



Impact of Extra-curricular Activities on Students' Academic Performance at Bhutanese HSS level: A Case of Orong Central School

Ugyen Penjor^{1*}

¹Orong Central School, Bhutan.

Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of extracurricular activities on the academic performance and students' assessment towards the extra-curricular activities at higher secondary school (HSS) level. The sample consisted of 156 students from five different classes (IX-XII). The classes were selected randomly. The study used a mixed method approach. The quantitative component integrated was 24 items of 4 Likert scale survey questionnaires categorized under three themes. The qualitative component incorporated students' assessment on impact of extracurricular activities in academic performance were collected through open-ended questions. Data from survey questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive analysis (means and standard deviation) and inferential t-test was used for analysis of hypothesis. The qualitative raw data was thematically analyzed (transcribed, coded and categorized). The findings of the study indicated that that student who participated in extra-curricular activities either in Games or sports activities have high academic performance as compared to those who did not participate. It is recommended that the school should give facilities and proper time to the participants of extra-curricular activities and ensure every student's participation.

Keywords: *Extra-curricular activities; Academic performance; assessment; Bhutan; Central School.*

*Corresponding author: E-mail: urgyan@education.gov.bt;

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Education aims to nurture body, mind and soul [1] 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 [2]. "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. Having the access to the outside world, academic performance is preferred than co-curricular activities in Bhutan. In contrast, Chambers & Schreiber [3] assert, "One research finding suggested that only an academic curriculum would enhance academic performance" as cited in [4]. Admittedly, the school education encompasses to uphold the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domain gearing towards wholesome development. The holistic development of a students 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 classes IX to XII of Orong CS.

1.2 Problem Statement

The researchers attempt to carry out the study to ascertain the impact of extra-curricular activities on students' academic performance in Bhutanese HSS level. The researchers hold the opinion that such research would expose the ground reality existing across schools in Bhutan and find ways to focus on the area of importance. The existing practice of positioning importance on extra-curricular activities as well as academic

performance at equal footing questions its feasibility. A debate exists in education 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 postsecondary education. Another 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. However, numerous researches have been completed on younger students below class VIII on the impact of extracurricular activities. Very little studies have been conducted on the impact of extracurricular activities on students at HSS level. One must swing through many research studies in order to determine the benefits or disadvantage of extracurricular activities on academic performance. There is a knowledge gap. Therefore, there is a need to identify the benefits and detriments of extracurricular activity participation. This study would help the policy makers, educationists and teachers to redirect their approach to Bhutanese education system in schools at HSS level to examine both sides of the disagreement.

1.3 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 high marks. 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, X, XI and XII of Orong CS. 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 policy makers and educationalists to review the existing extracurricular practice at Bhutanese HSS level.

1.5 Research Question

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

1.6 Hypothesis

Null hypothesis (H₀): there is no significant impact of extracurricular activities on students' academic performance.

Alternative hypothesis (H₁): there is significant impact of extracurricular activities on students' academic performance.

1.7 Significance

This study will be undertaken to ascertain the impacts of extracurricular activities on academic performance in Orong Central School and to establish its effectiveness for class IX -XII at the HSS level. The researchers found out that the extra-curricular activities have positive impact on academic performance of students at Orong HSS. Therefore, the results from the research may have the potential to add to the existing literature on extracurricular activities. In addition, the result directs the policy makers and educationists in providing the importance on extracurricular activities in schools.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 What are Extracurricular Activities?

Unlike other curricular activities, extra-curricular activities are performed by the students outside the realm of normal curriculum or school. 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. You might consider the work of [5] who notes, "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" 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" [5] The students perform these activities voluntarily instead of being mandatory.

2.2 Importance of Extracurricular Activities

A study conducted on "*The Impact of Extracurricular on Academic Performance and*

School Assessment" suggests, "schools should be persuaded to increase the scope and student involvement in extracurricular activities, especially in urban or low-income schools" [6]. 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 [6]. 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 [7]. Additionally, another study by Joekel RG showed that achievement in extracurricular activities is a factor that can predict success in life beyond college [6].

