

STATUS OF CO-SCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES IN THE SCHOOL PROGRAMME OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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Scholastic and co scholastic activities should get equal importance in school programme for all round development of the child. A modest attempt was made in this study to see what is the status of co-scholastic activities in the school programme of the elementary schools of Jorhat district of Assam. The sample consisted of 50 elementary school from three educational blocks of the district. Primary data were collected through interview schedules, observations recorded in the investigator's diary, focused group discussions with the respondent teachers of the sample schools and interview with various school functionaries. Secondary data was collected from half-yearly evaluation sheets from different educational blocks. The study revealed that co-scholastic activities have not earned a proper place in the school routine. The teachers did not have any kind of formal training to handle the co scholastic activities. There was also no evaluation of these activities either half yearly or annually. Co scholastic part of the curriculum was totally ignored in the school programme

INTRODUCTION

All round development of the child is the dynamic trend in the new educational system. The school has now emerged as a place where students acquire various skills. Effective schools follow a holistic approach to education i.e. an integrated development stressing on physical, mental, moral and social aspects. A lot of innovations are going on in the field of education. It has become child "centered". A teacher inspires a child to know things himself through constructive activities. The main function of the teacher is to help children develop their talents, abilities and capabilities. This education system encourages a child to acquire more knowledge. But this type of education has not been adopted fully in India particularly in Assam in the true spirit. A holistic approach to education at the elementary level is a must as it is the most important subsection of the whole education system. Such an approach will facilitate the total development of a child by providing the right atmosphere for learners to develop and enrich their talent. Building self-concept, self image, sense of enterprise and sportsmanship and so on should be part of the educational process. Therefore the curriculum is designed giving due emphasis on both scholastic and co scholastic area. This investigation attempts to explore how the co scholastic part of the curriculum is being implemented in the elementary schools.

OBJECTIVES

1. To know the process used by the elementary school to transact and evaluate the co-scholastic area of the curriculum.
2. To know the status of continuous and comprehensive evaluation in the elementary schools of Jorhat district of Assam.
3. To know the teachers' awareness towards continuous and comprehensive evaluation.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE KEY WORDS

Co-scholastic Activities

The school curriculum has two broad areas to take care of all the developmental aspects of the child. The cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Subject like language, mathematics, science and social studies helps mainly the cognitive development of the child. Many other activities are necessary for development of the affective and psychomotor domain. Those activities like games and sport, art and music, craft work etc. are termed as co-scholastic activities. Instead of co-curricular activities, the term co-scholastic activities are used as both cognitive and non-cognitive development can take place by exposing the child to the lesson on scholastic subjects and non-scholastic subjects.

Elementary School

The primary and upper primary schools where grade I to IV and grade V-VII respectively are target. Primary and upper primary stage together is called elementary stage of education.

Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation

The term “continuous” means regular assessment of the progress of the child. The term “comprehensive” refers to all aspect of the child development cognitive and non-cognitive. The “comprehensive” evaluation covers all the aspect of growth and development of the child which includes physical, intellectual, emotional and social. The term “evaluation” is the process to find the extent to which the objectives of the curriculum of the desired outcome are achieved.

METHOD

Descriptive survey method was used in the study. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used.

Sample

A sample of 50 elementary schools of Jorhat district of Assam was selected by two stage purposive sampling technique. In the first stage, 3 blocks were selected from 6 educational blocks of Jorhat district. From the list of schools of the selected blocks, 50 elementary schools (30 primary and 20 upper primary) were selected purposively. Instead of random sampling, purposive sampling method was used to include schools from urban and rural areas, schedule caste and schedule tribe dominated areas, and tea garden areas. A representative sample of 55 teachers from the 100 sample schools was selected. Both primary and secondary data were used in the study.

Tools and Techniques for Data Collection

To collect primary data from teachers a questionnaire was administered. They responded to the items of the questionnaire instantaneously. A focused group discussion was also held to discuss various issues on conduction of co-curricular activities in their schools. Heads of the schools were interviewed by visiting the schools. Block elementary education officer, resource teachers were interviewed in the office of the block elementary education office. Few district level functionaries and district programme officers were also interviewed. Secondary data like grade evaluation sheets, student record card etc. were collected from district mission director’s office.

Analysis of Data

Data collected through interview, field note, observations and document were analysed. For quantitative data, simple statistical procedures were used.

FINDINGS

Co-scholastic activities have not earned a proper place in the school routine. In fact, no importance has been given to it in the school routine. There are no formal guidelines from the state authority for monitoring, supervision procedures in this regard. A few schools, on their own, have included a couple of classes here and there in the routine, to keep students engaged during breaks or absence of teachers. No periods are allotted per week in the routine for serious pursuit of co-scholastic subjects. There is no system of continuous and comprehensive evaluation in the elementary schools of Assam. There are two external examinations, one half yearly and one annually, to assess the pupil’s progress. There is also a system of conducting seven tests during an academic year. But all these tests cover mainly the scholastic subjects. There is no formal evaluation process to assess the skill and capability of the students in co-scholastic activities. Only evaluation of art is done in a partial manner in the half yearly and annual examination. As such, the student’s annual report card do not have a separate column to grade their performance in these activities. Most of the elementary schools in the rural areas lack even the basic infrastructure such as proper playground for sports and physical training and separate classrooms for creative activities like art, music etc. Most of the schools accommodate all their classes in one hall type classroom which is not conducive for carrying out such activities. The concept of continuous and

comprehensive evaluation is not a new concept. National Policy on Education 1986 had given much emphasis on it. The Board of Secondary Education, Assam had introduced it in 1998 in the secondary schools. A circular was sent to all secondary schools, but it was not practised in real sense. In teacher education curriculum for both elementary and secondary stages of school education, the concept is dealt with only theoretically. The sample teachers of this investigation were found to be unaware of this concept. One major cause of this situation is that no formal training had been imparted to the concerned teachers to handle these activities as a part of the school curriculum.

CONCLUSION

Apart from scholastic activities, importance should be given to co-scholastic activities too for student's development. Previously co-curricular activities were not given due importance and teachers excepting a few, were not given any responsibility. But now, the psychological, ethical, academic, social, civic, aesthetic, cultural and recreational values of co-curricular activities have been emphasised and so due attention should be given on their effective organisation and management. Lack of proper planning, paucity of various facilities, lack of proper qualified staff, over emphasis on academic programmes are some of the problems which need to be sorted out for ensuring success of these activities.

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