

PARENTAL INFLUENCE ON PSYCHOLOGICAL VALUE PERCEPTION OF CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: IT'S LINKS WITH IMPROVING PERSONALITY TRAITS OF HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS

By

G. N. SUNITH KUMAR *

S. AROCKIASAMY **

* Lecturer, Kerala University College of Teacher Education, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

** Principal, Gnanamani College of Education, A.K. Samudram, Namakkal district, Tamil Nadu.

ABSTRACT

Co-curricular activities provide prospects for better youth development and growth experiences. These activities are particularly good at providing opportunities for students to work in teams, to exercise leadership, and to take the initiative themselves. The active participation of the students is required to reap out maximum benefits out of such activities. The present study utilized data from 1000 higher secondary school students to find out the influence of parental factors in perceiving the psychological values of co-curricular activities and in improving their personality traits. Findings indicated a negative influence of parents; however the psychological values of co-curricular activities exerted significant positive influence on the selected personality traits of higher secondary students. The results point out the need to ensure effective participation of students in co-curricular activities which could boost their personality.

Key words: Co-Curricular Activities, Perception, Psychological Values, Parental Influence, Personality Traits.

INTRODUCTION

The co-curricular activities have been accepted as an integral part of a school's curriculum because they provide scope for democratic living; develop social skills, a sense of cooperation, team spirit and self discipline, which are important for a citizen to function in a democratic country. All these are possible only through student's participation in co-curricular activities. The basic idea behind such activities in educational institutions is the building up of the student character and personality as well as training of their mind that may help / facilitate academic achievements of the child. It is believed that unless balancing both the curricular and co curricular activities is done the very purpose of education would be left unrealized.

The developmental benefits associated with co-curricular activities are thought to depend on the students' sustained engagement in freely chosen, meaningful, and interesting experiences (Sharp et al., 2006). This may help in the correct perception of the values associated with such activities. However, this potential for positive

development during such activities is lost due their disengagement. The available research suggests that a sort of internal motivation could help the students in their engagement in interested activities (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002) which could better be achieved by motivation from the parents (Sharp et al., 2006).

Co-Curricular Activities

Co-curricular activities are defined as those activities that enhance and enrich the regular curriculum during the regular school days. They are also referred to as extracurricular, extra-class, non-class, school life, and student activities (Tan & Pope, 2007). The co-curricular activities are often grouped into different portfolios such as sports, uniform, academic or volunteer units; some activities are physically active and allow students to get out from their desk and try new things (Som and Furqan, 2010). These activities allow students to experience practical tasks, which are not taught in class which reveal that co-curricular activities have more of a student-centered nature than the regular classes (Leung et al., 2011).

Student's Involvement In Co-Curricular Activities

Studies suggest that students who participate in co-curricular activities benefit in a number of ways, which include higher educational attainment and achievement, reduced problem behavior and positive psycho-social adjustment (Stearns and Glennie, 2009; Feldman and Matjasko, 2007). To Marais (2011), co-curricular activities offered after school hours can be an excellent opportunity to discover new meaning in life rather than wasting time lazing around or making trouble out of boredom. It is also claimed that co-curricular activities are good at providing opportunities for students to work in teams, to exercise leadership and to take initiatives by themselves (Som and Furqan, 2010).

A school's objectives cannot be fully realized without a co-curricular activities program. Such a program should be designed to complement the regular academic courses and be an integral part of the total educational offerings. The leisure, recreational, social, psychological and emotional needs of students may best be fulfilled through participation in an effective activities program. A study carried out by Russel et al. (2000) found that extra curriculum involvement in high school produces honesty and fair play needed to prevent delinquency and crime. Cheng and Zhao (2006) found that students involved with extracurricular activities in the form of student organizations – can maximize students' learning in multicultural competence. These findings justify the fact the involvement of students in the co-curricular activities does offer positive benefits to their school experiences.

Co-Curricular Activities and its Psychological Values

Sidhu (1996) remarks, "In spite of the best efforts of the teachers, the classroom teaching will by large be monotonous, dull, routine-like and unpsychological. The much needed psychological satisfaction has to be provided by some other activities." The co-curricular activities provide a child a psychological compensation and act as an agent for the sublimation of instinct. When a variety of activities presented every pupil can find some as activity that suits his interest and attitudes. These activities are patient means of maintaining sound mental

health. Jamalis (2007) observed that the students who participate in the extra-curriculum are in all likelihood be better organized persons. The normal curriculum can only go so far as to teach and educate students about academic theories. But students whose only experience of school or college is one of rigid academic study may not be able to apply what they have learned in practice. At the psychological level, Dworkin et al. (2003) argue that extracurricular activities stand out from other aspects of adolescent's lives at school because they provide opportunity for identity work, develop initiative, and allow youth to learn emotional competencies and develop new social skills. If the co-curriculum was given an equal footing in student life there will be an improvement in the student ability to grasp things as a whole, because students will have received a more rounded education. Also, these activities play a vital role in the training of emotions. They provide opportunities for expression and this expression acts as catharsis, exhaust and out-let for pent-up emotions. Having a wide range of experiences prepares people better for the future, especially in today's uncertain world. Placing more emphasis on the co-curriculum thus ensures a variety of possibilities for young people to choose from instead of being sidelined.