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" [8]. Further, Hass is supported by Kirsch [9] "All respondents (100%) 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 [6] 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" Also, a study conducted by Whitley (1998) indicated that participation in extracurricular activities had a positive impact on student

achievement. Furthermore, Furda & Shuleshi found a positive relationship between extracurricular and success in high school.

2.4 Student's Assessment on ECA and Academic Performance

Differing from , the views of Furda & Shuleshi (2019), "But one of the most denying negative impact of participation in athletics is wounds or injuries" (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." (Saqib et al., 2018). 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 in support of participating and other in support of not participating in extracurricular activities". He further his claimed as: "So it is of 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. [2] who noted, " 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 " pointing to positive impact and reduction in negative behavior as clarified in the views of Wilson [10] ," 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".

3. 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 [11] In this study, mixed mode research design was used.

3.2 Research Method

According to Schwardt 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 determinate 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 [12,13]. Generally, mixed methods research represents research that involves collecting, analyzing and interpreting qualitative and qualitative data in a single study or in a sequence of studies that explore the same underlying phenomenon [14]. 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.

3.3 Research Instruments

In the study, to collect the primary sources of date, two instruments were used: 1. Student Assessment 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' assessment 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 [15]. The SPSQ is build using a four-point Likert scale i.e., Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The reliability coefficient of 0.60 (N=156) was obtained. Therefore, the SPSQ was reliable instrument to use in the study. To ensure further validity the questionnaires were subjected to senior researcher who are experienced in educational research.

There are three sets of Open-ended questions which offer respondents an opportunity to provide a wide range of answers. Because some of these answers will be unexpected. 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 Sampling Plan

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 student's participation in extracurricular activities were tracked in the school from different standards (IX to XII). The random sampling method was adopted for the selection of the sample from each standard. The sample consisted of a total 156 students, in which 81 were boys and 76 were girls from the school.

3.5 Data Analysis

This study includes both qualitative and quantitative data. Mall & Rossman 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" [16] Trshahe researcher examined the data in an attempt "to understand the essence of what is being expressed in the raw data" The analysis of data obtained in the study was done in two areas: (1) Students' assessment analysis and (2) Open ended question analysis.

To analyze quantitative data, SPSS 22.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used. The significance level was set to 0.05. For students' assessment analysis means, standard deviations, percentage and frequency on SPSQ were computed and calculated. T-test analysis was used to identify mean and statistical significance of academic performance of students' participation in extracurricular activities.

In this study developed the three sets of open-ended questions 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. The raw data obtained from open-ended questions of 156 students were transcribed and categorized under themes.

4. FINDINGS

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 assessment 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 qualitative results of the study obtained from open-ended questions of 25 students 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 [17]. 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

In the comparative analysis of three themes. The Table 1. revealed that student's participation in extracurricular in school with lowest mean of (M=15.2, SD=2.43, N=156), the mean with (M=13.86, SD=3.39, N=156) in case of students' assessment on extracurricular activities and the mean with (M=16.59, SD=3.40, N=156) for impact of extracurricular activities on academic performance with highest. The overall finding of

survey questionnaires revealed with mean of (M=15.22, SD=3.07, N=156). 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. The finding entails the reality that students have better academic performance after participating in extracurricular activities.

The analysis of students' participation in extracurricular presented in Table 2 depicted that 29.25% (N=365) of students responded with "Strong Agree" and 54.40 % (N=679) of students responded with "Agree". However, about 13.14% (N=164) and 3.21% (N=40) of students responded with "Disagreed and "Strongly Disagree" respectively. The subtotal mean was 1.90, the standard deviation was 0.666 with level of opinion "Agree". The results signify that

students' participation in extracurricular activities is more in the school than whose students who do not participated.

4.1.2 Analysis of Students' assessment on Extracurricular Activities

The analysis of students' assessment on extracurricular presented in Table 3 revealed that 39.42% (N=492) of students responded with "Strong Agree" and 50.48 % (N=630) of students responded with "Agree". However, about 8.89% (N=111) and 1.20% (N=15) of students responded with "Disagreed and "Strongly Disagree" respectively. The subtotal mean was 1.73, the standard deviation was 0.76 of opinion level "Agree". The statement "ECA helps me to be punctual in most of the school activities" had highest respondent of 102. The results indicated that students have positive assessment towards extracurricular activities in the school.

