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Co-Curricular Activities in Selected Private Schools to Independent Students – Qualitative Analysis

Abdul Munir Ismail, Zulkifli Osman, Abd Rahman Abd Ghani & Ahmad Effat Mokhtar

Faculty of Human Sciences, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

Email: abdmunir@fsk.upsi.edu.my

Abstract

This study aims to explain the co-curricular activities implemented in four private secondary schools in producing students who are able to be independent in their respective careers. Some people state that co-curricular activities are merely to meet the time of students while they are at school only. Such perceptions are inaccurate and unfounded. This study uses qualitative methods to obtain information. A total of six senior students from four private schools in the state of Selangor were selected as respondents. Researchers use focused interview methods to obtain respondents' information. The findings of the study are presented in a descriptive form that is a description of the study objectives. The findings of the study found that co-curricular activities such as *nasyid* and playing musical instruments, vegetable gardening, freshwater fish farming and livestock farming were applied to students. The findings of the study also found that cooking, sewing and small-scale business activities became a career that could generate a lucrative income for students. The results of this study prove that the activities of playing musical instruments, vegetable gardening, freshwater fish farming and livestock farming are suitable sources of income for teenagers today. Through co-curricular activities implemented in schools, students can hone their talents for their respective careers. This scenario indirectly sustains current economic activity.

Keywords: Activities, Co-Curricular, Students, Private Schools.

Introduction

Exciting and diverse learning activities outside the classroom not only encourage students to participate in the activities but as a platform for their future career opportunities (Awang & Teh, 2009). According to the Policy of the Ministry of Education Malaysia (2017), learning outside the classroom which is also known as co-curricular activities are one of the methods for students to seek knowledge that builds the mind and leadership attitudes as well as develop basic skills in various aspects. According to Lim Peng Geok (2018), school co-curricular activities also serve as a programme carried out outside the classroom with fellow students. Don and Ibrahim (2019) explained that school co-curricular activities in Malaysia are a form of learning that is compulsory for students because it is included in the national level curriculum. According to Nordin (2013); Herppich (2017), co-curricular aims for the

development of the mind which includes knowledge, skills, norms, values, cultural elements and beliefs to help the development of students internally and externally. In addition, Curtin University (2018) also says that students' emotions need to be instilled with high moral values in co-curricular activities. The goal of co-curricular to be conveyed to students is to provide in-depth knowledge through attractive extracurricular activities that captivate students to participate in it continuously (Asadullah, 2018).

According to Ng (2015), those who hold positions as teachers either in primary or secondary schools should know the procedures to manage, plan and supervise students to carry out co-curricular activities well. Michael and Ambotang (2019) explain that the role of teachers is not merely teaching in the classroom, but teachers are entrusted with the burden of managing co-curricular together with the students so that the co-curricular activities run smoothly and effectively for students. Referring to the Curriculum Development Division (2016), the goal of the existence of co-curricular activity education in schools is to (a) provide awareness and appreciation of students on their respective religious consciousness. (b) Develop the mental, spiritual and physical education of students in a balanced manner. (c) Strengthen social interaction and good association involving effective communication of students. (d) Build and unearth students' hidden talents in a co-curricular activity. (e) Train students on the practice of a high level of discipline. (f) Expose students to the surrounding community so that a good relationship is established between the school and the community.

The purpose of the implementation of the co-curricular activities is as a platform to provide new experiences and knowledge to students. Ministry of Education Malaysia (2018) explained that co-curricular activities can be categorized as extracurricular activities such as uniformed teams, recreational activities, sports, indoor games, agricultural activities and any activities allowed by the school. Through co-curricular activities implemented in school, it can polish up the hidden talents of students through students' interest and inclination towards a co-curricular activity (Curriculum Development Division, 2017).

