



## Exploring Junior College Students' Attitudes Towards Participation in Co-Curricular Activities: Impact on Personality Development

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### Abstract

This study explores the attitudes of junior college students towards participation in co-curricular activities (CCAs) and their impact on personality development. CCAs, recognized by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as vital for holistic development, enhance creativity, leadership, teamwork, and emotional intelligence. The research aimed to assess students' interest levels, identify barriers to participation, and analyse the relationship between CCAs and personal growth, academic performance, and career readiness. A sample of 177 students aged 15–18 from seven colleges in Mumbai was selected using stratified random sampling. Data were collected through a pre-validated rating scale converted to a Google Form and analysed using percentage analysis and graphical representation. The findings indicate disparities in participation across socioeconomic groups, with urban students having greater access to CCAs. While 54.2% of students expressed interest in CCAs, only 33.3% actively participated. Popular activities included creative arts, performing arts, and literary arts, with preferences for activities like group dance, essay writing, and craft work. Barriers such as peer pressure, academic workload, and uneven access to resources influenced participation. Despite these challenges, students acknowledged the developmental benefits of CCAs, including improved confidence (37.3%), communication skills (31.1%), and teamwork (27.1%). These findings highlight the importance of supportive environments and tailored opportunities to increase engagement in CCAs. The study highlights the need for educational institutions to integrate CCAs into the curriculum, address barriers to participation, and align activities with students' diverse interests. By fostering holistic education through CCAs, institutions can equip students with the 21st-century skills necessary for personal and professional success.

### Key Words:

*Co-Curricular Activities, Personality Development, Holistic Education, Junior College Students, National Education Policy 2020.*

Co-curricular activities (CCAs) are recognized in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as crucial to the holistic development of students. The policy emphasizes the need for an education system that nurtures not just academic excellence but also the development of personal and social skills. Participation in CCAs helps students acquire values such as discipline, teamwork, and leadership, which are fundamental for their overall personality development. By engaging in activities such as sports, debates, and arts, students build self-confidence, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence, all of which contribute to a well-rounded character. NEP 2020's focus on multidisciplinary learning further underscores the importance of such activities in fostering creativity and innovation, skills that are essential for success in both personal and professional life. In terms of future job possibilities, CCAs provide students with practical experiences that complement their academic knowledge. Activities like drama, public speaking, and leadership roles in clubs or sports help students develop transferable skills such as communication, problemsolving, and adaptability. These skills are highly valued in today's competitive job market, where employers are



looking for candidates with well-rounded capabilities. By participating in CCAs, students prepare themselves for a range of careers, from management and marketing to the arts and education. As the world of work continues to evolve with the advent of new technologies and industries, having a diverse skill set, including those honed through CCAs, will enable students to navigate various professional landscapes.

Moreover, CCAs play a pivotal role in cultivating 21st-century skills, which are essential for success in the globalized world. NEP 2020 highlights the importance of skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and digital literacy. By participating in activities that require interaction, teamwork, and leadership, students are not only exposed to real-world challenges but also learn to approach problems with innovative solutions. These skills align with the demands of modern workplaces, where employers expect employees to be proactive, adaptable, and capable of working in diverse, cross-functional teams. As the future workforce will demand more than just technical knowledge, CCAs contribute to shaping students who are ready to thrive in dynamic and rapidly changing environments.

### **Aim of the Study**

To explore junior college students' attitudes towards participation in co-curricular activity and impact on their personality development

### **Objectives**

1. To assess the level of interest and participation of junior college students in co-curricular activities (CCAs).
2. To examine the impact of participation in CCAs on enhancing students' creativity, leadership skills, social competencies, and emotional intelligence.
3. To analyse the attitudes of junior college students towards co-curricular activities and identify barriers or challenges they face in participating.
4. To evaluate the role of co-curricular activities in fostering personal growth, confidence, and self-awareness among students.

