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Importance of Conducting Indoor and Outdoor Events at Secondary Schools in Nepal

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Abstract

Many secondary schools conduct indoor and outdoor events at schools to improve the holistic development of learners. Both events not only boost academically for students but also improve their self-confidence. The purpose of the study was to find out the importance of conducting indoor and outdoor events in secondary schools and find the strengths behind organizing such events at schools. The research paradigm of this study was positivism, and this quantitative study employed the survey research design to investigate the importance of conducting these events in schools. I selected 75 students and 25 teachers from secondary schools using random sampling for this study. I distributed the questionnaire into two sections to my respondents online, that is, via messenger, to collect the primary data for the study. I used a correlation analysis for the data interpretation of the collected from this study. I divided the responses received into students' responses and teachers' responses. The findings of the students' response revealed that a fixed schedule for extracurricular activities, trained and experienced coordinators, and enough materials for the events are essential to conduct indoor and outdoor events in schools. The findings of the teachers' responses show that extracurricular activities improve the academic performance of students developing different language skills. The findings of this study have implications for school administrators, teachers, parents, students, and textbook writers.

Keywords: Extracurricular activities, indoor and outdoor events, quantitative, secondary schools, strengths,

Introduction

The present study informs about the importance of conducting indoor and outdoor events at secondary schools. This study has also investigated why many schools prefer to conduct outdoor events and indoor events. So, the main purpose of this study is to dig out the factors that enhance conducting both indoor and outdoor events at schools. The findings of this study can be beneficial to all the persons who keep an interest in the all-round development of students through outdoor and indoor events.

Generally, most schools organize outdoor events at different levels because a very small number of students may be interested in participating in indoor events such as story-forming, poem writing, speech, debate, etc. Indoor and outdoor events in this study refer to extracurricular activities conducted in schools. Extracurricular activities are very essential for students in the present context for their all-around development because learning does not take only inside the classroom, and learning is also not only meant to read the write with certain textbooks for limited knowledge. Students can gain knowledge of different fields of interest that are beyond their textbooks and classrooms. The physical aspects of the students should also be considered well for their holistic development. Extracurricular activities can be the best way to develop the different skills of the students that are not possible inside the four walls of the classroom. This section deals with the background, purpose and rationale of the study.

Many schools arrange extracurricular activities for their students. Extracurricular activities in Nepal provide freedom and opportunities to express themselves outside the tight formalities of the school programmeme, and, at times, it is more important for their emotional and social health (Kumar, 2004). Generally, both types of activities, i.e. indoor and outdoor events, are conducted at schools for the development of various aspects of the students. And my problem is: why do many schools hold indoor events and outdoor events in schools?

Education, at present, is considered the holistic development of students that are not only limited to learning and memorising certain facts, skills figures, etc. School is a common platform for students that helps to identify the potential development of different aspects of the students such as mental, social, emotional, physical, etc. Kochhar (1995) argues that the school curriculum is conceived as the entirety of learning experiences provided to students through various activities, both within and outside the school, all under its regulation. Therefore, it is important to organise extracurricular activities to promote good performance and development of students because the importance of education is not only based on academic success but also in other areas such as communication, self-management, self-esteem, etc. which are very necessary to be learned by the students. Therefore, it is logical to talk about extracurricular activities that are inevitable and integral parts of the educational system. Extracurricular activities are part of every student's everyday life in Pakistan and they display a key role in the lives (Zaman, 2017). Education can be gained through various activities that provide knowledge, skills, and morality to students.

Extracurricular activities are activities in which students participate, but these activities are not within the realm of the normal curriculum of the school. Extracurricular activities are optional activities for students, so some of the students participate in the activities in which they are interested, whereas the students do not participate in them if they lack interest in them.

Lunenburg (2010) states that extracurricular activities in America fulfill the objectives stated in the curriculum. However, extracurricular activities offer experiences and skills outside of formal education. Students can employ their acquired knowledge in their practical lives.

Extracurricular activities are activities that fall outside the domain of ordinary educational modules in schools, performed by students. Therefore, extracurricular activities are the activities of schools for the proper development of the students. Similarly, Zaman (2017) believes that extracurricular activities refer to activities that take place outside the regular school curriculum in Pakistan. These activities are voluntarily performed and students do not receive additional grades in response to participating in these activities. While talking about extracurricular activities, they are identified as important aspects of the education system because we find many schools and colleges encourage their students to participate in different non-academic activities that are optional. Regarding this aspect, Barnett (2007) notes ‘... Schools in America encourage students to participate in various extracurricular activities, such as athletics, vocational clubs, student government, newspaper and yearbooks, and special interest groups.