Co-Curricular Activities and Personality Development

The co-curricular activities provided platform to explore varied interests, to demonstrate leadership, learn team participation and acquire tolerance skills. It also helps students themselves gain new knowledge and skills as well as educating them against developing unhealthy activities during their leisure time (Manaf and Fauzee, 2002). Participation in co-curricular activities is widely thought to play a key role in students' personality development (Darling et al., 2005). Numerous researches were conducted to investigate this relationship and found that co-curricular activities were positively correlated to personality development (Shelly, 2007; Darling et al., 2005; Shaan, 2001). To the observations of Shuriye (2011), these activities provides practical sense perception of its subjects as it attempts to impart virtues, enlighten the mind and self, enrich the practical experiences, develop talents, and enhance skills and the personality as a whole.

It has also been found that extra-curriculum activities help reduced academic stress and tension, helping students to become more alert and productive in their learning (Arip and Yusof, 2002). Ashaari (1996) has suggested too that well planned after-school activities can develop positive attitudes, fun and healthy lifestyles for students.

Role of Parents in Activity Involvement and Personality Building

The parents remain a central socializing agent in children's lives and during adolescence, play a particularly important role in their motivations and free time experiences (Hutchinson et al., 2003). Research examining the parental influence on adolescent motivation and experiences is sparse, particularly in the critical domain of adolescent free time. Grolnick et al. (1997) explained that parental knowledge of their ward free time use can promote positive development, including their self-regulated motivation and self-determination. Consequently, it remains important for parents to stay informed, involved and knowledgeable about their adolescent's activities and whereabouts. Further, the parenting practices, motivational styles etc. may vary by gender as well as the occupational and educational status of the parents as was reported earlier by Sharp et al. (2006).

Problem Statement

The co-curricular activities offer distinct developmental context that has potential to facilitate positive development and growth experiences for the adolescence. Its psychological values in particular help in expressing personal behavior and may provide a vehicle for creative thinking. The higher secondary students who are at the adolescent stage and at their crucial stage of education often seen to focus on to academics alone without taking advantage of the extra-curricular opportunities they are offered. This makes it clear that even after implementation; the participation in full force is not yet accomplished. If the co-curriculum is given formal importance, with students required to undertake at least one activity, then more people would try, and discover new things. The present study aimed to understand the

extent to which the psychological values of co-curricular activities are felt by higher secondary students and how far this involvement reflects their personality traits like self-esteem, independence, self-acceptance and self-disclosure. Also, parental involvement is an important factor in a student's success all the way through the school level and hence their education and other background could determine the extent of students' participation in co-curricular activities. Therefore, the study was carried out taking parental education and occupation as the background variable.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses were tested

H1: Parental education and occupation exert a significant positive effect on the perception of psychological values of co-curricular activities

H2: Parental education and occupation exert a significant positive effect on developing the four personality traits of higher secondary students

H3: Students' participation in co-curricular activities and perception of its psychological values has significant positive effect on developing their self-esteem

H4: Students' participation in co-curricular activities and perception of its psychological values has significant positive effect on developing their independence

H5: Students' participation in co-curricular activities and perception of its psychological values has significant positive effect on developing their self-acceptance

H6: Students' participation in co-curricular activities and perception of its psychological values has significant positive effect on developing their self-disclosure

Research Methodology

The survey method was followed for this investigation to obtain data from the respondents. The data was collected through a self administered questionnaire by the researcher. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The part I comprised the personal data sheet that covers background information of the respondents. In section A, nominal scale was used to gather the background information. Special attention was given to such factors

as parent's education and occupation. The part II comprised the psychological value perception questionnaire as well as the questionnaire for analyzing the personality traits.

The students of Class XI were the sample units of this study. The study is confined to the schools of Kuzhithurai, Thuckalay and Nagercoil educational districts in Kanyakumari district, Tamil nadu, India. A sample of 1000 students was drawn through Stratified Sampling Technique. Before administering the tool, proper permission was sought, from the District Educational Officers and the concerned school headmasters. The tool along with the personal data form was administered to the higher secondary students.

