

The role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students of Isra University

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Abstract

The study aimed at identifying the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students of the University of Isra. To achieve the objectives of the study, the Descriptive analytical approach was used, in addition to a questionnaire especially designed to the purpose of the study. The questionnaire was distributed to 1122 students from the University of Isra.

The study revealed that the total score of questionnaire's paragraphs has a high degree, which reflects the university students' awareness of the importance of extracurricular activities in developing their cognitive skills. The study also revealed that there were no statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) between the average responses of the respondents regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students regardless of their demographic characteristics variables.

In light of the results revealed, the study proposed a set of recommendations including Intensification and diversification of extracurricular activities among university students in line with their preferences and needs, and conducting other studies related to extracurricular activities such as a study on identifying the reasons for students' reluctance to participate in extracurricular activities.

Keywords: The role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students of Isra University, University students

Introduction

The education sector has witnessed significant and remarkable developments, the effects of which appeared in the shift from focusing on content as its primary goal to the student and his thinking as the goal and means of education.

This has resulted in major changes in the roles and functions of all institutions and the tools that education uses to implement its goals, starting with the school and the teacher, curricula, tools, methods and various educational and educational aids, and these developments came as a result of the education process being a tool for modifying an individual's behavior and thinking pattern, which contributes to his adaptation to himself and his environment. Surrounding.

The teacher's role has changed from being a conveyor of the educational process to a facilitator and observer of student interaction through classroom activities and extra-curricular activities that contribute to refining his personality and developing his thinking and creativity skills.

Through the Deanship of Student Affairs, universities keep pace with modern educational theories, whether by looking at the student and considering him the center of attention or in focusing on diversifying educational methods, which made the extra-curricular activities part of the learning process and considered it an integral part of the school curriculum and a necessity of the educational process. To learn about the concept of extra-curricular activities and the awareness of the students of University of Israa.

Statement of purpose

The success of the teacher was measured in the past by the extent of his mastery of the method of giving or giving lectures to students accurately (Bulter & Hgewen, 2011), but nowadays, educators know how students learn better, as educational research confirms that the learning process is more effective when Avoid receiving information from others and directly listening to their lectures, when students actively and actively participate in the teaching-learning process (Salvane et al, 2006). The focus has become on the learner as the focus of the educational learning process and its center, after his position was marginal and his role was negative.

Based on that, the problem of this study revolves around identifying the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students of University of Isra

Significance of the study

The importance of this study stems from the importance of extra-curricular activities that focus on developing skills and knowledge among students, rather than focusing on transferring information and knowledge to them through indoctrination. The organized and honorable competition between groups and the interest in achieving positive results and achieving psychological stability, which contributes positively to the student's academic achievement.

Questions of the study

This study attempts to answer the following questions

1. What is the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students of the University of Isra?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills attributable to gender variables, the school year, and the type of activity practiced within the university?

Objectives of the study

This study aims to identify the role of extracurricular activities in some cognitive skills among students of the University of Isra, by identifying the types of extracurricular activities that are practiced within the university, and the extent of students' awareness of the importance of these activities in developing their cognitive skills, and verifying the existence of a statistically significant relationship when The level of significance ($\alpha=0.05$) between the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills due to the variables of sex, school year, and the type of activity practiced within the university.

Concepts and terms of the study

- **Extracurricular activities:** activities organized and supervised outside the scope of the curricular teaching sessions, and are usually complementary to the classroom activities and are commensurate with the university's goals and its general vision regarding student upbringing (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002).
- **Isra University:** It is a private Jordanian university established in 1989. The university seeks since its inception to be an active partner in the national efforts to improve the quality of education and to provide a university environment, committed to providing the best means of freedom and creativity and to graduate efficient cadres capable of facing life's challenges to take Its role in serving the local and Arab community, and for this purpose it carefully chose a variety of specializations for the BA and MA stages, and the Deanship of Student Affairs at the university supervises the extracurricular activities aimed at refining the students' personality and preparing it in a balanced manner, integration of students with extracurricular activities to develop their talents and highlight their energies to employ them in a successful way to change society by exploiting the students' leisure time, creating a spirit of participation and cooperation among students, strengthening relations between students and their professors to provide an atmosphere of comfort and tranquility, documenting the student's relationship with his community and his homeland and belonging to him, and broadening the cultural, artistic and creative horizons of students And publish it in the community (Isra University, www.iu.edu.jo).