Extracurricular activities were initiated in the 19th century in the United States of America. At first, they were just an additional part of the normal academic schedule for the year (Massoni, 2011b). So these activities had practical or vocational interests of the students. The first extracurricular activities that began at Harvard University and Yale University were literary clubs (2011b). Similarly, students in American schools were the first people who initiated athletics clubs. According to Jha (2004), before 1900, many educators in America believed that co-curricular activities were more recreational, and therefore hindrance to students' success in the classroom. But soon after 1900, as the schools continued to grow, they changed their rules and focused more on helping students prepare for citizenship.

In Nepal, both extracurricular and cocurricular activities are activities such as physical, literary, aesthetic, cultural, hobbies, craft activities, excursions, social welfare, etc. National Education System Plan (1971) made extracurriculars compulsory and gave directives to carry on such activities as gardening, quizzes, folk-song and dance, debate, arts, games, etc. Similarly, short training on sports for a teacher of a school must be carried out systematically (Jha et al., 2004). The educational laws of 1971 and 2002 have made extracurricular activities compulsory and have given legal recognition to them (NESP, 1971). Therefore, the status and importance of extracurricular activities in the academic fields of Nepal are evolutionary, as they have become an integral part of learning and a school should organise extracurricular activities for the development of creative potentials of the students.

Currently, co-curricular activities and extracurricular activities are often taken and understood synonymously. Both of them are noncredit academic activities. In this context, Kochhar (1995) opines that the distinction between curricular and extracurricular activities must cease to exist. Therefore, both of them are interrelated, yet, we need to distinguish between them. Co-curricular activities are formal classroom programmes that are conducted outside the normal school day in which participation is voluntary, whereas extracurricular activities are the activities that fall outside the formal curriculum provided in class such as sports teams.

For the present study, activities like competitions of literary works competitions, debates, spelling contests, story writing, etc. In general, activities conducted inside the classroom are

indoor events, and activities like dancing, music, and different types of sports like football, volleyball, cricket, running, etc. often conducted outside the classroom are outdoor events. Most of the academic institutions of the world incorporate both cocurricular and extracurricular activities for their students that enable them to shape their all-around development. In Nepal, many schools and colleges provide the importance of extracurricular activities that are conducted primarily on Fridays after school hours. Students who participate in these activities mostly in both activities can raise their self-esteem, discipline, confidence, etc., and decrease their behavioural problems. However, extracurricular activities are carried out by schools; from the researcher's experiences gained through various extracurricular activities, very few schools organise indoor events whereas many schools conduct outdoor events despite the lack of playgrounds and equipment. Therefore, the present study focused on why secondary schools conduct indoor and outdoor events.

Many factors play a crucial role in the holistic development of students in their study life. Both outdoor and indoor events play a vital role in the promotion of academic achievement and the development of other aspects such as social, physical and mental health. Each event offers different advantages and also challenges to participating in them. Despite having many benefits from both events, why do few schools organise indoor events and why do many schools conduct outdoor events? So, research work on the importance of holding outdoor events and indoor events in secondary schools that help to reveal the factors that improve the organisation of these events. Therefore, this study focusses on the importance of organising outdoor events and indoor events at secondary schools with two research questions: a) Why do many secondary schools conduct outdoor events and indoor events? b) What are the strengths of conducting indoor and outdoor events at secondary schools?

Literature Review

Students who participate in extracurricular activities can reduce their anxiety and get relief from their high temper by controlling their emotional behaviour. Booth (1958) reports that students who participate in sports, field trips, and drama can minimise their nervousness. Extracurricular activities are voluntary because interested students can only participate in extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities in Pakistan are part of every student's ordinary life, and they play a key role in students' lives (Zaman, 2017). Therefore, extracurricular activities are optional for the students, but these activities play a vital role in their personal lives. Massoni (2011a) emphasises the beneficial outcomes of extracurricular activities that include positive behaviour, learning or grade, and ambition of understanding in the United States of America. Participation in extracurricular activities not only makes students very mature in social life but also lessens academic stress enhancing the efficiency level of learning.