### **Need for the Study**

The growing emphasis on holistic education and the evolving demands of the 21st-century workforce highlight the need to examine the role of co-curricular activities (CCAs) in the development of junior college students. While academics remain a central component of education, the importance of extracurricular experiences in shaping well-rounded individuals cannot be overlooked. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes a multidisciplinary approach that fosters creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence qualities nurtured through CCAs. This study is necessary to understand how participation in these activities influences students' personality development and prepares them for the challenges of the modern world.

### **Here are some key reasons why this study is needed-**



1. **Holistic Development:** With the increasing focus on holistic education, understanding the role of CCAs in fostering personal and social development is critical. This study will contribute to recognizing the value of non-academic experiences in shaping students into well-rounded individuals.
2. **Enhancing Employability:** As the global job market becomes increasingly competitive, employers are seeking candidates who possess not only academic qualifications but also strong interpersonal and leadership skills. Exploring how CCAs contribute to skill development like communication, teamwork, and leadership will help students recognize the importance of these activities in enhancing their employability.
3. **Personal Growth and Confidence:** Participating in CCAs is known to boost selfconfidence, promote personal growth, and improve emotional intelligence. A deeper understanding of how these activities impact students' personalities will shed light on their role in fostering self-awareness, resilience, and emotional well-being.
4. **Cultural and Social Awareness:** Through CCAs like debates, cultural performances, and community service, students often develop a better understanding of diverse cultures and societal issues. This study will explore how CCAs contribute to shaping students' social consciousness and their ability to work in diverse environments.
5. **Informed Decision Making:** Many students are unaware of the long-term benefits of engaging in co-curricular activities. By investigating students' attitudes towards CCAs, this study will provide insights that could guide educational institutions in promoting and structuring such activities more effectively to meet students' needs and aspirations.
6. **Linking Academics and Extracurricular:** The study will also highlight how CCAs complement academic learning and contribute to the development of 21st-century skills, which are essential for success in both education and the workplace. By understanding the synergy between academic and co-curricular pursuits, educators can better integrate these components into their curriculum to achieve optimal student development.
7. **21st-Century Skills Development:** The importance of adaptability, collaboration, and innovation in contemporary education underlines the need to understand how CCAs equip students with such skills.
8. **Addressing Participation Barriers:** Insights into why students may refrain from engaging in CCAs can help institutions create more inclusive and accessible opportunities.
9. **Role of Educators and Institutions:** Understanding how teachers, mentors, and school policies influence students' participation in CCAs can lead to more effective institutional support and guidance.
10. **Policy Implications:** The findings of this study can inform the design and implementation of educational policies related to student participation in CCAs. By aligning educational
11. strategies with the holistic approach promoted by NEP 2020, institutions can ensure they provide a comprehensive and enriching learning experience that goes beyond academics.

We can say that this study is crucial for uncovering the multifaceted impact of co-curricular activities on junior college students. It will provide valuable insights into how these activities shape students' personalities, enhance their career prospects, and prepare them for the complexities of life and work in the 21st century.



## Scope of the Study

This study focuses on junior college students aged 15–18 across urban and semi-urban educational institutions, considering a diverse range of co-curricular activities such as sports, cultural programs, community service, and academic clubs.

## Review of Related Literature

1. Satrusallya & Jayanti (1991):  
Tailored co-curricular activities support adolescents' personality development but face barriers like financial constraints and lack of trained teachers.
2. Dr. Radhika Kapur (2019):  
Extracurricular activities foster skills, focus, and positivity, supporting holistic growth. However, they may distract from studies or pose affordability challenges.
3. Mulrooney (2019):  
Participation improves self-efficacy and employability skills, though engagement depends on raising awareness of their benefits.
4. Pooja Tyagi & Prof. Umed Singh (2017):  
Education must develop cultural intelligence (CQ) to enable effective interaction in diverse environments and enhance global competence.
5. Shahid Ali Khan (2020):  
Co-curricular activities complement academics, fostering intellectual growth, practical skills, and global understanding.
6. Josephine Kagwiria Kirimi et al. (2021):  
Co-curricular activities enhance holistic development, imparting essential skills and values for academic and personal success.
7. Shaikh Rezwana Rahman et al. (2022):  
Co-curricular activities improve grades and skills despite misconceptions. Future studies will explore their broader impact.
8. Ananya Singh (2024):  
Co-curricular activities positively influence academic achievement and personal development, with females excelling in participation and grades. They enhance cooperation and leadership skills.

