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Co-curricular Activities as Perceived by Students and Teachers of Government Secondary Schools of Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract

Education aims at making children capable of becoming responsible, productive and useful members of a society. Knowledge, skills and attitudes are built through learning experiences and opportunities created for learners in school. It is in the classroom that learners can analyse and evaluate their experiences, learn to doubt, to question, to investigate and to think independently. In Modern time we are talking about CCE. The 'comprehensive' component of CCE takes care of assessment of all round development of the child's personality. It includes assessment in Scholastic as well as Co-Scholastic aspects of the pupil's growth. The studies have shown that co-curricular activities are not only important for education but also significant for the overall development of personality of the child. Co-curricular activities play a pivotal role in the overall development of cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of the child. It makes the child bold and courageous to carry out diverse roles of the society. The results of the study revealed that Government school teachers select the students for various activities by their performance level in inter house competitions. All the teachers of government schools are against the statement that a co-curricular activity adds to pressure on students and teachers.

Keywords: Co-curricular Activities, Government Secondary Schools, Perceptions, Students and Teachers

Introduction

The aim of education simultaneously reflects the current needs and aspirations of a society as well as its lasting values and human ideals. At any given time and place it can be called the contemporary and contextual articulations of broad and lasting human aspirations and values. Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) refers to a system of school based evaluation of student that covers all aspects of student development. It is a developmental process of student which emphasizes on two fold objectives. These objectives are continuity in evaluation and assessment of broad based learning and behavioural outcomes on the other. The term 'continuous' is meant to emphasise that evaluation of identified aspects of students 'growth and development' is a continuous process rather than an event, built into the total teaching-learning process and spread over the entire span of academic session. It means regularity of assessment, frequency of unit testing, diagnosis of learning gaps, use of corrective measures, retesting and feedback of evidence to teachers and students for their self evaluation.

The second term 'comprehensive' means that the scheme attempts to cover both the scholastic and the co-scholastic aspects of the students' growth and development. Since abilities, attitudes and aptitudes can manifest themselves in forms other than the written word, the term refers to application of variety of tools and techniques (both testing and non-testing) and aims at assessing a learner's development in areas of learning, like:-

- Knowledge
- Understanding
- Applying
- Analyzing
- Evaluating
- Creating

The 'comprehensive' component of CCE takes care of assessment of all round development of the child's personality. It includes assessment in Scholastic as well as Co-Scholastic aspects of the pupil's growth.

- ❖ Scholastic aspects include subject specific areas, whereas
- ❖ Co-Scholastic aspects include Life Skills, Co-Curricular Activities, Attitudes and Values

Sample lists of tools and techniques that can be used in CCE are stated below:

Tools	Techniques
1. Questions	1. Examination
2. Observations	2. Assignments
3. Tests and inventories	3. Quizzes and Competitions
4. Checklist	4. Projects
5. Rating scale	5. Debates
6. Anecdotal records	6. Elocution
7. Document analysis	7. Group discussions
8. Portfolio	8. Club activities
9. Experiments	
10. Research	.FOR

In short, we can say that according to modem education thinkers, curriculum is not only teaching and learning in classroom. It also includes work in library, laboratory and workshop, participation in games and sports in playground and numerous informal contacts between teacher and pupils in these places. In these informal contacts there are very many activities. One of which is co-curricular activities. It is a part of curriculum of the institution.

Gandhiji gave an idea of 'Basic Education' in 1938 and Dr. Zakir Hussain, the Vice Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia developed the curriculum of Basic Education, on the lines suggested by Gandhi Ji, co-curricular activities were given their due place in the form of physical, socio cultural and craft activities.

All education commissions (such as <u>Mudaliar Commission</u>, <u>Kothari Commission</u> and others) in the post independence period in India- have repeatedly emphasized the need of more and more co-curricular activities.

Co-curricular or extracurricular activities include sports, art, theatre, debate and honour clubs, and music. The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) calls these co-curricular activities to denote that they are integral to the curriculum and not something separate. Every school has some activities for students, though schools with more financial resources have a greater selection. The NCES measures high school success in five categories: number of unexcused absences, number of skipped classes, grade point average, standardized test scores and likelihood of attaining a four-year college degree. In all five categories, students who participate in co-curricular activities outperform their non-participating peers.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFSHA) claims that typically these activities are only 1 to 3 percent of a total school budget. Given that activities are sometimes on the chopping block for districts trying to save money, groups such as the Alliance for Student Activities have been formed to highlight the importance of high school co-curricular activities.

