Co-Curricular activities in secondary Schools

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Abstract:
Co-curricular activities are considered as an important part of child development. It is a new way of imparting education through scientific blends on the part of education. It is a new invention for the new generation to grow up a child with excellence. Co-curricular activities form a vital link in the total pattern of educational experiences. These experiences comprise inside as well as outside class-room experiences to cover all facts of growth pattern and ensure balanced development of the child and good citizenship for the country. Schools are selected to play its major role. But many schools are found not arranging various types of co-curricular activities due to different problems. Consequently, many students are deprived from participation of these activities. Therefore, the present study mainly aims to aware the students, school authorities and parents/guardians about its importance at school level.

Introduction:
Internships in the Office of Student Activities are designed to provide Secondary school students with hands-on learning experiences that will help them develop valuable and transferable skills. Interns will work on a variety of projects designed to foster a new appreciation and understanding of the multitude of resources available to students at University Park. Interns are either paid minimum wage or can obtain course credit.

Co-curricular activities are an integral part of curriculum which provides educational activities to the students and thereby help in broadening their experiences .Co-curricular activities can be defined as the activities that enhance and enrich the regular curriculum during the normal school hours. All co-
curricular activities are organised with specific purpose which vary according to the nature and form of such activities.

In the ancient time, school education was based on Gurukul system, where the Gurus were the head of entire educational system. The decisions of the Gurus were the final decision. They imparted knowledge either from their own experiences or from the books written by great scholars. So, mental development or intellectual development was regarded as the main aim of education at that time. Modern education, on the other hand, is to make children ready for harmonious and all round development of personality through the activities like games and sports, excursion, debates, social services, cultural activities, dramatics, social function, dancing, music, etc.

Secondary stage of education is the most significant part of formal education. It covers the period of adolescents. All psychologists and educationists are of the opinion that instincts of adolescents should be properly trained and guided, as this period brings about the maximum bodily development. Therefore, in order to make the body active, various games and sports should be organized for them. In fact, secondary school should play a vital role in organizing co-curricular activities for adolescent students.

The Indian Education Commission of 1964-66 has stressed, “We conceive of the school curriculum as the totality of learning experiences that the school provides for the pupils through all the manifold activities in the school or outside that are carried on under its supervision”.

The New Education Policy (1986) lays special emphasis on the need of co-curricular activities. “Productive and creative activities help in the harmonious development of 4H’s: Head, Heart, Hand and Health. These activities provide for the expression of the child’s manifold talents. In fact, co-curricular activities are the most useful and integral part of curricular programme”.

The remarks of the Secondary Education Commission in respect of the co-curricular activities are worth noting. “This is not merely place of formal learning whose main concern is to communicate a certain prescribed quantum of knowledge but rather as a living and organic community which is primarily interested in training its pupils in what we have called the ‘gracious art of living’. Knowledge and learning are undoubtedly of value but they must be acquired as a by-product of interested activity because it is only then that they can become a vital part of student’s mind and personality and influence his behaviour. But the art of living is much more comprehensive concept than the acquisition of knowledge, however, intelligently planned. It includes training in the habit and graces of social life and the capacity for co-operative groupwork. It calls for patience, good temper, sincerity, fellow feeling and
discipline. These activities can only be cultivated in the context of the social life and the many co-curricular activities must find a recognized place in any school”.

**Types of Co-curricular Activities:**

There are numbers of co-curricular activities. We can divide them into certain groups as follows.

1. **Physical activities**: These activities help students to maintain their health, stamina, vitality and growth. Such activities include games and sports, athletics, cycling, swimming, boating, rowing, mass parade, N.C.C., Scout, girls’ guide etc.

2. **Social activities**: The social activities include social services like cleanliness week, first aid, village survey for some purpose, repairing of school buildings, construction of roads, adult education, blood donation etc. Besides, celebration of some special days such as parent’s day, school foundation day, birthday of a great man etc can be organized in the school.

3. **Literary activities**: Publication of school magazine, wall papers, pamphlets and bulletins, essay writing competition, writing of summary and reviewers of selected book etc. are included in this type of activities.

4. **Artistic activities**: To develop artistic sense of the pupils, the artistic activity includes dance competition, dramatic performances, music soiree, recitations, exhibition of painting, drawing, modeling, sculpture, variety show, flower arrangement, poetical composition and so on.

