

The Role of Extracurricular Activities in Developing Students' Social Skills from their Point of View

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Abstract

This study aimed at identifying the role of extracurricular activities in developing students' social skills from their point of view. The descriptive survey method was used. The study sample consisted of (473) male and female students from public schools in Irbid Governorate. The questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting data. The results of the study showed that the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills to a moderate degree from the students' point of view, and that there are statistically significant differences in the averages of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills due to the gender variable and in favour of males. The results also showed that there are no statistically significant differences in the Averages of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills attributed to the specialization variable.

Keywords: *extracurricular activities, social skills.*

1. Introduction

Classroom activities develop many skills in students' practical and educational lives, such as participating in competitions and writing reports that take place in schools, and provide the student with experiences that work to consolidate and consolidate what he has acquired in the classroom, and discover many new educational experiences, and the courses that are offered to students work When participating in extracurricular activities, it increases social, professional, and religious awareness (Winstone et al, 2020). Extracurricular activities in all their forms contribute to the development of students' personalities to a great extent and their psychological, moral, physical and mental education, in preparation for life situations and circumstances, in addition to the great impact they have on the learners' education, which sometimes exceeds classroom education (Nghia, 2017).

Classroom activities play a major and important role on the personal level of students and the general level of society, as they contribute to practising good behaviours, demonstrating capabilities and energies to invest in areas beneficial to the individual and society, as well as developing individuals' talents and directing them in useful areas (Milner et al, 2016). There is great importance for social skills in the lives of students, as a result of the rapid changes in the social and economic aspects that occur in societies, which requires students to possess skills that enable them to adapt and harmonize with

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societal conditions, as they are considered necessary in all diverse life situations, so a person cannot live isolated from the world, it is difficult to achieve a sound human existence without realizing social existence in all its forms, and the student, as a social being created for social life, carries deep down the instinct to love meeting and living in groups (Al-Jabri, 2023).

Social skills are observable behaviours that we can measure, and they are used by individuals during their interaction with others. The combination of these behaviours is considered a higher characteristic, which is social competence. It turns out that social skills are a group of skills that constitute the overall characteristic and are part of the overall personality competence. If the skills are added Academic skills, psychological skills, and physical skills become our integrated personality (Badr et al., 2018). There are many social skills that students need in all life situations and fields, whether in the family, school, or society. Possessing these skills is considered the path to their success, acceptance by others, and adaptation to them, and their absence. It is difficult to interact and communicate with others (Al-Sharqawi, 2022).

1.1. Problem statement

Most of the activities practised by students inside and outside the classroom are an integrated part of the school curriculum and are among the most important educational aspects that create an integration of the educational process. School activities are like any other school curriculum, as they seek to achieve a set of educational goals, and sometimes they exceed the effectiveness of extracurricular activities compared to classroom activities and help achieve the desired goals with less time and effort. Extracurricular activities aim to respond to students' hobbies, satisfy their inclinations, and develop their abilities. Through these activities, students can achieve growth in all fields and are not limited to the cognitive aspect, in addition to the students' ability to express themselves and their personal experiences.

Social skills are considered the main foundation for building students' personalities, and the presence of weakness in these skills greatly affects individuals' compatibility with others and society. Social skills determine the nature of an individual's daily interactions with those around him in different contexts, which, if characterized by competence, is considered a manifestation of psychological and social compatibility. Based on the above, the problem of each study is determined in general terms, as this study raises issues that have not been addressed by researchers before in similar circumstances, whether in terms of the nature of the subject of the study or the nature of the issues addressed methodologically in the research.

1.2. Questions of the study

1. What is the role of extracurricular activities in developing students' social skills?
2. Are there statistically significant differences between the averages of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills due to the gender variable?
3. Are there statistically significant differences between the averages of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills due to the specialization variable?

1.3. Objectives of the study

1. Identifying the role of extracurricular activities in developing students' social skills.
2. Detecting statistically significant differences between the averages of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills due to the gender variable.

3. Detecting statistically significant differences between the averages of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills due to the specialization variable.

1.4. Significance of the study

The study explains the importance of practising extracurricular activities in life in a better way. It enhances the importance of extracurricular activities among teachers, principals, and parents. The study helps in identifying the importance of practising extracurricular activities in the learner's life. The importance of the study lies in the fact that weak social skills represent a problem that affects students' compatibility with people and their acquisition of the necessary skills and knowledge. The importance of the target age group in the study, which is secondary school students. The results of the study may contribute to the preparation of guidance programs to develop social skills based on extracurricular activities for female students.