Longfield and James (2017) stated that the co-curricular achievement of private school students is assessed through various aspects. One of them is soft skills that include effective communication, musical instrument skills, farming skills, oratory skills, carpentry skills and efficiency in business (Hasan, Abdul Kadir & Asimiran, 2013). It is one of the most important aspects in measuring co-curricular achievement. Soft skills are closely related to the career prospect that students will face after graduation. This statement is supported by Ahmad, Ibrahim and Yusof (2017) by stating that co-curricular achievement which is soft skill is very important to show that the student is mastering certain fields, for example, public communication skills, convincing personalities and learning excellence. According to Nurhadi (2018), to achieve the goal of co-curricular activities in private schools, students must engage in co-curricular activities carried out inside and outside the class. Muhamad Akhir, Abdul Wahab, and Mohd Ali (2016) explained that most of the co-curricular activities that existed in private schools in Malaysia are carried out on weekends such as Saturday or Sunday and this situation includes students who live in dormitories.

Research Problem

Co-curricular activities are usually carried out outside the classroom, but there are also some co-curricular activities done inside the classroom based on the suitability of the activity. It is

known that co-curricular activities are part of the learning process in schools. Esa, Mohd Nor, Jusoh, Abd Rahman and Salehon (2015) described the implementation of co-curricular activities is usually carried out outside the classroom and in certain circumstances, these activities can be done inside the classroom as the activities outside the classroom can cause problems with student supervision. Undeniably, there is a public assumption that co-curricular activities simply wasting the student learning period. According to Nor Hidayah and Yusmaria (2014) and Ismail, Osman, and Akramin (2020), students are less able to develop their interests, forming noble values, positive social interaction and continuously hone students' talents. According to Matthew (2016), students are directly involved in the activities through the implementation of various co-curricular activities, thus, it will attract students to foster an interesting learning culture and produce independent students as well.

Study Objective is:

1. Co-curricular activities playing music and nasyid.
2. Agricultural activities include vegetable gardening, livestock farming and freshwater fish.
3. Sports activities, sewing, cooking and business in selected private schools to produce independent students in the future.

Study Methodology

This study uses a qualitative method that is research describing the situation that occurred at the time this study was conducted (Steinfatt & Millette, 2019). According to Yahaya (2017), the structured interview method involved five respondents who fully understand the implemented co-curricular activities. To obtain information, the researcher used the exploration method through the website documentation review of co-curricular activities of students in the schools involved. According to Creswell (2013), this method can further strengthen the findings on co-curricular activities implemented on female students. From the aspect of the procedure to obtain information, the researcher will make an appointment with the selected respondents, (Mohajan, 2018). The time and location of the interview were conducted at the appropriate location and agreed by the respondents. Data were analyzed using descriptive methods. The finding of descriptive information from the respondents is written as R1 to R6.

The location of this study is focused on four private schools in the state of Selangor which are identified as schools with their own co-curricular study system. The school is Global Private Secondary School in Rawang, Women's Welfare Private Secondary School in Puchong, Tahfiz Vocational School in Kuala Kubu Bharu and Training & Vocational Secondary School in Puchong.

Study Finding and Discussion

Playing music activity and nasyid

Based on the R1 interview, it can be summarized said that the activity of playing musical instruments and *nasyid* activities is one of the co-curricular activities that are very popular with students. They have also formed a nasyid group and some of their friends play musical instruments. Despite their status as a student, their *nasyid* groups are often get invited by the local community at weddings. Their nasyid group often receives invitations of playing traditional instruments such as *kompang*, *gambus* and singing Arabic songs with 'desert'

themed. R1 stated that co-curricular activities implemented in private schools can form *nasyid* groups that understand the cultural needs of the local community. They also have high self-confidence when performing the show. This view is supported by Marsh and Young (2016) that students should be exposed to playing musical instruments in building their self-confidence in society. According to Jamian and Ismail (2013), this activity should be encouraged to high school teenagers because it can prevent teenagers from unhealthy activities such as hanging out, participating in illegal street racing, taking illicit items and so on. Zainuddin (2016) explained that playing musical instruments and *nasyid* should be done separately by male and female students to avoid misunderstanding of society towards teenagers.

Vegetable Gardening, Livestock Farming and Freshwater Fish Breeding Activities

Based on the R2 interview, it can be summarized that the activity of livestock farming such as chickens, birds, horses, goats, deer, breeding fish in the pond is a fun and very challenging activity. The school gives students the option to choose three activities, namely vegetable gardening, livestock farming and breeding fish in the pond. Students are required to focus on one of these activities as a special project. The school provides basic facilities for livestock farming activities such as chickens, birds, horses, goats and deer. Meanwhile, the freshwater fish farming activities in the pond usually get encouraging feedback from senior male students. According to Ridzuan & Sulong (2019), school students need to be exposed to agricultural activities because agriculture is a profitable business venture. Students should take the opportunity to learn the techniques of growing vegetables and breeding fish in cages.