Literature review

The term extracurricular activities appeared in the last years of the twentieth century, and interest in it increased clearly with the beginning of the twenty-first century (Dopsaj, 2012) as one of the most important contemporary educational and psychological trends that have a great influence on the learning process inside and outside the classroom on the part of students of schools, institutes and universities (Metsapelto & Pulkinen, 2015), which contributed to further clarifying the concept of extra-curricular activities, their importance and areas of application in various academic disciplines and various school and university subjects.

Extracurricular activities are defined as "those programs implemented under the supervision and direction of the school, deal with what is related to school life and its various activities related to academic subjects, social and environmental aspects, or clubs with special interests in practical, scientific, sports, musical, theater or school publications" (Anderson et al, 2003).

The extra-curricular activities are a deliberate plan and means of enriching the curriculum and a program organized by the educational institution that integrates with the general program, chosen and practiced by the learner willingly and automatically in order to achieve educational and educational goals closely related to the school curriculum or outside, inside or outside the classroom during the school day or outside of school, which leads to the learner's growth in All aspects of his educational, social, mental, emotional, physical and linguistic development, resulting in a compatible personality capable of production (Covay & Carbonaro, 2010).

The researcher believes that the extra-curricular activities are different activities suitable for students' ages and capabilities, which they practice outside the boundaries of the classes and curricula, and represent an integral part with the school curriculum that students practice voluntarily (with self-motivation) to suit their different preferences and abilities and include multiple areas to satisfy their physical, mental, psychological and social needs. Pupils gain many experiences, each according to his stage of development.

The importance of extracurricular activity stems from its pedagogical value, which is evident through what it achieves from the objectives of the educational process. These activities have a direct effect on many personality traits of students (Farb & Matjasko, 2012), due to the response of these activities to many of their tendencies, desires, needs and their impact. In their attitudes (Fredricks & Simpkins, 2013), and the importance of these activities is evident through their positive impact on self-esteem and satisfaction with life and work (Mahoney et al, 2005), and achieving educational goals within the school such as a sense of belonging to the group, show the spirit of organized and honorable competition between groups and interest in achieving positive results (Metsapelto et al, 2010), achieving psychological stability, and its main role in solving students 'psychological, social and educational problems (Molinuevo et al, 2010), and its role in discovering and developing the students' outstanding talents and abilities. Music, arts, social activity, scouting, calligraphy competitions, poetry, music, and drawing, make the student more open to the world and other sciences, all of which are activities that improve students 'minds and their physical and social skills and have a positive psychological impact (Metsapelto & Pulkkinen, 2012), as they help the student On developing his skills, what makes studying easier and more enjoyable (NICHHD, 2004), and conversely, moving away from extracurricular activities makes universities poor in resources, far from developing, and from providing the best for their students (Schumacher & Seiler, 2011).

The main objective of the extra-curricular activities is to meet the needs of the pupils that are not satisfied through the systematic teaching sessions and to reinforce what is done in this teaching. Educators also unanimously agree on the importance of extracurricular activity in supporting the educational process, revealing the pupils 'tendencies, developing their skills and exploding their abilities so that this activity has become an important part of The school curriculum is devoted to him enough time and resources to achieve his educational, cultural, scientific and social goals (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002).

The extra-curricular activities in general aim to link school life with social life, educate students on cooperative work and sportsmanship, help pupils to make use of their spare time for what is useful to them, deepen what has been studied in the classroom during the lessons, and develop a positive feeling and attitude of pupils towards themselves and towards others (Anderson et al, 2003), and treatment of some psychological conditions that some students suffer, such as: shyness, indecision, and introversion, training students to love work and respect for workers, planning and organizing work, determining responsibility, developing their own abilities and talents and preparing them to develop and direct them in the right directions (Farb & Matjasko, 2012), and create educational situations that are likable to the same student, through which he can be provided with the information and skills to be absorbed and learned. In order to achieve the objectives of the prescribed school curriculum, the integration of the role of the home and the school in the educational upbringing of the student in terms of goals, and work to develop the student's ability in a set of methods (Metsapelto et al, 2010).