1.5. Limitations

1. Thematic limitations: The study was limited to identifying the role of extracurricular activities in developing students' social skills from their point of view.

2. Spatial boundaries: The study was limited to public schools in Irbid Governorate in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

3. Human limits: The study was applied to public school students in Irbid Governorate.

4. Time limits: The study was applied during the first semester of the year 2023/2024.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Extracurricular activities

Kim et al (2023) defined extracurricular activities as an optional recreational or educational activity that takes place outside the classroom, complements the school's educational program and expands the educational experience. Al-Samadi and Bakhit (2022, p. 198) defined it as "planned activities that take place outside the classroom, such as participating in the school press, cultural competitions and exhibitions, and participating in the school library group. They develop many skills and attitudes among learners, and are carried out under the supervision of the school's administrative and educational staff."

The importance of extracurricular activities lies in their educational value, as these activities have a direct impact on many of the personality traits of students. They contribute to increasing academic achievement, life satisfaction, and self-esteem. They help in reaching educational goals inside and outside the school and address students' social, psychological, and educational problems. They also reveal and develop students' abilities and talents, link students' school lives to their social lives, and increase students' positive feelings toward themselves and others (Hussein, 2020).

Extracurricular activities contribute to achieving a set of goals. They contribute to consolidating the values of cooperation and increasing social relations. They create educational situations that are desirable for learners and develop learners' creative abilities, which leads to learners reaching the highest levels of thinking. They also help in reaching the set educational goals and their various aspects (social, scientific, psychological) and providing learners with the habits and skills to become active in society. They train learners to take responsibility, and leadership and contribute to shaping the balanced and integrated personality of learners (Shabib et al., 2021).

There are many fields of extracurricular activities, and the following is a presentation of these fields (Abu Hantash, 2020). First, Sports activities: These are activities that aim to

give students physical education, enhance work behaviors, group cooperation, and positive competition, through creating school teams, organizing matches between classes, divisions, and other schools, and encouraging all participants to play all games and activities. Second, Cultural activities: These are activities that aim to develop students' critical, aesthetic, and human sense through organizing theatrical, musical, and cinematic concerts, competitions, exhibitions, and exploratory trips to historical monuments. Third, Social activities: They aim to increase awareness of how to maintain a healthy and sound environment through environmental awareness programs and cleanliness campaigns. Fourth, Scouting activities: These are activities that aim to increase self-reliance among students, through participation in scouting activities and providing logistical support in the form of playgrounds, halls, and equipment for practising the activities. Sixth, Health activities: These are activities that aim to increase awareness of ways to maintain mental and physical health through implementing health awareness programs and training that help maintain health. Seventh, Human rights activities: These are activities that aim to increase awareness of the rights and duties of individuals and enhance them by organizing programs to practice human rights activities. Lastly, Environmental activities, are activities that aim to preserve the environment through tourist trips, animal husbandry, and environmental preservation and hygiene campaigns.

2.2. Social skills

Al-Baaj (2020, p. 595) defined social skills as “the individual’s ability to interact with his peers, independence, and cooperation with others, the ability to self-control, in addition to the availability of personal skills in establishing positive, constructive relationships and managing matters and actions.” Hosokawa & Katsura (2017) defined these skills as a coordinated system of activities in which an individual aims to achieve a set of specific goals when he interacts with others or the process of an individual interacting with another individual who performs a social activity that requires him to achieve that harmony.

Social skills are important in the lives of individuals. They help achieve social adaptation among individuals within the institutions to which they belong. They contribute to individuals overcoming the problems they face and directing their interaction in the surrounding environment. They help individuals enjoy the activities they practice and satisfy their psychological needs, achieving autonomy, self-reliance, and enjoying leisure time. They gain individual self-confidence and participate with others in work that is consistent with their potential and abilities (Oraiba & Khaloufi, 2022).

Social skills consist of a set of elements (Afifi, 2019). Self-assertion skills: These are skills related to expressing negative and positive feelings and diverse opinions, defending rights, protecting and defining identity, and confronting pressures resulting from others. Emotional skills: They help in forming close friendly relationships with others, and managing interaction with them to interact, integrate with them, and get close to them. The skill of empathy and emotional participation is considered one of the main skills in emotional skills. Communication skills are divided into two parts, transmission skills and reception skills.

Social skills are characterized by a set of characteristics (Eid, 2023). They are characterized by being humane and preserved within the experiences of individuals due to their interaction with the environment, and thus it is the primary driver of behavior and directs it towards interaction in a positive way. They are acquired through the experiences and experiences that individuals are exposed to in different life situations. They consist of competence, skill, and experience in individuals performing activities and interacting with others. Social skills include the ability of individuals to control their behaviour and help individuals achieve psychological compatibility and social support through the environment in which they live.