## Research Methodology

### Size and Composition of the Sample

The study's sample comprised **177 junior college students** selected from **seven colleges** in the Mumbai District using a **stratified random sampling technique**. This approach ensured that students were drawn from diverse categories such as **rural, urban, semi-urban, and semi-rural areas** to provide balanced representation across gender, academic streams, and economic status.

**Composition: Gender:89 Girls ,88 Boys Stream:165 Commerce Students,7 Science Students ,5 Arts Students Economic Status: Urban: 118 Students, Semi-Urban: 28 Students, Rural: 24 Students, SemiRural: 7 Students**

### Tools for Data Collection

A pre-validated **rating scale** designed by Mr. G.A. Prreetham Prakash was adapted to meet the study's requirements. The scale was converted into a **Google Form** to facilitate data collection, ensuring accessibility and ease of use for participants. The tool focused on capturing students' **attitudes, behaviors, and participation** in co-curricular activities.

### Analysis of Data

- **Percentage Analysis** and **graphical representations** were employed to interpret findings effectively.
- **MS Excel** was used to generate charts and graphs, enabling a clear and comprehensive understanding of trends.

### Reliability and Validity:

The tool was rigorously reviewed to ensure **content validity** and **construct reliability**. Experts in the field reviewed the questionnaire, and pilot testing was conducted to refine its appropriateness for the target population.

### Ethical Considerations:

Participation was **voluntary**, with **informed consent** obtained from students. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained to adhere to ethical research standards.

### Key Findings & Observations

**Gender:** Out of 177 participants, **50.3% were female** (89 students) and **49.7% were male** (88 students).

### Stream:

- Commerce students dominated the sample, with **93.2% (165 students)** actively participating in co-curricular activities.
- The Science and Arts streams had significantly lower representation, with **4% (7 students)** and **2.8% (5 students)** respectively.

### Socioeconomic Status:

- **Urban category:** 118 students (66.7%)
- **Semi-Urban category:** 28 students (15.8%)
- **Rural category:** 24 students (13.6%)
- **Semi-Rural category:** 7 students (4%)

1. **Willingness to Participate:** A significant portion of students (40.7%) are undecided about participating in co-curricular activities, while 27.07% are willing, and 31.6% are





2. uninterested. This suggests a need for greater motivation and awareness about the benefits of such activities.
3. **Key Influences:** Peer pressure, academic workload, and parental expectations emerge as the primary factors influencing students' willingness to participate in co-curricular activities, indicating the need for supportive environments to encourage participation.
4. **Types of Activities Conducted:** Colleges conduct various co-curricular activities, but access to these is uneven. While 55.9% of student's report having access, 24.3% lack opportunities. This highlights the need for colleges to ensure equitable availability of activities.
5. **Preferences for Activities:** Among those with preferences, Fine Arts (11.3%), Performing Arts (16.4%), and Literary Arts (7.3%) are notable. These figures suggest diverse interests that colleges could cater to by expanding opportunities in these areas.
6. **Language Labs** as a Suggestion: Introducing language labs could be a significant step toward enhancing students' communication skills, addressing a gap identified in cocurricular provisions.
7. **Interest in Popular Activities:** Over 50% of students show interest in creative activities like Rangoli, Painting, Mehendi, Nail Art, and Craft Work, indicating their popularity and potential to engage more students.
8. **Participation Levels:** Despite the interest, only 33.3% of students actively participate in co-curricular activities, while 66.7% remain non-participants. Institutions, teachers, and peers play a crucial role in encouraging higher participation rates.
9. **Individual Interests:** Overall, 54.2% of students' express interest in co-curricular activities, with specific preferences for Drawing (20.3%), Craft Work (17.5%), Painting (15.3%), and Mehendi (10.2%). These interests could guide the design of more tailored activities.
10. **Participation in Performing Arts:** Students' interest in performing arts is nearly evenly split, with 48.6% interested and 51.4% not. Among specific activities, Group Dance is the most preferred (32.8%), followed by Solo Dance (7.3%) and One-Act Play (7.3%).
11. **Participation in Literary Arts:** Similar to performing arts, 48.6% of students are interested in literary arts, while 51.4% are not. Essay Writing (27.1%) and Debate (15.3%) are the most favoured activities, indicating areas where colleges could focus.
12. **Role and Impact of Co-Curricular Activities:** Most students (56.5%) recognize the importance of co-curricular activities, while 33.3% are uncertain, and 10.2% perceive no impact. Key benefits include confidence building (37.3%), improved communication (31.1%), and enhanced teamwork (27.1%)
13. **Development through Activities:** Co-curricular participation is associated with significant developmental benefits, including fostering a competitive spirit (81.4%), discipline (74%), creativity (85.3%), and teamwork (84.2%).
14. **Happiness from Participation:** Engagement in co-curricular activities contributes to emotional well-being, with 62.1% of students reporting happiness and 32.8% undecided.
15. **Drawbacks of Participation:** Some students highlight drawbacks, such as academic neglect, high costs, and unhealthy habits in sports. Addressing these concerns requires