Sports Activities (outdoor and Indoor)

Based on the R3 interview, it can be summarized that horse riding and archery activities are extreme sports that are exclusive and involve only male students. The horse riding sport is restricted to students who are genuinely interested in sports because it involves a lot of money and fees for the maintenance of the horse. According to Bukhari (2017), horses for sporting purposes require close supervision from their owners. Horses for sporting activities need to be given special food for horse stamina to function properly. According to R3, among the benefits of horseback riding as a hobby, riders can improve memory in the human brain. Thus, they are able to remember and solve many problems related to horse riding as a hobby. In addition, two-way communication with horses is very important in the safety aspect of equestrian sports. Based on the R3 interview, it can be summarized that archery is a sport that requires physical strength of the hands and shoulders. Archery is included in the category of static outdoor sports. There are many advantages in archery. Based on a reference in the portal of the Ministry of Health Malaysia via the website [http: // aktiv.myhealth.gov.my/ archery /](http://aktiv.myhealth.gov.my/archery/) 21 November 2020, archery activities can control emotions in a focused manner, build muscle in the abdomens until up to the shoulder, increase flexibility in the fingers' areas, increase mental strength and focus on the object and relax the mind as well as the level of self-confidence in the sport of archery. The benefit of playing darts (indoor) is almost similar to archery. This depends on the suitability of the activity types and the time of implementation.

Sewing and Cooking Activities

Based on the R4 interview, it can be concluded that sewing and cooking activities are activities that must be participated by female students until they finish schooling. Sewing activities are

very important to be mastered by women today because the opportunities to generate income are very wide. According to Aliva, Hayu Dian, Azzah (2018), the activity of sewing children's clothes, women's clothes and sewing curtains provides a much-needed economic opportunity, especially for today's women. Meanwhile, based on the R5 interview, cooking activities are very popular with female students mostly. They are given exposure to cooking a variety of modern and traditional dishes under the guidance of experienced cooks. This view is supported by Mohamed & Baba (2016) that the role of the guidance teacher is very important to provide continuous cooking practice to students.

Business Activity

Based on the R6 interview, it can be summarized that business activities involve male and female students. In the afternoon session, female students will be involved in business activities such as selling groceries in cooperative shops, homestay management, self-service laundry shops, fast food restaurants and selling drinks using the kiosk concept. Based on the interview, R6 also explained that the male students were involved in the process of making and selling bean sprouts, tofu, fresh vegetables, bread and biscuits for the public. Male student activities will usually be done at a predetermined time such as making bean sprouts as the activity should be done at night. The sale of fresh vegetables is done in the early morning. R6 also explained that these activities are not affected their learning because the co-curricular time is adapted so that it will not coincide with the learning period when asked about business activities interfering with learning activities. Co-curricular activities are done alternately in the evenings as well as Saturdays and Sundays. This business activity will be supervised by specialized teachers in the co-curricular areas.

Summary and Recommendation

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that co-curricular activities carried out outside the classroom are seen as having an impact on students. This is because the co-curricular learning process can strengthen students' understanding of routine activities performed practically. This is clear through the activities of private secondary students are seen to be more exposed to co-curricular activities that are directly related to daily life, compared to regular schools which do not implement programmes such as farming, rearing fish and raising pets. Students are not denied gaining knowledge through classroom learning. In addition, the learning period only involves a few hours but the co-curricular activities are very important in educating students to face future challenges.

Based on the theory by Geok (2018) that this theory is very important on the exposure of students doing activities outside the classroom to strengthen their interaction with the public. At the secondary education level, students need to be exposed to activities that can generate their finances. The co-curricular activities practiced by the students in the selected private schools are seen as very appropriate. Similarly, the theory of Longfield and James (2017) is seen as contributing enormously in the co-curricular activities of high school students. Students involved in co-curricular activities in the private schools are advised to strengthen useful knowledge skills. The researcher hopes that the students who completed their studies in private secondary school will be able to meet the job opportunities needed in the community.

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