5. **Productive activities**: This category of activities includes spinning, tailoring, embroidery, knitting, weaving, toy making, basket making, gardening, floriculture etc.

6. **Cultural activities**: The cultural activities include folk dance, celebration of religious and other festivals, visit to places of cultural importance etc.

7. **Academic activities**: Debate, symposium, art clubs, excursions, seminars, mock parliament, literary clubs, survey clubs etc. help students by developing thinking, reasoning, problem solving.

8. **Educational tours and excursions**: These activities include visit to the places of historical, geographical, cultural, educational or national importance.

9. **Activity of leisure**: Photography, stamp collection, album making, decoration, preparation of charts, models etc.

10. **Citizenship training activities**: This training includes mock parliament, students’ council, cooperative store, visits to a place of social importance and so on.
11. **Multi-purpose activities:** These activities include beautification of campus, cultural week celebration, community survey for special purpose, project of experimental or developmental nature, improvement of environment and many more. In Internship Programme we can use of these activities which can be more comfortable.

**Objectives of Co-curricular Activities:**

The main objectives of co-curricular activities are as follows:

1. To make children ready for harmonious and all round development of personality.
2. To prepare for practical life and to give training in good citizenship.
3. To develop a close relationship between the school, teachers and the community.
4. To raise the standard of whole educational system.
5. To identify the field where a child would like to explore himself.
6. To teach responsibility and make school life vigorous.
7. To make proper use of off time.
8. To develop the feeling of cooperation and co-existence among children.
9. To provide the opportunity for self evaluation.

**Importance:**

1. These activities are designed to meet the needs of the students and cover a broad/wide range of their abilities and talents.
2. Such activities stimulate the interests in the students and provide equal opportunities to all the students to participate.
3. These activities enhance the learning experience of the students and help in recognizing and developing their inner skills such as leadership qualities, creative or innovative skills etc.
4. Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities give the students a chance to think out of their box and get creative ideas of their own with the help of a guide/facilitator.
5. These activities help the students in developing richer learning experiences by giving them a chance to think in new ways to solve a problem or answer a question.
6. Students need to take time outs to do more than just studying. Co-curricular and Extracurricular activities give them a chance to relax, refresh and mingle easily with others.

7. In short, these activities prepare the students practically for their future.

8. The normal curriculum teaches and educates the student about academic theories while co-curricular activities and extra-curricular activities help the student to apply what he/she has learned to practice in their practical life.

9. These activities help in developing the grasping power of the students and provide an opportunity to the students to work in teams and thus develop team spirit in them.

10. Most of the Co-curricular and Extra co-curricular activities are to keep the students physically active and get them out their desks to try out new things in practical way.

**Conclusion:**

The education system of our country has been changed to a greater extent during Post-Independence period. Pupils are charged for all round development. Under the new educational ideals, schools are given responsibility to impart physical, mental and social training along with the bookish knowledge. Therefore, it has become very necessary to place various co-curricular activities in educational setup.

The present curriculum becomes over burden both for the teachers and the students. They have to complete their courses within the fixed time allotted by the Board/Council. Due to over burden, both students and teachers have no time to give proper importance on co-curricular activities. A period is not enough for today's broad based and extensive co-curricular activities. Different commissions and policy makers may say about its importance but practical application still remains absent in the curriculum. Generally, it is seen that almost all schools organize annual sports, cultural functions and some other competitions. But only a limited number of participants get satisfaction and numbers of students remain absent from these activities. Would it be possible to make over all development if we do not think about it?

Therefore, whatever the obstacle it is, if congenial atmosphere for co-curricular activities is created, if we locally manage many things, if materials are supplied timely, if teachers and guardians come forward to cooperate, nobody can keep the students away from participating in various co-curricular activities of their choice. If they get proper environment and social support, it is sure; they
will show better performances in their life. Because, it gives refreshment, it teaches pupil to be practical, it motivates them to get a platform in their life and it gives a personal identity. Moreover, it gives mental satisfaction to each volunteer. Thus, it is hoped that this study will help to understand the people about the importance of co-curricular activities, and also it will be benefitted for the students, teachers and school authorities to fulfill their unnoticed backlogs for such an important part of education.

References: