

Effects of Co-Curricular Activities on Academic Performance at Secondary Level Students

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to investigate the effect of co-curricular activities on academic performance at secondary level students. The study was quantitative in nature and descriptive method was used to conduct this study. The population of the study was comprised of secondary level students and 155 students were selected as sample of the study by using simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire was formulated on five point Likert scale for gathering the responses from the respondents. Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used for analysis of data. According to the objective, numerical analysis and results of the study it is concluded that Students who participate in co-curricular 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. Students often learned skills such as teamwork and leadership from college club activities while decreasing the likelihood of different problem behaviors. It is suggested that all educational institute authorities should provide adequate facilities for the students to take part in co-curricular activities within the institute premises and outside schedule class hour.



Introduction

Co-curricular activities (CCAs), previously known as Extracurricular Activities (ECA) are activities that educational organizations in some parts of the world create for school students. They are activities which all school students must attend alongside. In Singapore, the policy was introduced by the Ministry of Education, which believes extra activities for school students are a means to enhance social interaction, leadership, healthy recreation, self-discipline and self-confidence. At higher levels of education, CCA participation may even translate into academic points (Karim, 2021).

Co-curricular activities are also referred as Extra-curricular activities. Grammatically, there is a difference between the two. Extra-curricular is self-explanatory, i.e. Activities which are extra or additional to curricular but is more leisure oriented than learning oriented. Extra-curricular activities are mostly conducted after school hours. They generally don't complement academic studies. However, some of the activities overlap each other, some extra –curricular activities are considered co-curricular while for some it is extra-curricular (Singh, 2017).

Involvement in these activities may be beneficial in various ways e.g. it can encourage healthy lifestyle or personality development at an early stage. Extracurricular activities provide such learning which cannot be taught from subjects in class room and it helps young ones to apply their classroom learning (Lunnenburg, 2010; Ahmed et al., 2025; Naqvi et al., 2025).

Exam or grade performance of students is also linked with the level of involvement in such activities. Students who participate in various non-class room activities are also more engaged in school time, have better exam grades and motivation towards education (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). But students who take part in at least some co-curricular activities perform better in exams than those students who don't participate at all (Reeves, 2013). Youth development includes improvement in academics, social life, association with family, confidence, caring and compassion and character building (Morrissey & Werner-Wilson, 2005). There are multiple activities for students to participate, but it is important for students to know which activities benefit them the most. Extracurricular activities may have negative consequences such as facing bad behavior of a coach to degrade team members or to spare every free minute in multiple activities, but the positive consequences widely outnumber those and are instrumental in individual's development (Eccles, *et al.*, 2003).

Co-curricular activities, as the name implies, are those, not directly related with the prescribed curriculum and include; sports, athletics, scouting, cubing, various hobbies, excursions literary societies, dramatics, debates etc. to bring social and physical adjustments in the child. 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. One of the early philosophies behind co-curricular activities was that they should, wherever at all possible, grow out of curricular activities and return to curricular activities to enrich them (Kelbiso, 2019).

According to Eccles (2003) involvement in voluntary activities in school may increase achievement and participation. This is so because student's interpersonal skills and social norms are developed and consequently they get more involved in pro social programs which then help to improve their emotional wellbeing and social networks. The involvement in such activities is then expected to contribute towards the improvement in grades and it may also help to reduce behavioral issues. The mental health of the young ones can be improved by being involved in physical activities and, as a result, their self-perceptions will be higher than non-participating students.

Iqbal (2025), some researchers have divided co-curricular activities into informal and formal activities. The formal activities include activities which are relatively structured, such as participating in athletics or learning to play a musical instrument. Informal activities, on the other hand, also known as leisure activities, include less structured activities, such as watching television. Some literature on leisure studies has suggested that formal and informal activity settings have different influences on motivation and feelings of competence two factors which influence academic performance. One study found that more time in leisure activities was related

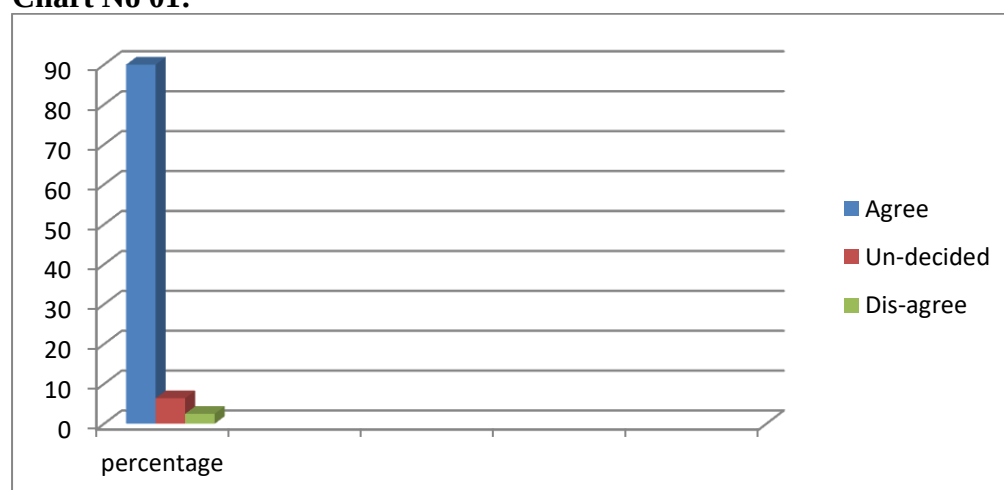
to poorer academic grades, poorer work habits, and poorer emotional adjustments, while more time in structured groups and less time watching TV were associated with higher test scores and school grades (Guest & Schneider, 2003).

Method and Materials

The chapter discusses the research methodology and procedure used in this study to examine the research problem. The main problem of the study was to examine the effect of co-curricular activities on students' academic performance at secondary level. The study was quantitative and descriptive in nature. The quantitative research is the process of explaining phenomena in the form of numerical data or information that can be converted into numbers. Through this survey, the information was collected to draw the effect of co-curricular activities. The set of individual item or data from which the statistical sample is taken is called population. The population of the study was comprised of students of spring field school in AJ&K one district. The sample of the study was comprised of 155 students, more than half of the population was selected from the population by using simple random sampling techniques. The data that was required from the sample has concerned the effect of co-curricular activities. In the literature review, researcher was able to locate an instrument that was related to objectives of study and nature of the requiring information. The questionnaire was used for the data collection. These questionnaires were developed by using five points Likert scale on the basis of related literature, review and under the guidance of supervisor. In order to collect the data from the students through the above mention instruments, the researcher personally visited the schools and handed over the questionnaire to the students and requested them to fill the questionnaire. The procedure of filling the questionnaire was also briefly described by the researcher. Following scoring procedure was made for the responses of questionnaires: 1. Strongly Agree, 2. Agree, 3. Undecided, 4. Dis Agree, 5. Strongly Dis Agree. Validity of instrument was checked by experts of field of education. Reliability of instrument was checked by Cronbach's alpha statistical technique with help of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Reliability of instrument is 0.89 which is good for conducting further research.

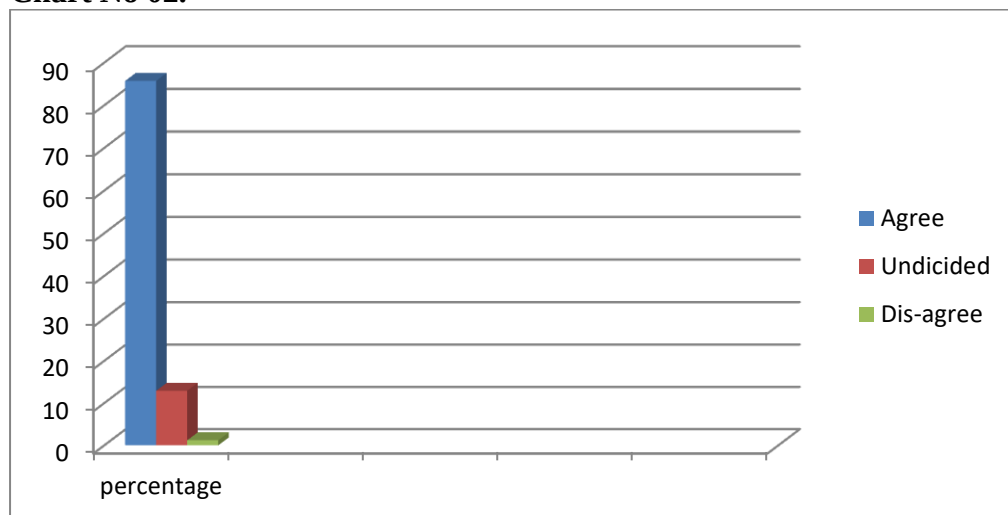
Data Analysis

Chart No 01:



The graphical form of results of statement 1 are given below. It shows that 90.8% students agreed that co-curricular activities complement the learning experience of students, 2.5% students disagreed this statement while 6.4% remain undecided.

Chart No 02.



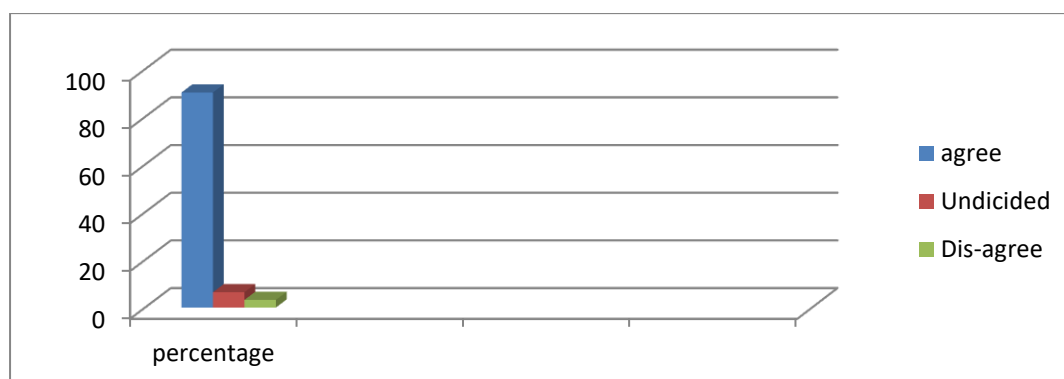
The graphical form of results of statement 2 are given below. It shows that 85.7% students agreed that co-curricular activities enhance social interaction, 12.9% students disagreed this statement while 1.2% remain undecided.

Chart No 03.



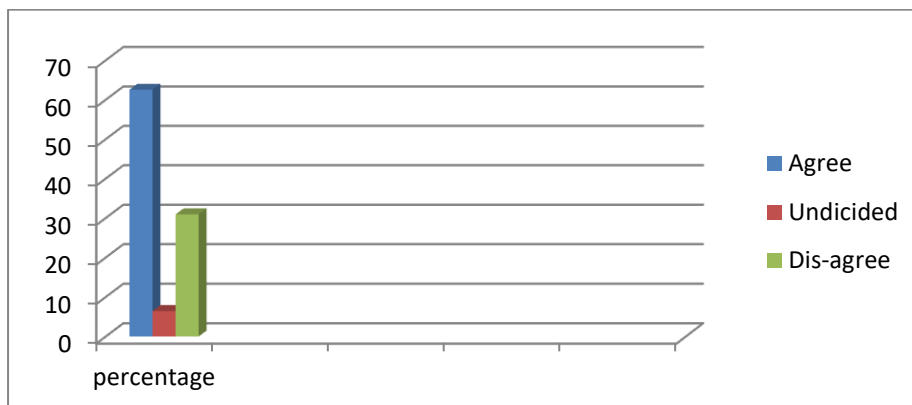
The graphical form of results of statement 3 are given below. It shows that 56.6% students agreed that co-curricular activities develop self-confidence, 14.1% students disagreed this statement while 29.0% remain undecided.

Chart no 04.



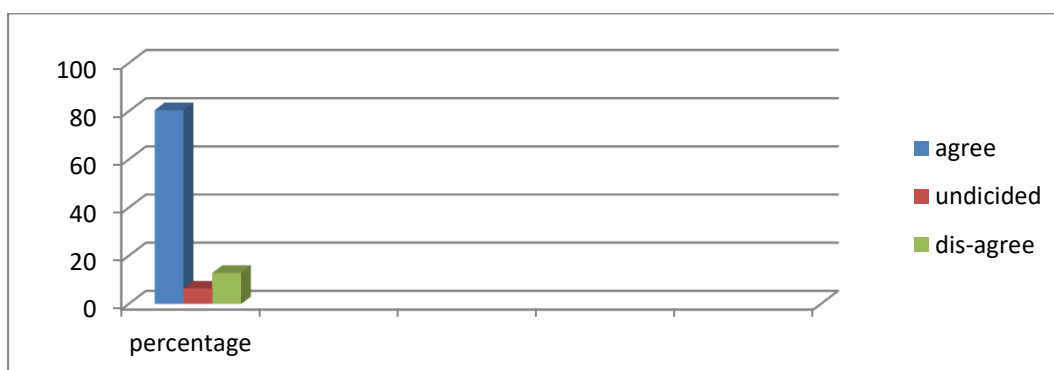
The graphical form of results of statement 4 are given below. It shows that 90.2% students agreed that students gain real life experience from these activities , 3.2% students disagreed this statement while 6.4% remain undecided.

Chart no 05.



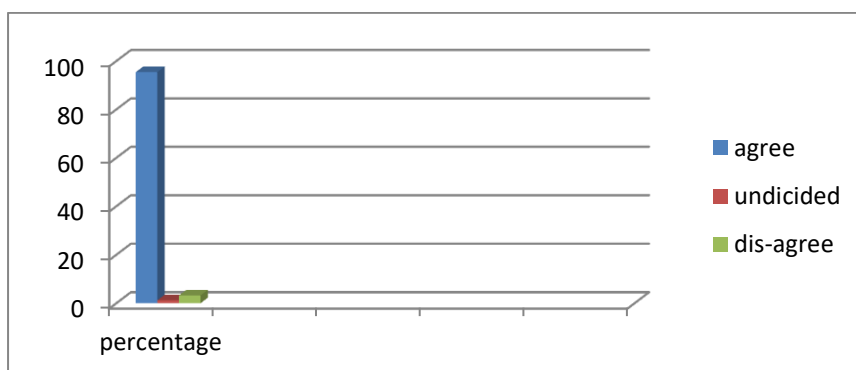
The graphical form of results of statement 5 are given below. It shows that 62.5% students agreed that co-curricular activities develop time management skills, 30.9% students disagreed this statement while 6.4% remain undecided.

Chart No 06.



The graphical form of results of statement 6 are given below. It shows that 80.5% students agreed that co-curricular activities improve coordination, 12.9% students disagreed this statement while 6.4% remain undecided.

Chart No 07.



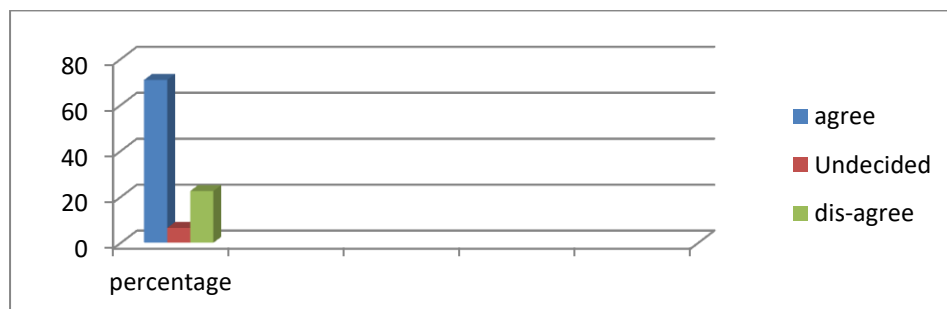
The graphical form of results of statement 7 are given below. It shows that 95.4% students agreed that co-curricular activities builds mental as well as physical strength, 3.2% students disagreed this statement while 1.2% remain undecided.

Chart No 08.



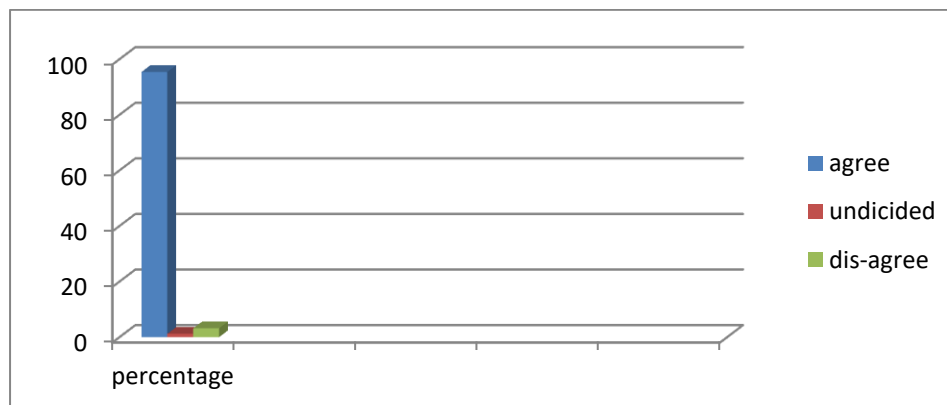
The graphical form of results of statement 8 are given below. It shows that 86.3% students agreed that co-curricular activities teach team work, 10.9% students disagreed this statement while 2.5% remain undecided.

Chart No 09.



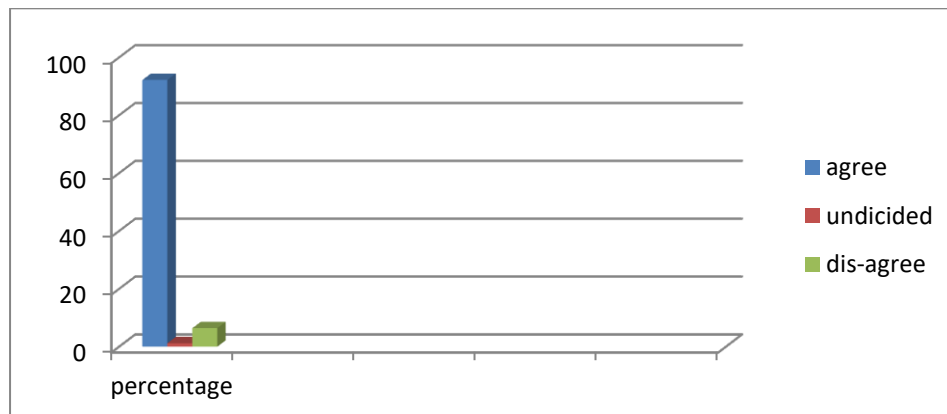
The graphical form of results of statement 9 are given below. It shows that 70.8% students agreed that art improve motor skills, 22.5% students disagreed this statement while 6.4% remain undecided.

Chart No 10.



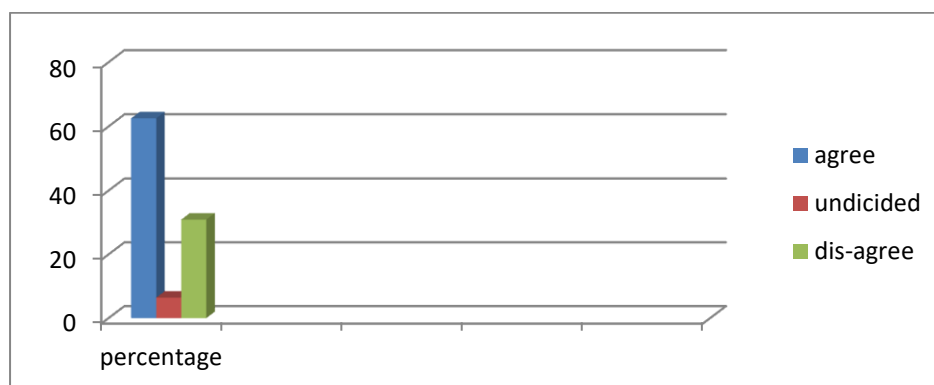
The graphical form of results of statement 10 are given below. It shows that 95.4% students agreed that music help in relaxation of mind, 3.2% students disagreed this statement while 1.2% remain undecided.

Chart No 11.



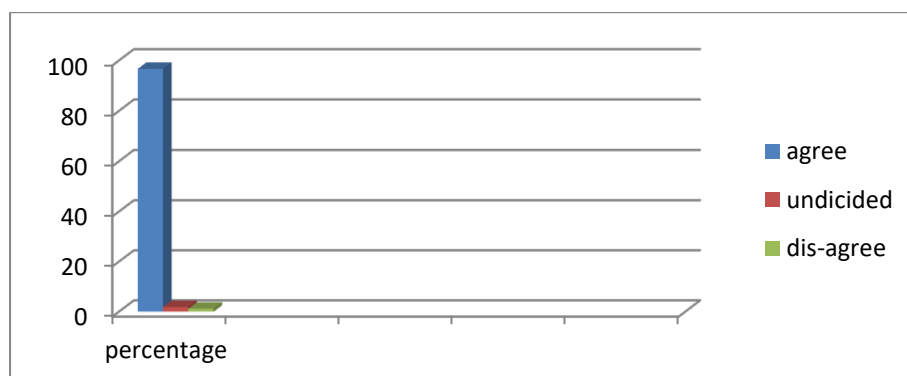
The graphical form of results of statement 11 are given below. It shows that 92.2% students agreed that drama improve performance abilities, 6.4% students disagreed this statement while 1.2% remain undecided.

Chart No 12.



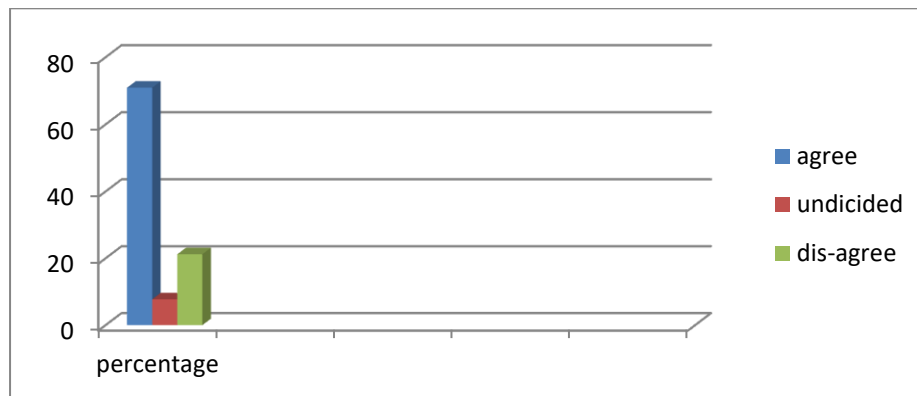
The graphical form of results of statement 12 are given below. It shows that 62.5% students agreed that sports teach coordination, 30.9% students disagreed this statement while 6.4% remain undecided.

Chart No 13.



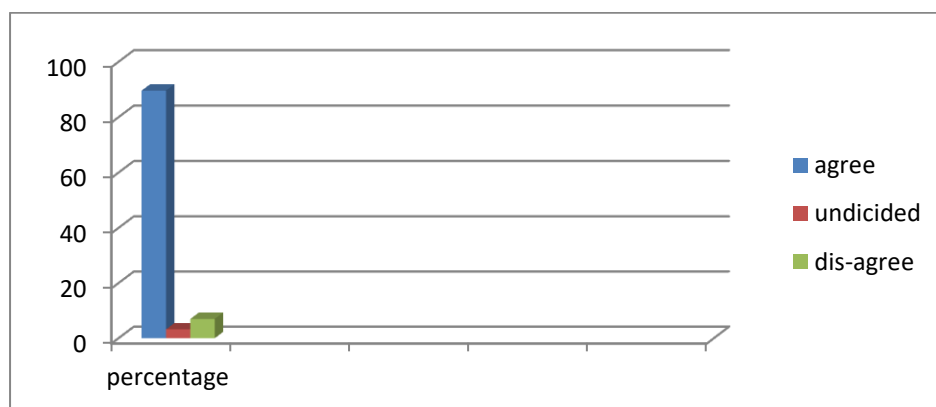
The graphical form of results of statement 13 are given below. It shows that 96.7% students agreed that speech competition develop communication skills, 1.2% students disagreed this statement while 1.9% remain undecided.

Chart No 14.



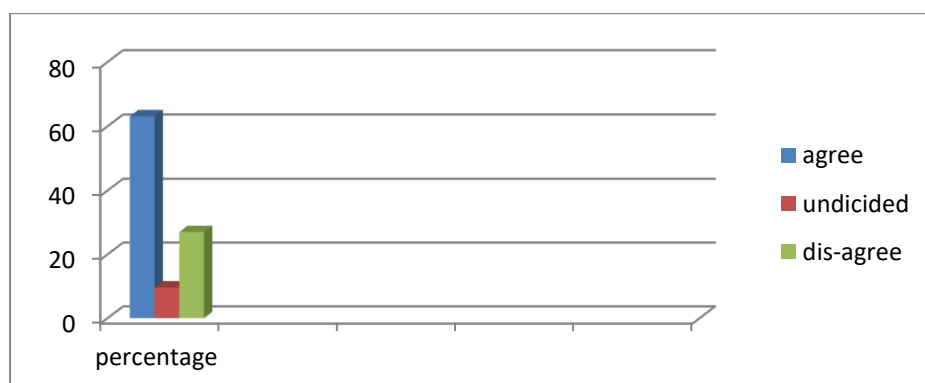
The graphical form of results of statement 14 are given below. It shows that 70.9% students agreed that group studies enhance creativity, 21.2% students disagreed this statement while 7.7% remain undecided.

Chart No 15.



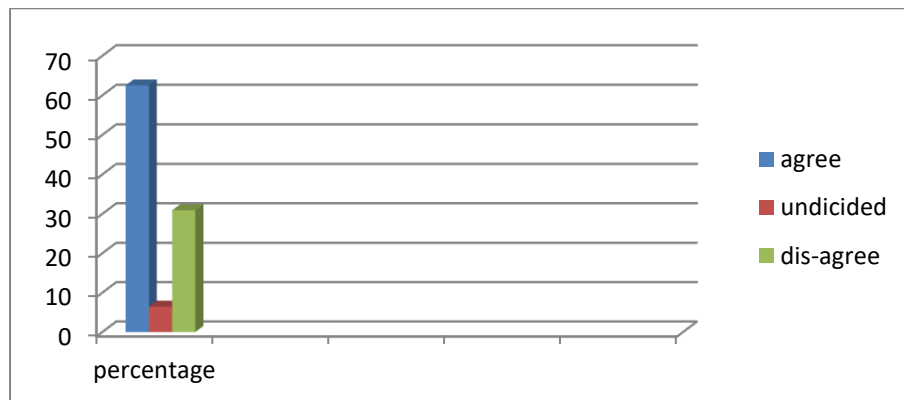
The graphical form of results of statement 15 are given below. It shows that 89.6% students agreed that co-curricular activities channeling student's energies in positive direction, 7% students disagreed this statement while 3.2% remain undecided.

Chart No 16.



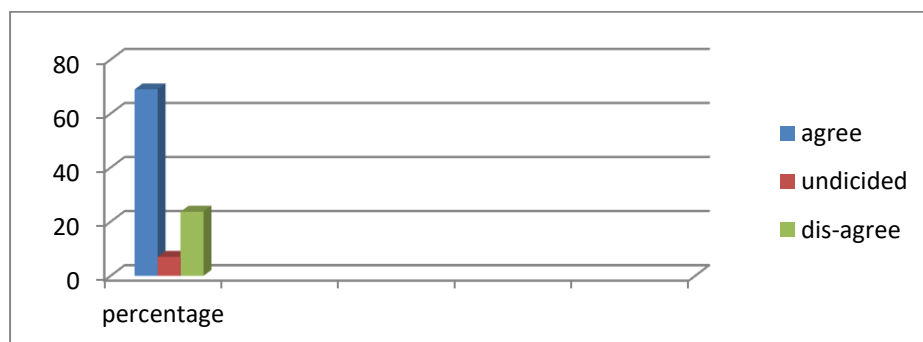
The graphical form of results of statement 16 are given below. It shows that 63.1% students agreed that co-curricular activities meet psychological needs of students, 27% students disagreed this statement while 9.6% remain undecided.

Chart No 17.



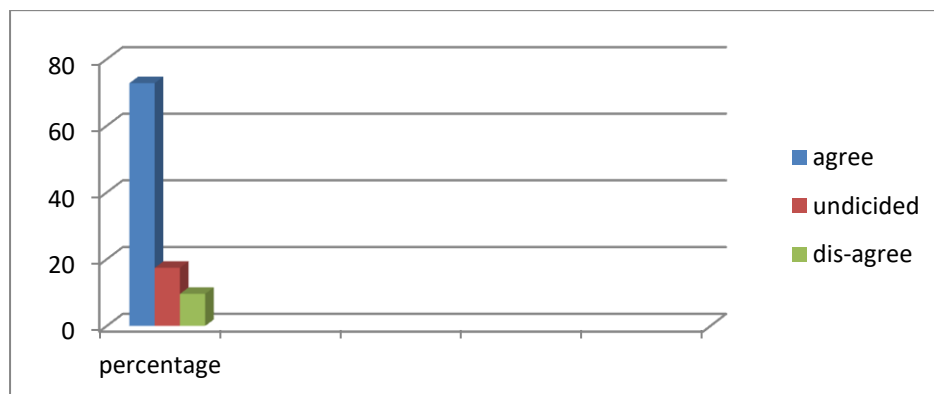
The graphical form of results of statement 17 are given below. It shows that 62.5% students agreed that students are morally trained through these activities, 30.9% students disagreed this statement while 6.4% remain undecided.

Chart No 18.



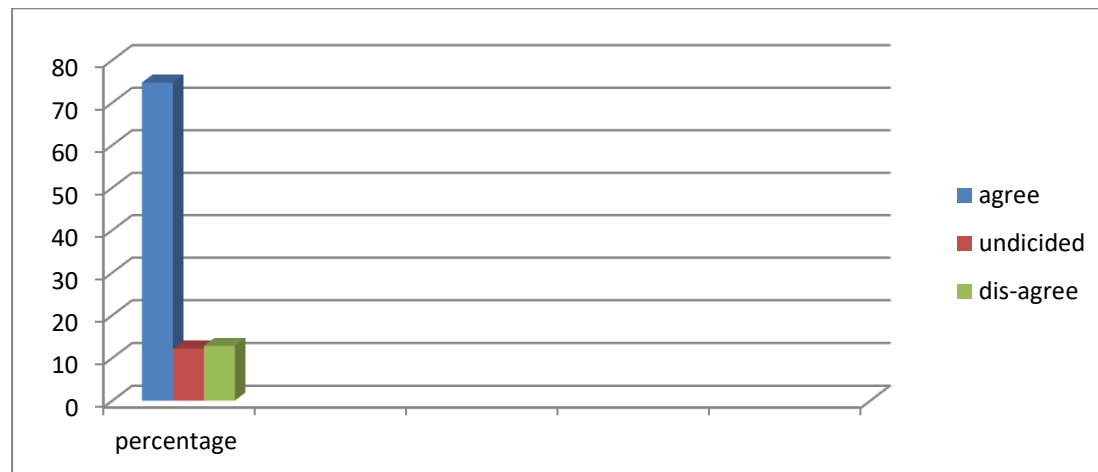
The graphical form of results of statement 18 are given below. It shows that 69% students agreed that co-curricular activities build student character, 23.7% students disagreed this statement while 7.0% remain undecided.