Extracurricular activities also provide an opportunity to learn new things and skills for the students they cannot get inside the classroom because they may feel shy and introverted when they are inside the classroom as they cannot be very close to their teacher to ask something they want. According to Hattie (2012), extracurricular activities might be advantageous to students as they figure out new ideas and understating that they could not figure out in the classroom. The more students who participate in extracurricular activities, the higher grades they will achieve and, unlike those who do not participate, the lower grades they will achieve (Zaman, 2017).

Therefore, participating in extracurricular activities is very advantageous for students, as they will academically be very strong. Most of the students who participate in such activities are successful in their studies.

Moreover, a study conducted in America by Slutzky and Simpkins (2009) points out that students who go through cooperation sports instead of distinctive sports accounted for higher levels of self-concept, which is accordingly higher self-esteem, over their non-sporting associates. Therefore, students can achieve good performance in their academic fields with the help of a higher self-concept that develops through participation in extracurricular activities. In this modern era, educationists accept that education is not meant for the memorisation of concrete items achieved inside the four walls of the classroom, but it is certainly meant for the holistic development of the students. In this regard, Kumar (2004) presents that cocurricular activities hold a place of great importance in the field of education for the all-round development of children.

However, Darling et al. (2005) comparatively study students who participate or do not participate in extracurricular activities and comment that 'students who participate in school-based extracurricular activities have higher grades, higher academic aspirations and better academic attitudes than those who are not involved in extracurricular activities at all.' Therefore, students who participate in extracurricular activities are more likely to improve their studies and attitudes than students who do not participate in them. Similarly, Thompson and Austin (2003) reported that there is no significant relationship between co-curricular activities and academic grades. However, while studying the relationship between cocurricular activities and interpersonal competencies, Mahoney et al. (2003) indicate a positive relationship between them.

Similarly, Cousins (2004) also points out that students who participate in extracurricular activities can develop valuable traits for their lives which help to achieve success in their future. This is why extracurricular activities should be conducted in schools like other curricular programmemes. The valuable traits learnt by the students can be sacrificing for the common good, striving for excellence, following the direction given by others, and being socialised and self-disciplined as well. Cosden et al. (2004) quote, 'Participation in an after-school program that is designed to build self-esteem had positive effects on standards test scores in maths and reading while receiving extended time to complete homework did not have the same positive effects on self-esteem or achievements'. The above statement reflects that students who participate in extracurricular activities have a positive effect on their study rather than spending their time doing the assignment.

Methodology

The present study mainly focused on the importance of conducting indoor and outdoor events at secondary schools. Therefore, I employed a survey research design under post-positivism as suggested by (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) to collect data from the respondents to get their responses on the preferences of students in taking part in outdoor and indoor events. This design has two different ways of collecting data according to instrumentation.

The population for the study was the students and the teachers from four private schools and one governmental school situated in Bara district of Nepal. Out of them, I collected 75 students studying in grade 10 and 25 secondary level using the random sampling method

(Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The selected teachers and students were from Himal Academy, Saraswati Secondary School, Guras Boarding School, Mount Secondary School, and John Academy.

I used a questionnaire survey as a research tool due to its accuracy and efficiency in collecting the responses. The closed-ended questionnaire that consisted of 5 different questions was developed for both students and teachers. A five-point Likert Scale questionnaire was used to measure the response from 1 ‘Strongly Agree’ (SA) to 5 ‘Strongly Disagree (SD) (Joshi et al., 2015). The questionnaire was administered online i.e. messenger to get the response from the sampled respondents.

Based on the set plan for this study, I went to the schools and asked permission from the principal. After getting permission, I visited the teachers and students and explained my purpose for visiting them. I also explained my questionnaire to them that was prepared to administer online i.e. messenger so I got their messenger ID from them to send them the prepared questionnaire. I prepared two sets of the questionnaire for both teachers and students. The questionnaire was administered to them through messenger to the respondents respectively and collected their responses. I used correlative analysis to interpret the raw data (Suter, 2012). After collecting the raw data from my respondents, I divided the collected data into two sections i.e. section 'A' for the responses of students and section 'B' for the responses of teachers. The collected data from the different respondents were analyzed and tabulated below.

