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HOW EFFICIENTLY MANAGED EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMS SUPPORT STUDENTS' SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS: A CASE STUDY OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SCHOOL IN JIZZAKH

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: This study investigates the extent to which efficiently organised extracurricular activities enhance students' social and emotional skills at the Presidential School in Jizzakh. The school provides a structured weekly schedule of diverse clubs—including drama, robotics, music, football, media, and IT—from Monday to Thursday, enabling students from Grades 5 to 11 to explore personal interests beyond academic learning. Qualitative observations and informal feedback from instructors indicate that participation in these clubs contributes significantly to improvements in communication, teamwork, self-confidence, creativity, and problem-solving skills. The findings suggest that a well-coordinated extracurricular program, supported by residential learning conditions, plays a critical role in shaping holistic student development.

Introduction. Recent educational reforms in Uzbekistan emphasize not only academic excellence but also the broader development of students' social and emotional competencies. Schools are increasingly expected to create environments where learners apply classroom knowledge to real-life contexts, collaborate effectively, and develop personal identity and

confidence. Extracurricular activities have emerged as a powerful vehicle for achieving these aims.

The Presidential School in Jizzakh, established to nurture highly talented youth, provides a unique environment: students live in the dormitory from Sunday evening to Friday afternoon, allowing extended access to structured learning opportunities. Unlike day-school settings, the school's residential model supports extracurricular engagement beyond regular instructional hours, reducing logistical barriers such as transportation or scheduling conflicts.

This study examines how the school's efficiently managed extracurricular programs contribute to students' social and emotional skill development. Specifically, it focuses on five core competencies fostered across various clubs: communication skills, teamwork, self-confidence, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Methods. Research Context. The study was conducted at the Presidential School in Jizzakh, which accommodates students from Grades 5 to 11. The school day includes 6 periods for Grade 5 students and 7 periods for Grades 6–11, with a 30-minute morning break and a one-hour lunch break. The last academic lesson finishes at either 14:45 or 15:35, after which students take a short stroll or rest in the dormitory before participating in extracurricular activities.

Extracurricular Structure. Extracurricular programs operate four days per week (Monday to Thursday) from 16:00 to 21:00. Activities are divided into four one-hour sessions daily, allowing students to choose clubs aligned with their preferences and grade eligibility. Examples include:

Drama (Amphitheatre) — Grades 5–8

IT (Room 104), Chess (Room 106), Music and Songwriting (Room 105) — Grades 5–11

Swimming (Swimming pool) — separate boys' and girls' sessions

Media (Radio room) — Grades 8–9

Football (Stadium) — Grades 8–11

DIY and Robotics (Room 110) — Grades 5–10

Dance (Gym) — Grades 8–11

Data Collection. Observational field notes, instructor interviews, and informal student reflections were collected over several weeks. These sources provided insight into behavioural changes, participation patterns, communication styles, problem-solving instances, and social interactions. No numerical statistics were recorded; instead, qualitative descriptors such as many, most, and some were used to maintain confidentiality.

Results. Findings indicate that students who consistently participate in extracurricular activities exhibit noticeable improvements in the targeted social and emotional competencies:

Communication skills. Drama, Media, and Music clubs require students to articulate ideas, perform publicly, and negotiate roles. Many participants became more expressive, confident in sharing opinions, and proficient in using appropriate language during collaborative tasks.

Teamwork. Football, Robotics, and Songwriting demand collective decision-making, role distribution, and peer support. Most students learned to rely on teammates, resolve conflicts constructively, and achieve shared goals.

Self-confidence. Students engaged in Dance, Drama, and Swimming often reported reduced fear of failure and increased willingness to try new tasks. Some students who were initially reserved became more active in class discussions.

Creativity. IT, DIY, Music, and Song writing sessions encouraged original thinking. Many students developed unique digital projects, choreographies, or musical compositions, demonstrating innovative approaches to problem-solving.

Problem-solving skills. Chess, Robotics, and Media clubs provided structured tasks that required logical reasoning, troubleshooting, and experimentation. A considerable number of students showed greater persistence and resilience when facing complex challenges.

Discussion. The results suggest that the Presidential School's well-organised extracurricular program, supported by a boarding system, plays an instrumental role in developing students' social and emotional capacities. Because students reside on campus, they have uninterrupted access to facilities and mentors, enabling sustained engagement that is often impossible in non-residential schools.

The structured timetable prevents overlap between clubs and academic responsibilities, helping students manage time effectively. Additionally, the range of available clubs ensures that learners with diverse interests can find suitable outlets for their talents, while instructor expertise provides authentic mentorship.

This coordinated system encourages students not merely to accumulate knowledge but to practice life skills such as leadership, responsibility, creative expression, and collaborative communication—competencies essential for 21st-century success.

Conclusion. Efficiently managed extracurricular activities at the Presidential School in Jizzakh significantly support the development of students' social and emotional skills. By integrating structured schedules, varied club options, professional instructors, and a residential learning environment, the school provides fertile ground for shaping confident, cooperative,

and creative individuals. Continued investment in extracurricular programming can further strengthen holistic education models in Uzbekistan.

Moreover, the findings of this study suggest that extracurricular programs should not be viewed as optional add-ons, but rather as essential components of modern schooling. When implemented with clear objectives and strong organizational frameworks, such activities promote life skills that traditional classroom instruction alone cannot fully develop. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, schools across the country may benefit from adopting similar approaches, ensuring that young learners are equipped not only with academic knowledge but also with the interpersonal, emotional, and cognitive competencies required to thrive in an increasingly complex world.

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