Table 1. Statistics of Paired Sample T-test

Class	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Participation in Extracurricular Activities	15.2	2.43	0.00
Students' Assessment on Extracurricular Activities	13.86	3.39	0.00
Impact of Extracurricular Activities on Academic Performance	16.59	3.40	0.00
Total	15.22	3.07	0.00

Table 2. Students' participation in extra-curricular activities

Statement						Mean	Std. Deviation
	N	SA	A	DA	SDA		
I participate in the extra-curricular activities in school always	156	48	93	15	0	1.79	.601
I prefer playing indoor/outdoor games	156	39	101	15	1	1.86	.595
Most students participate in ECA	156	52	95	9	0	1.72	.563
Participation is mandatory	156	47	80	27	2	1.90	.720
I participate under compulsion	156	12	55	59	30	2.69	.871
School has enough extra-curricular facilities	156	50	89	15	2	1.80	.657
School provides enough time to engage in ECA	156	51	87	13	5	1.82	.714
School has a schedule to engage students in ECA	156	66	79	11	0	1.65	.610
Subtotal	1248	365	679	164	40	1.90	0.666

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

Table 3. Students Assessment on extra-curricular activities

Statement						Mean	Std. Deviation
	N	SA	A	DA	SDA		
I like/prefer engaging myself in Extra-Curricular Activities	156	60	78	16	2	1.74	.690
ECA keeps our body physically and mentally sound	156	83	69	4	0	1.49	.551
I can actively engage in the class	156	40	97	18	1	1.87	.691
ECA helps me to be punctual in most of the school activities	156	36	102	17	1	1.89	.596
Students enjoy participating in ECA	156	93	56	7	0	1.45	.582
I am an active participant in most of the Extra-curricular activities conducted in the school	156	33	76	37	10	2.15	.828
I suggest the schools to continue engaging students in ECA	156	71	76	8	1	1.72	1.661
ECA provides enriching experiences and values	156	76	76	4	0	1.54	.549
Subtotal	1248	492	630	111	15	1.73	0.76

Table 4. Impact of extracurricular activities on academic performance

Statement						Mean	Std. Deviation
	N	SA	A	DA	SDA		
ECA refreshes and helps me to study better	156	45	81	27	3	1.92	.732
Participating in ECA has improved my academic score	156	32	68	50	7	2.21	.811
ECA has improved my concentration in the class	156	17	78	57	4	2.31	.697
ECA helps to actively participate in the class activities	156	32	99	25	0	1.96	.605
I participate in ECA to broaden my knowledge	156	34	86	30	6	2.05	.752
ECA has guided me to improve my academic skills	156	40	81	33	2	1.98	.723
Participating in ECA has improved my retention power	156	17	106	33	0	2.10	.559
Participation in ECA has enhanced my mood to study	156	29	94	28	5	2.06	.702
	1248	246	693	283	22	2.07	0.69

4.1.3 Impact of Extracurricular Activities (ECA) on Academic Performance

The analysis of impact of extracurricular on academic performance presented in Table 4 depicted that 19.71% (N=246) of students responded with “Strong Agree” and 55.53 % (N=693) of students responded with “Agree”. However, about 22.68% (N=283) and 1.76% (N=22) of students responded with “Disagreed and “Strongly Disagree” respectively. The subtotal mean was 2.07, the standard deviation was 0.69 with level of opinion “Agree”. The

results signify 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. Here are examples of the open-ended questions findings, noted below:

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

Through a random sampling, 25 out of 156 students' response were analyzed. From 25 respondents, 98.07% 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 20.68 % of the students participating in ECA has enhanced their concentration in the class and could perform better in their studies. In the words of XAS3, "Yes, the extra-curricular activities help us to improve our concentration in the class, refresh our mind and study well in the class." Moreover, 27.58% of the respondent revealed that ECA engages them fruitfully with highest respondent amongst others. About 6.89 % of the respondent responded that ECA makes them attentiveness in the class and 24.13% of the students are of views that it broadens their skills respectively. However, 2 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." (XIICS4)

4.2.1.2 How will ECA boost your academic performance?

During the analysis of 25 respondents for the open-ended questions, 57.14 % 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, "It will make our mind free and fresh that will help us to perform better in academics." (XAS10). The study found out that confident level physically and mentally, refreshing in the class and activeness boost academic performance which together

compounded to 14.28%. Differing from the above view, about 3.57% responded that it does not boost academic performance.

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

The respondents ranging classes IX to XII of Orong CS, responded that there is positive impact on them in terms of academic learning. The positive effects of participating in the ECA are: improve retention power with 6.89%, active participation in the class having 10.34%, gain experience and behavioral change with 13.79% and maximum students responded as helping in academic score with 34.48% evidently. A student IXS12 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," XICS4.

The least percentage of 6.89% reveals that retention power is an abstract idea for the children. Thus, children did not respond in favor.

5. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Discussion of Findings

The findings of the present study are presented in three major categories. Firstly, participation of students in extracurricular activities. Secondly, students' assessment on extracurricular activities. Thirdly, impact of extracurricular activities on students' academic performance.

5.1.1 Discussion on 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 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. In the recent study, it was found that 29.25% (N=365) of students responded with "Strong Agree" and 54.40 % (N=679) of students responded with "Agree" that they participate in extracurricular activities provided in the school. Apart from this, Ahmad et al. [6] asserted, "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 (XIICS4) 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.

5.1.2 Discussion on Findings of Students' assessment on extracurricular activities

The results indicated that students have positive assessment towards extracurricular activities in the school. A study conducted in Lucknow, the capital of the state Uttar 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" [18]. This study discovered that 39.42% (N=492) 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 50.48 % (N=630) of students responded with "Agree" pointing to: refreshed their mind, augment both physical and mental activeness. The positive assessment on extracurricular activities is authenticated in the study conducted by Saqib et al. [2] "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-assessment and confidence, professional advice students to be involved in extracurricular activities while at the same time keeping it at balance with their academic performances". The recent study to find the assessment of students on extracurricular activities at Orong CS congruent the findings of Saqib and his team. This understanding is furthered by Wilson who

established, "Students who participate in extracurricular activities generally benefit from the many opportunities afforded them" thus confirming the opinion of the current research.

5.1.3 Discussion on 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 "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 [9]. In the recent study, it was depicted that 19.71% (N=246) of students responded with "Strong Agree" and 55.53 % (N=693) of students responded with "Agree".

Similarly, in the words of Wilson [10] "Benefits of participating in extracurricular activities included having better grades, having higher standardized test scores and higher educational attainment, attending school more regularly, and having a higher self-concept" while they are in schools and "Participants in out-of-school activities often learned skills such as teamwork and leadership while decreasing the likelihood of alcohol use and illicit drug use and related problem behaviors" when students are out of school. However, about 22.68% (N=283) and 1.76% (N=22) of students responded with "Disagreed and "Strongly Disagree" respectively. The overall finding of survey questionnaires also revealed with mean of (M=15.22, SD=3.07, N=156) that statistical significance value (p) was 0.00 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. 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. [6] confirmed, "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” stands in consonance to the findings of the recent study conducted at Orong CS, Samdrup Jongkhar, Bhutan.

5.2 Conclusion

The study scrutinized the positive impact of extracurricular activities on academic performance of students of Orong CS ranging from classes IX to XII. The result indicated that extracurricular activities have significant influence on students and their academic performance. First, 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”. Second, the respondents perceived that ECA helped them to engage themselves, keep body physically fit and provided them experience and values. Finally, the findings indicates that there is positive relationship between ECA and academic performance.

In addition to this, Kirsch 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, assessment 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.

5.3 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 recommended that the schools across Bhutan ensures mass participation in extracurricular activities. Second, it is also recommended that parent, student and teacher’s assessments are also examined to further validate the role of extracurricular activities on students. Third, the school must ensure continued research of school extracurricular activities and the role they play in the lives of students at HSS level. Fourth, 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.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents’ written consent has been collected and preserved by the authors.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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