Results

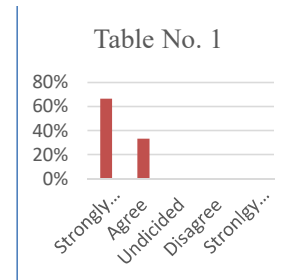
Analysis of the Students’ Responses

Research Question 1: My school has a fixed schedule for conducting extracurricular activities.

Table 1

Fixed Schedule for Extracurricular Activities

This table illustrates that 66.7% of participants responded with ‘Strongly Agree’ and 33% of participants ‘Agree’ to the statement.

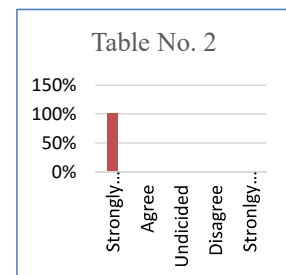


Research Question 2: My ECA In-charge and Event Co-ordinators are well experienced and trained in conducting extracurricular activities.

Table 2

ECA In-charge and Event Coordinator

This table describes that 100% of participants responded to ‘Strongly Agree’ which shows the trained as well as experienced ECA in-charge and coordinators can only conduct the indoor and outdoor events for their students effectively.



Research Question 3: My school has sufficient materials and equipment for extracurricular activities.

Table 3

Materials for Extracurricular Activities

This table reveals that 100% of respondents ‘Strongly Agree’ with the statement. It shows that the school certainly arranges indoor and outdoor events for the students with sufficient materials.

Research Question 4: I am interested in indoor events conducted at my school.

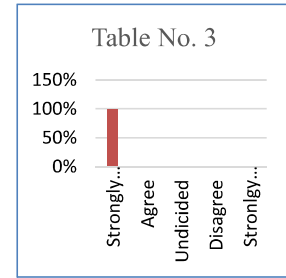


Table 4

Interests in Indoor Events

This table mentions that all of the respondents ‘Strongly Agree’ with the statement asked of them. It also reveals that the students were very excited to take part in different indoor events conducted at school.

Research Question 5: I develop my self-esteem, self-discipline, and management skills through extracurricular activities.

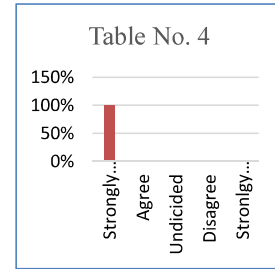


Table 5

Self-esteem & Self-discipline

This table indicates that 100% of respondents ‘Strongly Agree’ with the statement given to them. It shows that indoor events are really helpful in developing various aspects of the students.

Analysis of the Teachers’ Response

Research Question 1: Extracurricular activities play a vital role in the academic performance of students.

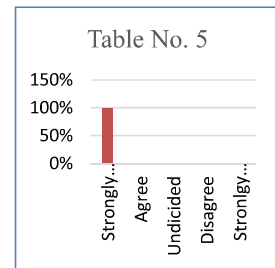


Table 1

Role of Extracurricular Activities

This table describes that 10% of the respondents ‘Strongly Agree’, 80% of them were ‘Agree’, and the rest 10% of them were ‘Strongly Disagree’ with the statement administered to them. It shows that the majority of respondents were in favor of extracurricular activities that play a crucial role in the academic performance of the students.

Research Question 2: The indoor events develop writing and speaking skills including critical thinking.

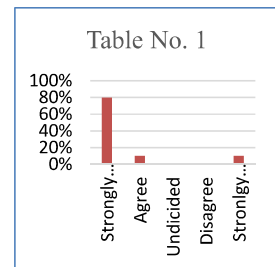


Table 2

Indoor Events and Writing and Speaking Skills

This table illustrates that 60% of respondents responded to ‘Strongly Agree’ and 40% of the respondents ‘Agree’. This means there is great importance of indoor events in academic fields.

Research Question 3: Students who participate in extracurricular activities are more disciplined and moral.