In order to achieve these goals, the teacher (the facilitator) must have enthusiasm and love to work with pupils in order to be able to give them a love of activity, and to master the quality of the activity in order to be able to provide the students with successful experiences (Covay & Matjasko, 2012), and to have the ability to guide the pupils In a manner characterized by friendliness, friendship and a sense of humor that encourages them to continue "and assume responsibility individually and collectively", that the members accept and cooperate with them to make the activity succeed and achieve its goals, and that he has good morals that make him a role model, and that he is keen on teaching students the different types of activities and how to participate in them And working with groups, and to have distinct capabilities in observation, leadership, cooperation and exploitation of the available capabilities.

Procedures of the study

Methodology of the study

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, answer the questions raised, the Descriptive analytical approach was used, which is defined as the method based on describing the phenomenon as it is without change, describing it accurately, expressing it qualitatively or quantitatively by giving it a numerical description through numbers and tables showing the extent or size of this phenomenon or its degree of association with other phenomena.

Study population and it’s sample

The study population is defined as the total vocabulary that the researcher aims to study to achieve useful results. It represents the audience that the researcher wants to study and generalize the study on all its vocabulary.

The study population represents all students from University of Isra from various scientific and humanitarian colleges. While the study sample consists of 1122 students had been chosen randomly from the University of Isra. The following table describes the study sample:

Table No.1: Sample of the study

Variable		Repetition	Percentage
Gender	Male	498	44.4%
	Female	624	55.6%
	Total	1122	100%
Academic level	freshmen year	365	32.5%
	Second year university	281	25%
	Third year university	281	25%
	Fourth year university	134	11.9%
	Fifth year university and more	61	5.4%
	Total	1122	100%
College	Scientific	527	47%
	Humanitarian	595	53%
	Total	1122	100%
The type of activity you practice at the university	Sports activity	347	30.9%
	Cultural activity	241	21.5%
	Artistic activity	48	4.3%
	Social activity	113	10.1%
	Voluntary activity	121	10.8%
	Other	252	22.5%
	Total	1122	100%

Previous table shows the Personal characteristics of the study sample consisted of 498 males (44.4%) compared to 624 females (55.6%).

According to the previous table, 365 students (32.5%) are freshmen, 281 students (25%) are in their second year of University, 281 students (25%) are in Third year of University, 134 students (11.9%) are in Fourth year of University, and 61 students (5.4%) are in Fifth year University and more.

With regard to the colleges of the University, previous table shows that 527 students (47%) are studying in scientific colleges, while 595 students (53%) are studying in Humanitarian colleges.

Regarding the type of activity practiced at the university, previous table shows that 347 students (30.9%) practicing Sports activity, while 241 students (21.5%) are practicing Cultural activity, 48 students (4.3%) are practicing Artistic activity, 113 students (10.1%) are practicing Social activity, 121 students (10.8%) are practicing Voluntary activity, and 252 students (22.5%) are practicing other activities.

Validity of the study tool

The validity of the study tool was verified by presenting the questionnaire in its preliminary form to a group of specialized arbitrators in the fields of Educational Sciences. In the light of those

views, some questions were excluded, and others were amended to make the number of the questions of the questionnaire was (20) questions.

Stability of the Study Tool

The stability coefficients of the resolution dimensions ranged between (0.84-0.88) for the Pearson's correlation coefficients, and (0.90-0.93) for the Cronbach's alpha coefficients, this means that the questionnaire has an acceptable stability factor for the study purposes.

Sources of data collection

The study relied on several sources through which the necessary data were collected. These sources included the following:

- **Primary Sources:** Included the study questionnaire.

- **Secondary Sources:** These were represented in books and references, periodicals articles and reports, previous researches and studies that dealt with the subject of study, research and reading in various Internet sites.