Tools

A 'Co-curricular Activities Psychological Value Perception Questionnaire' structured and validated by the investigator was the tool used for collecting the data on perception of psychological values of co-curricular activities. It consisted of statements under three point scales – Yes/Sometimes/No. There were 20 statements covering this dimension of co-curricular activities from which the respondent could choose the one that suit him/her most.

For collecting data on personality traits, the Self-esteem, Independence, Self-acceptance and Self-disclosure inventories were used. The Self-esteem inventory was devised by Dr. Arockiasamy and Soosay Nayagam consisted of 27 items. Independence inventory standardized by Manju Rani Aggarwal consisted of 20 items. Two self-devised inventories viz., Self-acceptance inventory and Self-disclosure inventory consisted of 24 and 25 items respectively, each item with three optional responses namely Yes, Sometimes and No.

Results

Effect of Parents' Education and Occupation on Psychological Value Perception of Co-Curricular Activities

Test of hypothesis has been carried out to see whether there is any significant difference in the perception of psychological values of co-curricular activities among

the higher secondary students with regard to their parent's education and occupation.

The hypotheses of the test are

Ho: There is no significant difference in the psychological value perception of co-curricular activities with respect to parental education and occupation

H1: The psychological value perception of co-curricular activities is significantly more with high education and occupation of the parents

The test analysis done using ANOVA is presented in Table 1.

The statistical significance is presented in the 0.05 level. The tabular details (Table 1) obtained through analysis of variance shows $P > 0.05$ and hence not significant. Hence, it is clear that there exists no significant difference among the higher secondary students on the measure of perception of the psychological values of co-curricular activities with regard to their parent's education and occupation. This means that the educational and occupational status of the parents hardly have any impact on the psychological value perception of co-curricular activities by the higher secondary students.

Effect of Parents' Education and Occupation on Improving the Personality Traits of Higher Secondary Students

An analysis of variance was used to examine whether the personality trait development of higher secondary students would be influenced by their selected parental variables. As seen in Table 2, the personality traits viz., self-esteem, independence and self-disclosure variate

Variables	Source	df	Sum of squares	M.S.V	F	Theoretical value	Significance P<0.05
Father Education	Between sets	4	77.91	19.48	1.26	2.63	NS
	Within sets	995	15417.50	15.49			
Mother Education	Between sets	4	57.56	14.39	0.93	2.63	NS
	Within sets	995	15437.84	15.52			
Father Occupation	Between sets	3	18.22	6.07	0.39	2.42	NS
	Within sets	996	15477.19	15.54			
Mother Occupation	Between sets	3	21.56	7.19	0.46	2.42	NS
	Within sets	996	15473.84	15.54			

Table 1. Analysis of Variance on the Perception of Psychological Values of Co-Curricular Activities Among Higher Secondary Students with Respect to their Parent's Education and Occupation

insignificantly ($P > 0.05$), while little significant ($P < 0.05$) influence was noted with mother's occupation on improving the self-acceptance of their ward. However, the overall observation constrains to conclude that the psychological value perception of co-curricular activities is hardly influenced by the parental education and occupation.

Impact of Psychological Value Perception of Co-Curricular Activities on Improving the Personality Traits of Higher Secondary Students

Pearson's product moment correlation analysis was conducted to examine whether personality trait development would be achieved by participation in co-curricular activities and perception of its psychological values.

Table 3 portrays significant correlations of the psychological value perception of co-curricular activities to the selected personality traits like self-esteem, independence, self-acceptance and self-disclosure. The statistical significance is presented at the 0.05 level. It was noted that in all cases, the psychological values correlated positively ($P < 0.05$) with the personality trait. This positive relationship suggests that high levels of perception have resulted in higher self-esteem, independence, self-acceptance and self-disclosure.

Variables	Self-Esteem		Independence		Self-Acceptance		Self-Disclosure	
	F	Theoretical value	F	Theoretical value	F	Theoretical value	F	Theoretical value
Father Education	1.90	2.63 (NS)	1.00	2.63 (NS)	1.90	2.63 (NS)	2.50	2.63 (NS)
Mother Education	0.06	2.63 (NS)	0.34	2.63 (NS)	0.74	2.63 (NS)	0.68	2.63 (NS)
Father Occupation	0.37	2.42 (NS)	2.30	2.42 (NS)	1.08	2.42 (NS)	1.03	2.42 (NS)
Mother Occupation	0.15	2.42 (NS)	0.15	2.42 (NS)	2.62	2.42 (S)*	0.57	2.42 (NS)

* S in paranthesis indicates significant ($P < 0.05$) and NS indicates not significant

Table 2. Analysis of Variance on the Differences in Selected Personality Traits (Self-Esteem, Independence, Self-Acceptance and Self-Disclosure) among Higher Secondary Students

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Theoretical value	Significance $P < 0.05$
Psychological Values and Self-esteem	0.207	0.062	S
Psychological Values and Independence	0.115	0.062	S
Psychological Values and Self-acceptance	0.121	0.062	S
Psychological Values and Self-disclosure	0.157	0.062	S

Table 3. Product Moment Correlation analysis to find out the relationship between Psychological Values and their Personality Traits

The result of hypotheses 3 to 6 are presented in Table 3.