16. balancing academics with activities, ensuring affordability, and promoting healthy practices. It was observed that **institutions with better infrastructure** and resources positively influenced students' participation in co-curricular activities, creating disparities among socioeconomic groups.
17. **Suggestions for Improvement:** Increasing access to activities, balancing academics and co-curricular demands, and providing affordable options can enhance students' participation and benefit their holistic development.

### Teacher's Role

Teachers are pivotal in ensuring the success of co-curricular programs. They must motivate students to participate, plan and organize activities systematically, and foster a balance between academics and extracurricular engagement. As innovators, teachers can leverage technology to enhance learning experiences and create inclusive environments. By being adaptable, supportive, and creative, educators can maximize the positive impact of co-curricular activities, contributing significantly to students' overall development.

By addressing these findings and implications, schools and colleges can create vibrant, inclusive co-curricular programs that equip students with the skills and confidence needed to excel in an ever-changing world.

### Conclusion

Co-curricular activities are integral to holistic education, offering experiences that complement theoretical knowledge and prepare students for real-world challenges. They foster intellectual growth, enhance practical skills, and contribute to the development of well-rounded, multitalented individuals. By engaging in co-curricular activities, students not only improve academically but also experience personal growth, becoming more confident, disciplined, and emotionally balanced. These activities foster a sense of belonging and self-esteem while promoting teamwork, leadership, and communication skills.

To ensure the success of co-curricular programs, institutions must offer diverse, engaging activities that resonate with students' interests and connect to the community. Integrating these activities into the curriculum can nurture all-round development and prepare students for academic, personal, and professional success. Encouragement from teachers, peers, and families is essential, but participation should remain voluntary to allow students to explore their passions freely. Addressing barriers such as academic pressures, costs, and access disparities will further increase participation rates.

### Educational Implications

1. **Academic Performance:** Students engaged in co-curricular activities often show better academic results, reduced absenteeism, and improved self-concept.
2. **School Retention:** These activities help reduce dropout rates by offering a fulfilling and attractive alternative to purely academic pursuits.



3. **Behavioural Benefits:** Participants are more disciplined, focused, and less likely to engage in negative behaviors. They also exhibit reduced anger and frustration, becoming more conscientious and diligent.
4. **Skill Development:** Co-curricular activities enhance vital life skills, such as teamwork, leadership, and communication, equipping students for future success.
5. **Emotional Well-being:** Students find these activities enjoyable and enriching, fostering a positive school experience and emotional resilience.

### Suggestions for Further Study

1. Analyse the impact of co-curricular activities on students' personality development, career aspirations, and life goals.
2. Investigate the relationship between co-curricular participation, motivation, and academic achievement.
3. Study the perceptions of parents, teachers, and administrators about the value of cocurricular activities.
4. Explore success stories of students excelling in co-curricular domains and their social, psychological, and economic impacts.
5. Examine strategies for effectively integrating co-curricular and curricular activities, with a focus on infrastructure and institutional support.

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