Statistical Procedures

The researcher used the statistical package (SPSS) and descriptive statistic measures to describe the characteristics of the study sample in repetitions and percentages, and answer the study questions by extracting means and standard deviation for each paragraph of the questionnaire.

Study Procedures

1. Theoretical literature and previous studies in the field of education and extracurricular activities. Based on the procedural definitions of the concepts, the themes of the questionnaire were determined.
2. A questionnaire measuring the variables of the study was designed to answer its questions and achieve its objectives, the statements and indicators that measure each paragraph of the questionnaire were formulated using the relevant studies of the subject and the literature of the subject of the manifestations and indicators.
3. The questionnaire was presented to a group of arbitrators, in order to judge the clarity of the wording of the phrases, the extent of the representation of the phrase to the area they measure, suggest what they deem appropriate, and after the restoration of the Refereed copies, the results of the arbitration were analyzed and the questionnaire was rearranged and amended in the light of the arbitrators' opinions and observations.
4. Questionnaires were prepared and distributed to the study sample by google document application due to Coronavirus spread and university hour's suspension as a result.
5. The completed questionnaires by the study sample were retrieved, emptied and analyzed using SPSS programming.

Study tool description

The final questionnaire consisted of two sections as follows:

- **The first section:** related to the variables of the study sample (Gender, Academic level, College, and the type of activity practiced at the university).
- **The second section:** related to the study questions which consisted of (20) questions measuring Students' awareness of the importance of extracurricular activities and the role of these activities in developing their cognitive skills.

Likert scale was used to measure the answers of the study sample as follows:

Strongly disagree = (5) degrees, disagree = (4) degrees, neutral = (3) degrees, agree = (2), strongly agree = (1) one degree.

The following division has been approved to determine the degree of approval: (Upper limit for the answer - lower limit = total divided by 3) $(5-1=4 \div 3= 1.33)$. Accordingly, approval scores were distributed as follows:

$1 + 1.33 = 2.33$, meaning that from 1 to less than 2.33 = Low average.

$2.34 + 1.33 = 3.67$, meaning that from - 2.34 to less than 3.67 = Medium average.

$3.68 + 1.33 = 5.00$, meaning that from -3.68 to 5.00 = High average.

Discussion of the study questions

The first question: What is the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students of the University of Isra?

To identify the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students of the University Isra, the researcher extracted the mean and standard deviation for each paragraph of the questionnaire. Table no.(2) shows the result:

Table no. (2)
Means and standard deviation for the paragraphs of the questionnaire

No.	Paragraph	Mean	Stdv.	Paragraph arrangement	Average
1.	The extracurricular activities deepen my leadership skills	3.12	0.862	11	Medium
2.	Student activities encourage local community service	2.39	1.089	1	Medium
3.	The extracurricular activities reinforce my sense of pride and patriotism	4.21	1.130	19	High
4.	The qualifications of the cadres supervising the extracurricular activities are adequately qualified	3.55	1.185	13	Medium
5.	The university maintains the security and safety of students participating in extracurricular activities	2.69	1.336	6	Medium
6.	Faculty members participate in the activities held at the university	2.85	1.282	7	Medium
7.	Faculty members encourage me to participate in extracurricular activities	2.63	1.099	5	Medium
8.	The extracurricular activities held at the university meet my needs	4.32	1.048	20	High
9.	I engage in extracurricular activities that match my abilities and talents	3.10	1.059	10	High
10.	Extracurricular activities are held in suitable places	2.45	1.057	2	Medium
11.	The extracurricular activities fit my preferences and interests	2.59	1.930	4	Medium
12.	The extracurricular activities held at the university are continuity	3.15	0.724	12	Medium
13.	Extracurricular activities at the university are diversity	3.82	1.139	17	High
14.	I got incentives to participate in extracurricular activities	2.96	1.279	8	Medium
15.	I had an active role in planning the extracurricular activities at the university	3.56	1.180	14	Medium
16.	The extracurricular activities held at the university increased my experiences and knowledge	2.49	0.989	3	Medium
17.	Extracurricular activities contribute to building my career path	4.10	1.094	18	High
18.	Extracurricular activities develop my talents and my personality	3.75	1.245	16	High
19.	Extracurricular activities increase my self-learning	3.68	0.962	15	High
20.	Extracurricular activities increase my self-learning	2.98	1.322	9	Medium
	Total	3.74	1.444	-	High