Chart No 19.



The graphical form of results of statement 19 are given below. It shows that 72.8% students agreed that co-curricular activities motivate to do hard work, 17.4% students disagreed this statement while 9.6% remain undecided.

Chart No 20.



The graphical form of results of statement 20 are given below. It shows that 74.7% students agreed that co-curricular activities enlightened responsible citizen, 12.8% students disagreed this statement while 12.2% remain undecided.

Discussion

The findings of the study clearly show that students strongly believe co-curricular activities play a valuable role in their overall learning and development. Most students agreed that these activities complement academic learning and help make the learning experience more meaningful and engaging. This supports previous research, such as that of Marsh and Kleitman (2002), which found that participation in co-curricular activities positively impacts academic success by increasing motivation and engagement in school tasks. Students also shared that co-curricular activities help improve social interaction and teamwork. This aligns with past studies which highlight how such activities provide students with the opportunity to work in groups, share ideas, and develop interpersonal skills. These social experiences are critical for building communication and collaboration skills that are useful in both academic and real-life situations.

Another important outcome from the data is the belief that co-curricular activities help in building self-confidence and managing time effectively. Although some students were unsure or disagreed with these points, a majority still saw positive development in these areas. These findings are consistent with research by Fredricks and Eccles (2006), who reported that participation in non-academic activities fosters self-discipline and self-belief among students. Many students agreed that co-curricular activities offer real-life experience, improve coordination, and develop both physical and mental strength. These outcomes mirror findings from earlier studies that suggest hands-on activities, such as sports and drama, are beneficial for physical health and emotional well-being. The role of such activities in promoting coordination and balance, both physically and mentally, has also been supported by developmental psychologists.

The responses also emphasized the specific benefits of art, music, speech competitions, and drama. Students found these activities helpful in improving motor skills, relaxing the mind, enhancing communication, and building performance abilities. These results align with the work of Deasy

(2002), who found that participation in arts-based co-curricular activities promotes creativity, emotional expression, and fine motor skills development. Interestingly, students also viewed these activities as a means of moral training, character building, and motivation for hard work. However, some showed uncertainty about the psychological and moral impact of these activities. While the majority still agreed on their importance, this variation suggests a need for better planning and integration of values-based activities. Previous literature supports the idea that when co-curricular activities are designed with a clear moral or developmental aim, they can effectively build character and social responsibility.

In conclusion, this study reinforces the findings of previous researchers and confirms the wide-ranging benefits of co-curricular activities in students' academic, personal, and social growth. While most students view these activities positively, the mixed responses in some areas indicate the need for schools to ensure that these programs are inclusive, well-structured, and aligned with students' developmental needs.

Conclusion

According to the objective, numerical analysis and results of the study it is concluded that Students who participate in co-curricular 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. Students often learned skills such as teamwork and leadership from college club activities while decreasing the likelihood of different problem behaviors. It is suggested that all educational institute authorities should provide adequate facilities for the students to take part in co-curricular activities within the institute premises and outside schedule class hour. The study concludes that co-curricular activities play a significant role in supporting and enriching students' academic learning. A large majority of students believe that these activities complement classroom education by providing practical experiences and enhancing understanding. They help bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-life application, making learning more meaningful and engaging. Students also strongly feel that co-curricular activities improve their social skills. Participation in group activities such as sports, music, drama, and teamwork-based programs fosters social interaction and teaches them how to work collaboratively. These opportunities help students develop better communication, cooperation, and understanding with peers, which is essential for personal and academic growth.

Another key finding is the development of self-confidence through participation in various activities. Many students reported feeling more confident when engaging in performances, competitions, and other creative tasks. Such experiences also contribute to building mental and physical strength, improving their ability to face challenges with resilience. Furthermore, the study shows that co-curricular activities contribute to time management and coordination skills. While a few students seemed unsure, most agreed that balancing these activities with academics teaches them how to manage their schedules effectively and enhances their ability to organize and plan their tasks. Art, music, drama, and speech competitions were especially appreciated for developing specific abilities. Students felt that art improves their fine motor skills, music helps in calming the mind, and drama boosts performance and expression. Speech competitions were recognized for sharpening communication skills, making students more confident speakers. Generally, the study confirms that co-curricular activities are essential for holistic student development. They support not just academic growth but also contribute to emotional, moral, social, and physical well-being. Therefore, schools should continue to encourage and integrate such programs as a core part of the educational experience.

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