Barnett and Weber (2008) asserted there is a wealth of research which has documented the positive effects of extracurricular recreational involvement on pre- and adolescent functioning as well as deterring negative effects of dropping out of school or becoming involved in self-harming practices.

The study also perceived the benefits of children participating in different types of recreational activities. Their results showed the vast majority of mothers whose children participated in recreational activities believed there were significant positive benefits related to the development of character attributes, both in terms of self and in how one treats others. Mothers attributed their children's learned experiences as a result of participation in various types of recreational activities including individual sports, team sports, performing, and community involvement.

Jacquelyn R. Elliott (2009) The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between involvements in formal, college-sponsored, co-curricular programs and student success and development at the community college, with success defined as grade point average and overall student satisfaction with the college experience and with development defined as self-confidence, ability to manage emotions, and emotional independence from parents. The study took place at three public community colleges located in central Kansas. Ninety-four community college students who were involved in one of three formal, college-sponsored, co-curricular programs during their freshman year (student government, a service oriented program, Phi Theta Kappa, and intercollegiate athletics) were compared to 96 of their peers who were not involved in a formal, college-sponsored program of this type.

Some marginal relationships were found among the groups; however, the analysis of the group membership and outcome measures controlled for these demographic differences. The analysis indicated that students involved in formal, college-sponsored, co-curricular programs had significantly higher grade point averages and satisfaction with the college experience. In addition, the involved students proved to be more self-confident, better able to manage emotions, and more emotionally independent from parents. The results substantiate consistent findings in the literature that the involvement in college or university sponsored co-curricular programs has a positive impact on student success and development.

Tahir Mehmood et. al. (2012) the study was designed to find out the impact of co-curricular activities on personality development of Secondary School Students. On the basis of data analysis, it was found that co-curricular activities have significant impact on selected personality traits.

Zahida Habib (2012) the modern education system recognizes that child comes to school for all-round and better development. It aims at the development of the total personality of the child and for that school provides opportunities for experience. Results indicated that Community Model Schools were better in students' performance due to well organized co-curricular activities and physical facilities than Govt. Girls Primary Schools. By and large it came out that the performance of community model schools is better than Govt. Girls Primary Schools it is due to the well organized co-curricular activities in Community Model Schools.

The above mentioned studies are some of the researches related to co-curricular activities. The review of the above selected literature gives the researcher very comprehensive understanding about her topic and provides a very sound and scientific base to clearly specify objectives and in finding out a general trend to the studies which have been conducted on such related topics. But no significant study was found on perception of government schools of teachers and students towards co-curricular activities, so the investigator attempted to undertake the present study.

Objectives of the study

The following objectives are laid down for the present study:

- a) To study the perceptions of students towards co-curricular activities organized in government schools.
- b) To study the perceptions of Teachers towards co-curricular activities organized in government schools.

Sample

Keeping in mind the scope of the study, the objectives of the study, the investigator follow the following research design which includes research method, sample size, tools and procedure used for data collection along with statistical techniques used for the analysis of the data.

The sample of the present study was secondary school students of government schools affiliated to Himachal Pradesh Board of School Education, Dharamshala (HPBSE) of two districts i.e. Una and Bilaspur. From each district 10 (ten) government schools were included in the sample. 20 (twenty) students (10 male and 10 female) were taken randomly from each

school selected. In addition to this 6 (six) teachers (3 male and 3 female) were also included in the sample from each school. In the present study random and convenient sampling technique was applied to get a total sample of 400 students (200 from each district) of class-IX school students. Finally, 400 students (200 males and 200 females) and 120 teachers (60 male and 60 female) were included in the sample.

Tools Used For Data Collection

For collection of data required for the study of any problem one may use various devices. For each and every type of research we need certain instrument to gather new facts or explore new fields. The Instruments thus employed are called Tools. In present study the researcher has used self developed questionnaire as tools to collect the data. Tools for the study were developed by the investigator on the basis of the objectives undertaken for the study. The following tools were developed by the investigator:

a. Questionnaire for teachers. b. Questionnaire for students.

Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data by tabulation of the collected data, however valid, reliable and adequate the data may be it does not serve any worthwhile purpose unless it is carefully edited, systematically classified, tabulated, scientifically analyzed, intelligently interpreted and rationally concluded.

a) To study the perceptions of students towards co-curricular activities organized in government schools

Through this objective an attempt was made to study the perceptions of students towards cocurricular activities organized in government schools.

The data were analyzed qualitatively on the basis of responses given by the students through questionnaire. The Questionnaire consisted of 22 items, out of which 10 items are close ended type and 12 are open ended type. The open ended and close ended questions are categorized under the following headings:

- i) Importance of co-curricular activities (Item no. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 are close ended)
- ii) Participation of co-curricular activities (Item no. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 are close ended)
- iii) Organization of co-curricular activities (Item no. 21, 22 are open ended)

i) Importance of Co-Curricular Activities

The percentage of the students of government schools giving a particular response about the importance of co-curricular activities organized in their schools is shown in the **Table 1** on next page.

S. No.	STATEMENT	Reponses of student (%)	
		Agree	Disagree
1	Co-curricular activities develop positive attitude and Confidence.	80	20
2	Co-curricular activities important for value inculcation.	82	18
3	Co-curricular activities are important for all round development.	80	20
3	Co-curricular activities is a prestige symbol for school.	72	28
4	Co-curricular activities gives more recognition for student.	55	45

Table 1: Importance of Co-curricular Activities

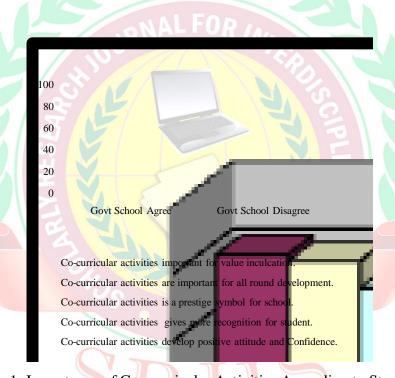


Figure 1: Importance of Co-curricular Activities According to Students

Table 1 indicates the importance of co-curricular activities. The table shows that 80% students of government schools agreed that co-curricular activities develop positive attitude and confidence. Majority of the students of government schools (82%) felt that these activities are also important for value inculcation and 80% favour all round development of the students.

Majority of students agreed that now-a-days co-curricular activities are a prestige symbol for schools; about 55% of students of government schools stated the same. The above has also been depicted through the figure 1.

ii) Participation in Co-Curricular Activities

Participation in co-curricular activities is also very important on the part of the student, for their personality development.

S. No.	CUP A UPPRATERIUS	Responses of students (%)	
	STATEMENT	Agree	Disagree
1.	Co-curricular activities help in academic performance.	43	57
2.	Co-curricular activities should be compulsory in school.	35	65
3.	Students should participate in variety of Co- curricular activities	65	35
4.	Student should participate in Co-curricular activities organized in the school.	92	08
5.	Participation in Co-curricular activities affect your	59	41

Table 2: Participation of co-curricular activities

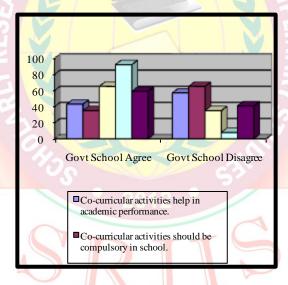


Figure 2: Participation in Co-curricular Activities According to Students

Table-2 and figure-2 shows that 43% student of government schools are of the view that participation in co-curricular activities helps in learning. They agreed that co-curricular activities have been beneficial to them in many ways. However, 47% students of government schools are not in favour of the statement that participation in co-curricular activities helps in learning.

On asking whether participation of a student in co-curricular activities should be compulsory, only 35% students of government schools felt that participation in co-curricular activities should be compulsory for all students.

However, 65% of government school students are of the opinion that co-curricular activities should not be imposed on students and they should be free to choose whether they want to participate in these activities and if "yes" then they should also be free to select activities of their interest for participation. They were of the view that making co-curricular activities compulsory will take away the joy and fun of participating in such activities.

While majority of students both in government schools stated that they participate in co-curricular activities out of their choice only, 35% of government school students disclosed that they don't have liberal choice and face some sort of pressure from teachers to participate in co-curricular activities. 92% students of government schools agreed to the statement that students should participate in co-curricular activities organized in the schools.