The previous table shows that the paragraph (2) ‘**Student activities encourage local community service**’ scored the first range with a mean of 2.39 and a 1.089 standard deviation, this result reflect the awareness among university’s students with the importance of Extracurricular activities, while paragraph (8) “**The extracurricular activities held at the university meet my needs**” scored 4.32 mean and 1.048 standard deviation. Although this result has a high degree, it is imperative for the university to conduct opinion surveys and distribute them to students to identify any types of extracurricular activities that they have desired and that meet their needs and desires.

It also noticed from the previous table that the total score of questionnaire’s paragraphs has a high degree with 3.74 mean and a 1.444 standard deviation. Two results can be extrapolated from this

high score, the first result is the university students 'awareness of the importance of extracurricular activities and their interest in them, and the second result is the university's interest in these activities and encouraging students to participate in them.

The second question: Is there a statistically significant relationship at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills attributable to gender variables, the school year, and the type of activity practiced within the university?

To examine if there is a statistically significant relationship at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills attributable to gender variables, the school year, and the type of activity practiced within the university, the researcher applied Kruskal-Wallis¹ test as follows:

Table No. (3): Results of Kruskal-Wallis test

Variable		Repetition	Kai square	Indication level	Average rank	statistically significant
Gender	Male	498	3.36	27.88	0.563	No statistically significant
	Female	624		32.17		
Academic level	freshmen year	365	4.64	29.50	0.589	No statistically significant
	Second year university	281		35.88		
	Third year university	281		29.75		
	Fourth year university	134		29.36		
	Fifth year university and more	61		39.40		
College	Scientific	527	4.83	37.50	0.305	No statistically significant
	Humanitarian	595		31.36		
The type of activity you practice at the university	Sports activity	347	5.63	15.33	0.789	No statistically significant
	Cultural activity	241		37.83		
	Artistic activity	48		23.80		
	Social activity	113		42.67		
	Voluntary activity	121		26.25		
	Other	252		29.17		

By studying the previous table, it becomes clear that the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test indicated that there were no statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) between the average responses of the respondents regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students due to variables (gender, academic level, college, the type of activity you practice at the university).

This means that all members of the sample agree on the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students regardless of their demographic characteristics variables.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study aimed at identifying the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students of the University of Isra. To achieve the objectives of the study, answer it's questions, the Descriptive analytical approach was used, in addition to a questionnaire especially

¹ Kruskal-Wallis test is a non-parametric method for test samples originate from the same distribution to compare two or more independent samples of equal or different sample sizes.

designed to the purpose of the study. The questionnaire was distributed to 1122 students from the University of Isra.

After applying appropriate statistical procedures, the study revealed that the total score of questionnaire's paragraphs has a high degree with 3.74 mean and a 1.444 standard deviation. This result reflects the university students' awareness of the importance of extracurricular activities and their interest in them, in addition to the university's interest in these activities and encouraging students to participate in them.

The study also revealed that there were no statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) between the average responses of the respondents regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing some cognitive skills among students regardless of their demographic characteristics variables.

Recommendations

Considering the above results, the following recommendations were made:

1. Intensification and diversification of extracurricular activities among university students in line with their preferences and needs.
2. Conducting other studies related to extracurricular activities such as a study on identifying the reasons for students' reluctance to participate in extracurricular activities.
3. Giving extracurricular activities a top priority while planning school curricula with the start of each university academic year.
4. Providing material and moral incentives for students participating in extracurricular activities.
5. Activating the partnership between the media department and the Deanship of Student Affairs in order to develop a plan to encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities.
6. Giving extracurricular activities a part of academic achievement, provided that the completion and performance of those activities is a requirement for graduation from the university.

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