curricular activities, such as singing, dancing, and physical activities." (Respondent 5)

One of the respondent teachers replied:

"Most of the students, due to fear of society and family rigidity, avoid participating in extracurricular activities, although they want to participate." (Respondent-24)

From the above views and responses of teachers, it is concluded that most of the students at the secondary level have pressure on them because of their family and society, due to which they feel reluctant to participate in co-curricular activities. So family and society pressure is a major reason why students do not participate in co-curricular activities.

Incentives and Rewards:

When asked by the teachers about incentives and rewards, they replied differently.

Some of the teachers answered:

"Rewards and incentives are necessary for students' participation in co-curricular activities because, in this way, students are mostly motivated and attracted towards their participation in co-curricular activities." (Respondents-20 &22)

One of the respondents replied when asked:

"In our school, no proper rewards are given to students and teachers for their participation in and supervision of co-curricular activities." (Respondent-15)

Few respondents viewed:

"Our school administration arranges rewards for student's participation as well as teachers' conduct of co-curricular activities." (Respondent -17 and 19)

Teachers also give recommendations for better student participation in co-curricular activities.

Suggestions for Better Participation of Students in Co-Curricular Activities:

One of the themes that emerged from the questions asked of the respondent teachers was their suggestions for better student participation in co-curricular activities.

Some of the respondents answered:

"For better participation of students in co-curricular activities, zero periods should be arranged in the time table in which students participate in co-curricular activities so students can give proper time to their studies and co-curricular activities." (Respondent-20)

Another respondent articulated:

"Students have the burden of their studies and the fear of exams and class tests at the secondary level. If they participate in extracurricular activities during their class time, their studies are affected. So, extracurricular activities should be organized before or after school." (Respondent-11)

One of the respondents stated:

"In order to increase the participation rate of students in co-curricular activities, there should be an awareness campaign among students' family members. In this way, teachers convey their point of view to parents about their children's participation in extracurricular activities. Teachers are better guides and can motivate students as well as their parents. So parents will allow their children to participate in co-curricular activities." (Respondent 20)

Many respondents enunciated:

"School administration should arrange proper funds and resources to organize proper co-curricular activities for students, because without proper funds and resources, co-curricular activities can't be organized." (Respondents 12 and 14)

Some teachers replied:

"Students should be motivated and encouraged for their participation in co-curricular activities. In this way, their willingness towards their participation in co-curricular activities can be increased." (Respondents-22 &25)

One of the respondents stated:

"To increase the involvement and participation of students in co-curricular activities, they should be given incentives in the form of prizes, certificates, and trophies." (Respondent-21)

Another respondent enunciated:

"When teachers motivate students and appreciate them for their participation in extracurricular activities, it is itself an incentive for students, because a few words of teacher's praise for students are a source of inspiration for them." (Respondent-26)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It was concluded from the study from the study that teachers mostly responded that participation of students in co-curricular activities at the secondary level develops physical fitness, psychological strength, social associations, academic progress, and aesthetic development in them. Due to these benefits, co-curricular activities in education at the secondary level are essential. We can't deny their need for students. The respondent teachers argued that most parents do not allow their children to participate at the secondary level. Some parents think it is a mere waste of time and that they should only obtain education, and when their children participate in co-curricular activities, they think that their children waste their study time in such activities. From the replies of teachers, it was found that many parents do not allow their children to participate in co-curricular activities because they have less income, due to which they can't afford the different things required for co-curricular activities, such as costumes, equipment, fees for different physical

activities, and hiring a coach other problems such as problems lack of encouragement from parents and family members, less support and guidance from teachers as well as from parents, lack of funds and supplies from school administration lack of incentives given in the form of prizes and trophies, no or little permission and non-co-operation from parents, lack of incentives, such as prizes, trophies and certificates given to students for their encouragement etc.. To cope with such problems, students may be treated with special attention, guidance, reinforcement and encouragement, not only by their teachers and administration, but also by their parents, family and society. Similarly, from the replies of teacher it has been concluded, that as, students considered co-curricular activities as an essential part of their student life at secondary level, because these activities develop physical as well as mental, academic, social and aesthetic abilities of the students to participate in co-curricular activities Schools may arrange guidance and counseling sessions for parents and students, and guidelines for teachers for handling and organizing co-curricular activities. So, the students willingly participate in co-curricular activities and their parents heartily allow them to participate in co-curricular activities. Specific space and time may be display for co-curricular activities in the school time table. So, it will be easy for students to participate in co-curricular activities. Proper funds and supplies may be provided by the school administration for organizing the co-curricular activities.

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