Majority of the students of government schools (41%) stated that participation in cocurricular activities does not affect their studies. On analyzing their responses, it came to the light that these co-curricular activities provide a medium to release their stress due to studies and make them fresh and thus they enjoy participating in co-curricular activities. However, 59% students of government schools stated that co-curricular activities affect their studies.

iii) Organization Of Co-Curricular Activities

Table 3: Organization of Co-curricular Activities

S. No	STATEMENT	Responses of students %	
5.110		Agree	Disagree
1	Schools have different houses.	100	0
2	School organize inter-house Co- curricular competitions 2012	46	54

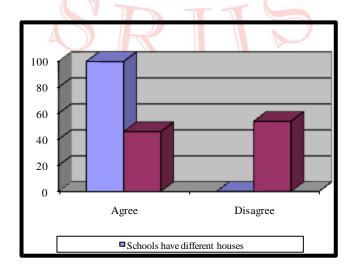


Figure 3: Organization of Co-curricular Activities According to Students

Table-3 and figure-3 shows that 100% students of government schools revealed that they have different House System in their schools. But there is a difference in House System of government schools. But only 46% students revealed that their school organize such type of competitions.

Analysis of Responses Given on Open Ended Questions (Items no.11-20)

In the following lines the interpretation of the responses on Open ended questions is given.

In **Item no.11**, it was seen that an overwhelming number (89%) of students from government schools agreed that co-curricular activities are important for them. They expressed their view that these activities increase their confidence, reduce their stress and enhance their positive attitude. These are important for all round development of the students; activities keep them active and inculcate values in them. But a small percentage of students do not agree with the statement. They are of the opinion that studies are more important for a student. So they should pay more attention towards their studies than to participate in these activities.

In **Item no.12**, On asking whether participation of a student in co-curricular activities should be compulsory, only 65% students of government school felt that participation in co-curricular activities should be compulsory for all students.

In **Item no.13**, it was seen that Games and sports, singing and dancing competitions, debates are the activities liked by the students of government schools.

In response to the Item no.14 "who encourage you to participate in co-curricular activities". Almost all students of government schools revealed that their teachers encourage them. Some students said that their parents encourage them while other few students revealed that their peers encourage them to participate.

In response of **Item 15** most of the respondents of government Schools responded "No" to the question that co-curricular affect their studies against a few responses from private school.

Item no.16 of the questionnaire deals with the reason to participate in co-curricular activities, students of government schools reply they like to participate for enjoyment to get free from studies and these activities also keep them physically fit.

Item no. 17 is dealing with "Do you face any kind of problem while participating in cocurricular activities?" it has been inferred that all the student of government school responded that they do not face any kind of problem while participating in co-curricular activities.

In response to **Item no. 18** of the Questionnaire, majority of government schools expressed the view that the participation in co-curricular activities bring more recognition and reward to

a students. They revealed that the reason to participate in these activities was to just get the fame, recognition in the school and in the eyes of the teachers. But as compare to it, a few respondents who did not agree with them.

In response to **Item no. 19** mostly parents of students of government schools, encourage their child for participation in co-curricular activities but some parents do not encourage them as they get worried about the investment of their time & energy in these activities.

In **Item no.20**, it was seen that almost all the students mentioned that their participation in cocurricular activities is not mentioned in their report cards as they get grades according to their performances.

b) To study the perceptions of Teachers towards co-curricular activities organized in government schools.

This section deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data related to the perceptions of Teachers towards co-curricular activities organized in government schools. The data was analyzed qualitatively on the basis of responses given by the teachers through Questionnaire. The Questionnaire consisted of 22 items, out of which 13 items are close ended and 9 are open ended. The close ended questions are categorized under the following heading:

- i) Importance of co-curricular activities [Item no.1, 2, 3, 4]
- ii) Organization of co-curricular activities [Item no. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10]
- iii) Participation of co-curricular activities [Item no.11, 12, 13]

i) Importance of Co-Curricular Activities

The percentage of the **teachers** of government schools who responded about the importance of co-curricular activities organized in their schools is shown in the **Table-4** and in figure-4.

