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Student Participation in Co-curriculum: Why it is Important?

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ABSTRACT

Almost every high educational system or university offers variety type of co-curriculum activities such academic clubs, music and entertainment, recreation and sports. These activities offer opportunities for students to learn the values of individual and group responsibility teamwork, physical strength and endurance, a sense of culture and community competition. After all, every high educational system or university should be seen as a transformative experience which students can prepare themselves to succeed in varied roles they will undertake in future life. Co-curriculum was constructed by the student as a central focus. Co-curriculum may be referred to as a planned or organised guild base to execute or carryout teaching and learning process, it relate to the entire process of educational system, school and society. Co-curriculum activities provide a channel for reinforcing the lessons learned not only in the classroom, at the same time student have the ability to apply academic skills in a real-world context, and thus considered part of a well-rounded education.

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Introduction

A balance participation in co-curriculum activities can lead to success in university and become a good marks to bring as a quality graduate. Participating in co-curriculum activities helps the students to boost their self-esteem and to build solid character traits and leadership skills. But in the other way around, some students continuously not interested to participate in co-curriculum. They felt that curriculum involvement was a waste of time and that caused them to get home late in the evening. This situation tended to unfold either when a student was struggling so much or wanted to focus totally on academics, they make the exclusion of everything else.

According to Esa (2015), co-curriculum activities are one of the the right platform for improving generic skills such as team skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills and others skills among students in higher education). One of the researchers, Massoni (2011) recognized many benefits derived from participation in co-curriculum activities. Students who involved in co-curriculum pursuits tend to improve their academic grades as well due to increased better time management, self-esteem and motivation.

They demonstrate a reduction of at-risk behaviour and a heightened sense of belonging, resulting in better behaviour. Co-curriculum activities foster a sense of commitment to a cause or purpose that can decrease their selfish behaviour and reduce behaviour problems for they show discipline in drills, practices, and routines and they have a responsibility to perform those tasks correctly. They also learn many new skills from their chosen activity, and in integrating these activities into their everyday lives, they learn how to thinking critically, teamwork and social skills. They tend to develop beneficial skills like having life-long relationships with their friends and learn how to lead others.

Studies have shown that students pursuing their co-curriculum activities achieved better results in their grades.

Their academic performance well or better because they know how to balance their co-curriculum activities with their academic pursuits. They also have a better understanding on how to manage their time efficiently (time management). Many activities like participation in debates, drama, music and sports enhance in achieving the bigger purpose of achieving better education. They got higher grades and positive attitudes towards the school and it gives positive aspects that students need to become productive students and adults. It moulds a student holistically, thus the students become more marketable in the workplace.

Student engagement will increase the students' positive behaviours and sense of belonging as well as they might stay focus in the class. Over the time, this student engagement towards co-curriculum were further developed and broadly implemented. Due to Gilbert (2007), enhancing all students' abilities to learn or to become lifelong learners in a knowledge-based society is one of the function of student engagement which has been built around the hopeful goal. A large numbers of researchers found there was a few types of engagement were noted like academic, cognitive, intellectual, institutional, emotional, behavioural, social, and psychological. But there is something to argue about. For example, some researchers studied students' need to "belong" to achieve high grades and graduate. But, must students belong to be academically successful; or, must they simply behave? Are high-achieving students who work but do not participate in extracurricular school events disengaged learners? (Willms, Friesen, & Milton, 2009; Harris, 2008). What should our education system do to help students engage successfully?

In believing that improving student learning is by involving the student in co-curriculum planning process, which mean that we must heard what they want thoroughly. In what they wrote in *This We Believe* (National Middle School Association's position paper (1995)

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“Because of students’ drive toward independence, co-curriculum that challenges must enable to guide the course of their education increasingly. Due to that, with their varying capacities to handle responsibility, students must be nurtured in making choices about co-curriculum goals, content, activities, materials, and assessment. Moreover, the student should have opportunities for involvement in team which emphasizes student initiative and responsibility”.

Active participation in co-curricular activities can provide students with super skill-development opportunities that give a significant impact on their career trajectory. By developing the range of skills and attributes that are important for students and graduates, it will become a better sense of the student journey, which enable them to take responsibility for their own development.

Conclusion

Co-curricular activities can be one of the function to tie and help the student academically and socially. By participate in a group and enjoy themselves to interact with people out of their normally interact can form a new social networks. This will benefits for both parties who is teachers and students. Maybe at the end of the day it will increase the results in academic and social for the students but for the teacher, it always become the main goals to make sure the students have a better learning process.

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