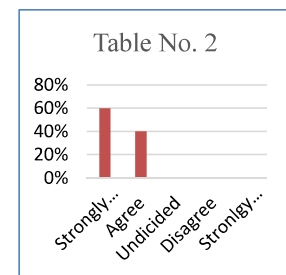
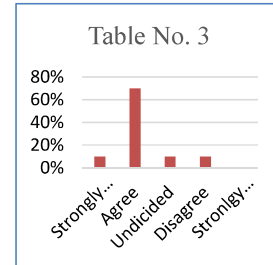


Table 3

Extracurricular and Discipline

This table indicates that 10% of respondents responded to ‘Strongly Agree’, 70% respondents were of ‘Agree’, 10% of them were ‘Undecided’ and the rest 10% of them were of ‘Disagree’ to the statement. There are mixed responses regarding the statement asked to them, yet, the majority of the respondents support that students who take part in extracurricular activities are good in their moral behavior.

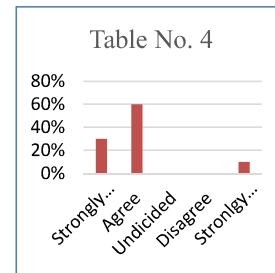


Research Question 4: Indoor events as well as outdoor events make the students physically and mentally very strong.

Table 4

Indoor and Outdoor Events and Physical Status

This table points out that 30% of respondents responded to ‘Strongly Agree’, 60% of them ‘Agree’ and 10% of them ‘Strongly Disagree’ to the statement. This reveals that the majority of the respondents were in favor of making students physically and mentally fit through extracurricular activities.

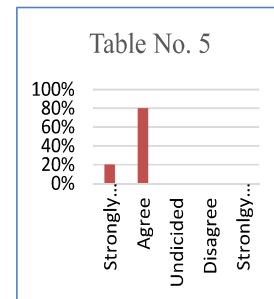


Research Question 5: Extracurricular activities should be included in the school curriculum.

Table 5

Extracurricular Activities and School Curriculum

This table shows that 20% of the respondents were of ‘Strongly Agree’, and 80% of respondents responded ‘Agree’ to the statement. This indicates that there should be the inclusion of extracurricular activities in the curriculum.



Findings and Discussions

The data collected were analyzed and tabulated based on the responses obtained from different respondents. These responses were divided into two sections to better describing and analyzing them. Section A describes the responses responded by the students, and section 'B' describes the responses responded by the teachers. Both students and teachers were provided with 5 different close-ended questions with different themes. The questionnaires given to the students were different from those of the teachers.

Findings of the Student Responses

The first research question asked to the students was about the fixed schedule of extracurricular activities at their school. This study found that their school has a fixed schedule for extracurricular activities which is very important for them. The second question asked to the students was about the training of the In-charge and Coordinators of extracurricular activities. The study found that well-trained In-charge and Coordinators can only handle extracurricular activities as expected at school. The third question sent to them was about the materials used for

extracurricular activities and the result shows that these materials are very necessary for extracurricular activities because extracurricular activities cannot be conducted in the absence of these materials. The fourth research question administered to the students was about the interest of the students in indoor events. The result shows that all students are very interested in participating in the indoor events conducted at school. The final research question administered to the students was on the self-esteem and self-discipline of the students who participate in extracurricular activities. The result reveals that the students who take part in indoor events are much more forward in performing any activities at school, which is similar to the findings of Darling et al. (2005). Therefore, involvement in extracurricular activities promotes the holistic development of children.

Findings of the Responses of the Teachers

The first research question that teachers was about the important role of extracurricular activities that help improve the academic aspects of students. The result shows that the majority of the respondents claimed that extracurricular activities play a crucial role in the academic performance of the students, which is similar to the findings of Zaman (2017). The second question forwarded to the teachers was about the strengths of indoor events that develop different language skills. The finding reveals that indoor events are very essential for developing various skills of language i.e., speaking skills, reading skills, writing skills, etc. The third research question asked to the teacher was about the morality of the students who participate in extracurricular activities. The research found the mixed responses regarding the statement, but most of the respondents responded that they are in favour of the moral behaviour of those students who participate in extracurricular activities. The fourth research question asked to the teachers was about the physical and mental strength of those students who are involved in extracurricular activities, but the finding is contrastive with the findings of Thompson and Austin (2003). The finding of this statement shows mixed responses to it. The final research question asked to the teacher was about the inclusion of extracurricular activities in our national curriculum. The result shows that extracurricular activities should be included in the national curriculum so that students can participate in extracurricular activities for their holistic development.