Table 4: Importance of Co-curricular Activities

S. No.	STATEMENTS	Responses of teachers (%)	
		Agree	Disagree
1	Co-curricular activities are as important as curricular activities.	100	0
2	Co-curricular activities are important for all round development of a student.	90	10
3	Co-curricular activities are important for value inculcation in student	98	2
4	Co-curricular activities develops positive attitude and confidence	90	10

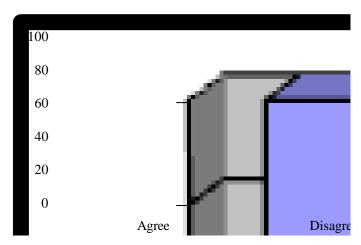


Figure -4: Importance of Co-curricular Activities According to Teachers

First item of the **Table -4** revealed that all the teachers of government schools agreed upon co-curricular activities are as important as curricular activities. From the responses it is clear that these activities facilitate students' interest and self confidence. They also believe that giving only academic input to students would not help in development of all aspects of the students' personality. Therefore, they emphasized on giving same importance to co-curricular activities as is given to curricular aspects of education.

The **second item** of **table 4** shows that 90% teachers of government schools agreed that cocurricular activities are important for all round development of a student. They stated that through co-curricular activities they can develop all domains of the child i.e. cognitive, psychomotor and effective.

The **third item** of **table 4** shows that 98% teacher from government schools stated that through co-curricular activities values can be inculcated in students.

The **fourth item** of **Table 4** revealed that same percentage (90%) of teachers from government agreed to the statement that co-curricular activities develops positive attitude and confidence in the students.

Through this description we can conclude that the importance of co-curricular activities has been realized by all the teachers of government schools.

ii) Organisation of Co-Curricular Activities

Table 5: Organization of Co-curricular Activities

S. No.	C/F A /DEN/JEN/JEC	Responses of teachers %	
S. NO.	STATEMENTS	Agree	Disagree
1	There should be more periods in the time table for Co- curricular activities	78	22
2	There should be an organized school calendar for Co- curricular activities in the school	95	05
3	Record should be maintained by the teacher as well as school.	75	25
4	Schools have different houses.	100	0
5	Organizes inter-house Co-curricular activities competition for students.	50	50
6	Facing any problem while organizing Co-curricular activities	68	32

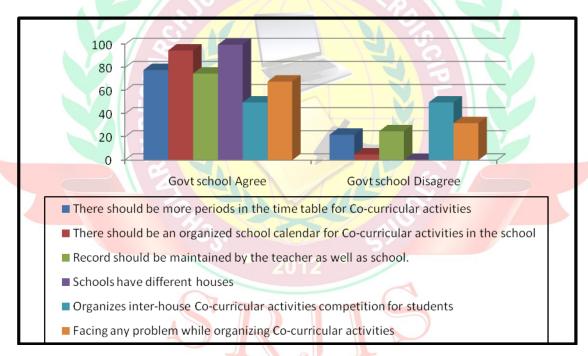


Figure-5: Organization of Co-curricular Activities According to Teachers

Table-5 shows that 78% teachers of government schools felt that there should be more periods for co-curricular activities in the school time table. This may be inferred as that 22% of teachers of government schools are satisfied with the time allotted to co-curricular activities in the Time-Table in their schools.

In response to the **item no. 6** almost all the teachers agreed that there should be an organized school calendar for co-curricular activities in the school. They stated that it will help in organizing these activities properly and rate of participation of students will be increased as

they will get informed timely and they will have enough time for preparation. But government school teachers are more concerned in this regard.

In response to the statement, that "Record should be maintained by the teachers as well as school" i.e. Item no.7, 75% teachers of government school agreed.

In **item no. 8** it was seen that 100% teachers of government schools have different houses in their schools.

But in response of **item no. 9** it was observed that there is a difference in House System of schools as only 50% of teachers from government schools agreed to the statement.