2.3. Previous studies

Abdel Nabi (2023) explored the relationship between motor skills and social skills in children on the autism spectrum. The descriptive approach was used. The study sample consisted of (5) children on the autism spectrum in Egypt. The questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting data. The results showed a positive correlation between Motor skills in all their dimensions and social skills in all their dimensions.

Al-Qahtani (2023) investigated the role of competitive games in developing some social skills from the point of view of primary-grade teachers. The descriptive approach was used. The study sample consisted of (60) female teachers in the city of Hofuf. The questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting data, and the focus on social skills was (Personal skills, interactive initiative skills, and interactive response skills). The results of the study showed that competitive games affect interactive response skills to a high degree, that competitive games affect interactive initiative skills to a high degree, and that competitive games affect personal skills to a high degree.

Ghalis and Salem (2022) explored the role of extracurricular school activities in the academic achievement of basic education students from the point of view of teachers. The descriptive analytical method was used. The study sample consisted of (47) male and female teachers in the city of Sirte in Libya. The questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting data. The results of the study showed that there is a role for extracurricular school activities in academic achievement to a high degree and that there is a group of difficulties facing extracurricular school activities from the point of view of teachers with a high degree of approval.

Al-Maliki et al. (2022) identified the reality of social skills among students in early childhood and primary schools. The comparative descriptive approach was used. The study sample consisted of (182) students in the city of Jeddah. The questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting data. The results of the study showed that the level of social skills among students came at a high level and that there were statistically significant differences in the students' averages regarding the level of social skills due to the type of school and in favour of early childhood schools.

Naili and Hussein (2021) explored the impact of extracurricular activities in achieving academic adjustment for primary school students from the point of view of teachers. The descriptive approach was used. The study sample consisted of (120) male and female teachers. The questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting data. The results of the study showed that there is an impact Extracurricular activities contribute to achieving academic compatibility to a high degree, and there are statistically significant differences in the averages of the study sample members regarding the impact of extracurricular activities in achieving academic compatibility due to the gender variable and in favour of females.

Al-Raqqad and Bashtaq (2020) identified the role of extracurricular activities in developing psychological resilience among basic-grade students in private schools in the Amman Governorate from the point of view of their teachers. The descriptive analytical approach was used. The study sample consisted of (273) male and female teachers, and the questionnaire was used as a tool to collect data, and the results of the study showed that classroom activities have a role in developing psychological flexibility to a high degree. The results also showed that there are statistically significant differences in the averages of the study sample members due to the variables (gender, age, years of experience, and academic qualification).

Khatabah (2020) investigated the relationship between the forms of family interaction and social skills among Yarmouk University students. The descriptive, correlational approach was used. The study sample consisted of (452) male and female students. The questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting data. The results of the study showed that the forms of family interaction were highly High, and the level of social skills was high.

The results also showed that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between forms of family interaction and social skills and that there are statistically significant differences in the averages of the study sample members regarding social skills due to the gender variable and in favour of males.

Al-Otaibi and Al-Abbas (2019) explored the role of extracurricular activities in developing leadership skills among female students in the primary stage. The descriptive survey method was used. The study sample consisted of (160) activity leaders in the primary stage in the city of Riyadh. The questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting data, and the results showed The study showed that there is a role for classroom activities in developing leadership skills among female students to a very high degree and that there are obstacles in applying extracurricular activities to develop leadership skills with a high degree of approval. The results also showed that the members of the study sample agreed with the proposals put forward to activate extracurricular activities to develop leadership skills to a very high degree.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

The study used the descriptive survey method, due to its suitability to the nature of the study, by answering its questions and drawing conclusions based on the application of the tools represented in measuring the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills, due to its suitability for the study.

3.2. Sampling

The study population consisted of all public school students in Irbid Governorate in the first semester of 2023/2024. The study sample was chosen in a stratified random manner, as it was the most appropriate under the circumstances of the educational process. The study tool was distributed to school students using an electronic link. It was received Responses from students. The study sample consisted of (473) male and female students from various scientific, literary, industrial, and other specializations. The following table shows the distribution of the study sample members according to the variables of gender and specialization.