Discussions of the Findings

The conduct of extracurricular activities in secondary schools is advantageous in developing the various skills of the students (Cousins, 2004). Students are physically as well as psychologically strong because they participate in different events organised in schools. Regarding the objective of this study, it revealed that extracurricular activities carried out in secondary schools in the Bara district can be outdoor and indoor events. These events are conducted for the holistic development of the students. The results agree with the findings of Kumar (2004) who showed that extracurricular activities foster every trait of the students. This suggests that regular participation in extracurricular activities makes students academically strong.

All students responded positively to the statements given to them because they all agreed or strongly agreed with the statements asked of them. They replied that they have a fixed timetable for the conduct of extracurricular activities because it is only once a week, which is not

sufficient for them. Regarding the training of the In-charge and the Coordinators of extracurricular activities, all of the students showed positive concepts toward it. It shows that they have trained the manpower to conduct the extracurricular activities. This finding also aligns with a study by Mohamed and Osaki (2022) that pointed out the need for infrastructure facilities and trained teachers in schools to handle extracurricular activities.

However, most private and government schools do not have trained staff or playgrounds. Students showed great interest in the indoor events conducted at school but the study found that a very small number of even counted students are only ready to participate in indoor events like speech, debate, poem writing, story-forming, etc. Provided that they take part in indoor events, they do not seem to have self-esteem or self-confidence because they are found to be suffering from a mass phobia, nervousness, introversion, etc. This finding correlates with the findings of Thompson and Austin (2003) who indicated that there is no relationship between the conduction of extracurricular activities and well academic performance of the students.

Furthermore, most of the teachers who participated in this study responded positively to the role of extracurricular activities that play an important role in the academic performance of the students (Zaman, 2017). Although the study found the great role of extracurricular activities in the academic performance of students, however, most of them involved in extracurricular activities are also found to be poor academically. This study found that materials play a great role in extracurricular activities in the school but most of the private and government schools do not have the required materials and playing fields to carry out extracurricular activities. This finding aligns with the findings of Mohamed and Osaki (2022), who pointed out that there is a need for the required materials and play fields in schools to conduct extracurricular activities. All teachers are in favor of the indoor events that develop different moral as well as language skills of students, as story forming helps to develop writing skills, and speech and debate programmes help develop speaking skills.

However, in reality, students involved in indoor events are found to be poor in speaking and writing skills. This study found that the majority of teachers believe that the students involved in extracurricular activities are honest, disciplined, and sincere and they have moral behavior which is similar to the findings of Mahoney et al. (2003), who showed a positive relationship between extracurricular activities and communication skills of the students. But students today are carefree and irresponsible in their duties. Students will be physically and mentally fit and fine if they participate in indoor and outdoor events which is supported by most of the teachers. There is a very strong response from the teachers regarding the inclusion of extracurricular activities in our national curriculum, but the finding of this present study seems to be hypothetical because of the government's ignorance. According to the responses collected from the respondents, it can be concluded that the government should have certain provisions to manage extracurricular activities in secondary schools. There is also a need for motivation for trained teachers, sufficient materials, funds, and playgrounds for effective participation in extracurricular activities.

Conclusions and Implications

The present study focused on the importance of holding indoor events and outdoor events in secondary schools. To carry out this present study, the background, literature review,

methodology, findings, and discussion are performed. In the background, the past and present scenario of the topic was being talked about. Regarding the literature review, previous topics were collected, observed, and studied to find their strengths and weaknesses that could help the present study be better. The research methodology, research design, population and sampling, tools and techniques for data collection, and analysis of the data were discussed in detail. The survey method was selected as the research design and a random sampling method was adopted for the sampling of the population where the closed-ended questionnaire was used as a tool to gather the responses of the respondents. The private and government schools situated in Bara district were the study area and the students and teachers of those same schools were the populations for this present study. Each questionnaire consisted of five closed-ended questions that were different from each other. The collected data was described and analyzed using five different Likert Scale and the findings were tabulated using Excel.

The findings of this study have implications for administrators who could manage both events well for the holistic development of the students. Similarly, the findings of this study could be relevant to parents who could understand the advantages of participating in their children's indoor and outdoor events at schools. Additionally, secondary-level students could benefit from involving in outdoor and indoor events at school to build their self-esteem and self-confidence. Similarly, the findings of this study have implications for teachers as well as curriculum designers for the physical and psychological development of students.

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