In response of **item no. 10** it has been observed that 68% of teachers in government schools face problems in organizing co-curricular activities. The same has been also reflected through the open ended **question no 18**.

iii) Participation in Co-Curricular Activities

Table 6: Participation in Co-curricular Activities

S. No.	STATEMENT	Responses of teachers %	
S. 1NO.		Agree	Disagree
1	Participation of student in Co-curricular activities should be compulsory	95	05
2	Student should try a range of Co-curricular activities	80	20
3	Participation in Co-curricular activities help in academic performance of student	88	12

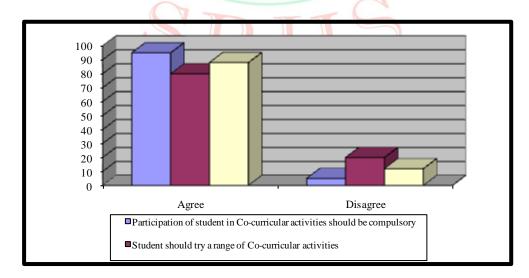


Figure-6: Participation in Co-curricular Activities According to Teachers

Table 6 shows the responses of **teachers** when they were asked to respond to the statement that co-curricular activities should be made compulsory for their students. The table shows that there is great difference between the views of teachers of government. 95% of government school teachers felt that participation in co-curricular activities should be made compulsory for all students as they felt many students do not participate at all in co-curricular activities.

Table 3.6 also shows that the same responses (80%) of teachers of government were agreed that students should try a range of co-curricular activities. 88% of government school teachers agreed that co-curricular activities have been beneficial for students in many ways, like; for all round development, to make them physically strong and healthy.

Analysis of Teachers Responses given on Open Ended Questions

In response to the **item no. 14** teachers expressed their view that non-participation of students in co-curricular activities makes that whole effort and purpose of organizing these activities, futile. Thus, government school teachers felt that participation in co-curricular activities should be compulsory for all students.

In response to the item no. 15 that "Do you think there is any relation between participation in co-curricular activities and academic performance of student?" Teachers of government schools replied in a positive manner as they also cited that co-curricular activities like excursion visits, visits to historical places help in strengthening academic achievement. They cited examples from their own experiences of organization of excursions to museums, metro station and zoological park help in academic performance. They reasoned that students are very actively participating in such activities and in this manner they pay full attention towards it.

In response of the **item no 16** teachers of government schools agreed that co-curricular activities help in inculcation of values. They revealed that co-curricular activities help to overcome the barrier of inequality caused by caste, economic status etc. Activities such as religious festivals through which students learn to appreciate good elements of one's religion and learn to respect other religion also.

In response to the **item no. 17** that "**How do you encourage students to participate in co- curricular activities?**" Teachers of government schools replied that by educating students about the benefits of co-curricular activities, by self participation and giving grades in annual results.

In **Item no.18**, the investigation reveals that government schools face more problems in organizing co-curricular activities in the school. Teachers of government schools revealed that they have to face financial stumbling blocks, lack of facilities, lack of space, shortage of time and inadequate administrative support while organizing co-curricular activities in the school.

This also can infer from the **item no. 19** which relates to the suggestions that can facilitate smooth and more successful organization of co-curricular activities.

In response to the **Item no.20** that students participate in co-curricular activities for recognition and reward only, most of the respondents refuted this statement and said that most of the students participate in co-curricular activities because of their personal interest to have fun & enjoyment. On the other hand few teachers agreed with this statement and said that students participate only just to get recognition and rewards.

In response of **item no 21** all the teachers' of government schools are against the statement that co-curricular activities adds to pressure on students and teachers.

In item no. 22 that "What are the criteria to select students for various activities?" Teachers of government school reveals that they select students for co-curricular activities by their performance in Inter House Competitions and by engaging them in the competitions and then according to their performance. They also selected students on the basis of their interest, their aptitude, skills, performance in inter house competitions & junior senior wing activities.

Educational Implications

The study reveals number of aspects on which the following recommendations are being made:

- There should be a calendar for co-curricular activities on the lines of regular academic
 calendar. The time table for various types of activities duration etc should be clearly
 chalked out for co-curricular activities in the very beginning of the session .And the
 calendar should be made available to the teacher's students and parents in the beginning
 of the session.
- 2. In the government school infrastructure needs to be developed further to give a boost to co-curricular activities and already available resources/human as well as material needs to be utilized effectively.
- 3. Regular period for different kinds of co-curricular activities needs to be marked clearly in the time-table.

- 4. Appropriate grades, awards, recognition and facilitation needs to be given to the students for participation in co-curricular activities to encourage them for these activities and to retain their interest in co-curricular activities.
- Activities need to be organized on more regular basis (daily and weekly) in the schools.
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