Discussion

This study attempted to extend research frontier on the perception of psychological values of co-curricular activities and its influence on the development of four selected personality traits in Students of Higher Secondary classes. The results of the study have relevance with the existing findings in other parts of the world and provide positive insights for the inculcation of the much neglected co-curricular activities in the regular curriculum.

The results obtained from the first hypothesis clearly reveal that the education and the status of the parents is not a significant factor for the perception of psychological values of co-curricular activities. The findings in this study is opposed to those of Sabiston and Crocker (2008) who explored the direct and indirect influence of self-perceptions, parent and best friend on the leisure-time physical activity of the adolescents. As pointed out by Smith (1945), the students of low socioeconomic status have less opportunity than those of higher status to profit from the educational advantages of extracurricular activity. The insignificant role played by the parents in perception of the psychological values of co-curricular activities as is revealed from the present study could be correlated with the findings made by Simpkins et al. (2009). According to them, the participation in co-curricular activities and the perception of its values are determined by the children's leisure pursuits and interest from childhood through adolescence.

In the light of the findings of the study, it could be said rather concluded that the development of personality of a child is more or less independent of their parents' education and occupation. The selected personality traits like Self-esteem, Independence and Self-disclosure were not influenced by the status of their parents. However, the occupation of mother seemed to exert significant influence on the self-acceptance level of the higher secondary students. A study conducted by Oliver et al. (2009) examined the links between mothers' personality and parenting behaviors on the child adjustment, and concluded that adolescents with more

conscientious mothers potentially facilitate adolescents' behavioral adjustment. These findings highlight the role a mother can play in shaping the character of her child. It can be overviewed from this study that though a meager influence is exerted by the status of the mother, on the whole the personality formation of a child is determined by the child's perceptions for a psychological well-being rather than depending of factors like parenting.

The statistical analysis have corroborated the evidence that students who participate in the co-curriculum activities have shown a significant positive correlation with the four personality dimensions tested which includes self-esteem, independence, self-acceptance and self-disclosure. The result was in consonance with the one reported by Jennifer and Jacquelyne (2006) who pointed out that the breadth of participation in various extracurricular activities influences academic, psychological and behavioral outcomes of the adolescents. Similar positive relationship of the co-curricular activities with the child personality development was also reported by Sitra and Sasidhar (2005) and Jamalis (2007). Additionally, the findings of the present study bring to our notice the need for blending of co-curriculum with academics so as to develop the entire personality of the students. Students' involvement in co-curriculum activities gives large impact on their interpersonal skill and personality development. A research done by Darling (2005) found that there is a high difference in mean measurements in the outcomes of students who are involved in co-curriculum activities than those who are not involved in any. This was also supported by Ahmad et al. (2011) who added that co-curriculum activities can help boost individuals' potential in self development and can provide the students with preliminary practice in dealing with leadership, personality and society.

It can be concluded from the study that student involvement in co-curricular activities and correct perception of its psychological values helps in developing their personality in the four aspects tested, thus causing the objective of this study to be achieved. Therefore, it is essential that significant steps must be taken

to assure that every student participates actively in co-curricular activities which could mould them better. The educational authorities, teachers and parents (PTAs) could certainly help in this noble cause.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Sunith Kumar G. N. is currently working as a Lecturer at Kerala University College of Teacher Education, Thiruvananthapuram. He holds bachelor and master's degree in Mathematics and Education and doctoral degree in Education. He has published 20 research and speculative articles in reputed Journals and Seminar Proceedings. His research interests include Mathematics Education, Educational Statistics, Value Education, and Teacher Education.



Dr. S. Arockiasamy has served as Lecturer and Reader in St. Xavier's College of Education, Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli for 26 years (1979-2005). Currently, he is the Principal of Gnanamani college of Education, Namakkal (2005-still continuing). He served as NAAC co-ordinator and has successfully guided 200 M.Ed, 150 M. Phil dissertations and 10 Ph.D's in Education, published 8 books, 24 research and speculative articles in reputed journals. He has expertise in research methodology and data analysis and his research area include Educational Psychology, Teacher Education and Value Education.