Table 1. Distribution of study sample members according to the variables of gender and specialization

Variable	Category	Number	Percentage %
Gender	Male	251	53.1
	Female	222	46.9
Specialization	Scientific	135	28.5
	Literary	145	30.7
	Industrial	103	21.8
	Other	90	19.0
Total		473	100

The table shows that the majority of the study sample was male participants, with the number of respondents being (251) and a percentage of (53.1%), while the number of respondents was female (222) and a percentage of (46.9%). As for the specialization variable, the table shows that most of the study sample consisted of those whose specialization was (literary), with several respondents (145) and a percentage of (30.7%), then those whose specialization was (scientific), with several respondents (135) and a

percentage of (28.5%), while those whose specialization was (28.5%). Industrial) The number of respondents was (103) with a percentage of (21.8%), and finally, those belonging to different specializations (others) with several respondents (90) and a percentage of (19%).

3.3. Instrument of the study

The social skills scale was developed by reviewing the theoretical literature and previous relevant studies and reviewing the scales and tools it included, such as the (Earls, 2011; Al-Hawyan, 2011; Al-Qatawneh, 2014). The questionnaire consisted of (19) items that measured the level of students' social skills. The scale consisted of positive items, and each item had five options to answer: (to a very weak degree, to a weak degree, to a moderate degree, to a great degree, to a very great degree), and to judge the degree.

3.3.1. Validity

The questionnaire was presented in its initial form to a group of arbitrators specialized in the principles of education and educational administration in Jordanian universities, to express their observations and opinions about the achievement of the questionnaire and its paragraphs for the objectives of the study, the extent to which the paragraphs belong to their axes, and the soundness of the paragraphs in terms of linguistic formulation. In light of this, the questionnaire was modified based on the judges' comments were finalized.

3.3.2. Reliability

To verify the stability of the study tool, Cronbach's alpha was used to ensure the stability of the scale of the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills, and the following table shows this.

Table 2. Reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha method

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
The role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills	19	.807

The table shows that Cronbach's alpha coefficient in the scale "The role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills" reached (.807), a high value that calls for confidence in the scale.

3.4. Data analysis

The Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used to analyze the responses of the study sample members, arrive at answers to the study's questions, and achieve its objectives. The following statistical methods were used, frequencies and percentages, arithmetic averages and standard deviations, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to verify the stability of the study tool, and the "T" test in the case of one sample (T-Test) was used to confirm the significance of the mean for each item of the questionnaire.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Results of the first question

The first question states, "What is the role of extracurricular activities in developing students' social skills?" To answer this question, arithmetic means, standard deviations, rank, and T value were used to determine the degree of agreement. The following table shows this.

Table 3. The arithmetic mean, standard deviation, rank, and T value for each paragraph of the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills and for the axis as a whole.

Item	Mean score	Standard deviation	Rank	Level	T value	Sig.
Extracurricular activities made it easier for me to make friends with others	3.11	.926	11	Medium	2.631	.000
Extracurricular activities helped me with self-control	3.15	.898	9	Medium	3.532	.000
Extracurricular activities enabled me to treat my peers with respect	2.74	1.012	17	Medium	5.591	.007
Extracurricular activities encouraged me to take on leadership roles outside the classroom	3.40	1.037	5	Medium	8.338	.009
Extracurricular activities enabled me to express my thoughts and feelings	3.62	1.043	2	High	12.963	.000
Extracurricular activities helped me advocate for my rights	3.14	1.113	10	Medium	2.726	.000
Extracurricular activities have made me listen more when others talk	3.13	1.101	14	Medium	2.630	.000
Extracurricular activities encouraged me to confront others	3.62	1.195	3	High	11.238	.000
Extracurricular activities contributed to my ability to organize my thoughts when faced with problems	3.66	1.197	1	High	11.986	.000
Extracurricular activities helped me control my emotions	2.12	1.099	19	Low	17.404	.000
Extracurricular activities increased my ability to control my anger	3.46	1.284	4	High	7.845	.000
Extracurricular activities made me more considerate of other people's feelings	3.23	1.045	6	Medium	4.886	.001
Extracurricular activities enabled me to easily identify my problems	3.24	1.114	7	Medium	4.624	.008
Extracurricular activities provided me with skills to deal with everyday life problems	2.53	1.168	18	Low	8.701	.017
Extracurricular activities increased my self-confidence	3.21	1.362	8	Medium	3.276	.026

Extracurricular activities encouraged me to rely on myself to face life's problems	3.15	1.269	13	Medium	2.646	.003
Extracurricular activities increased my ability to pick up a conversation and carry it on without shame	3.14	1.233	15	Medium	2.387	.000
Extracurricular activities increased my desire to participate in volunteer work	2.88	1.214	16	Medium	2.235	.000
Extracurricular activities encouraged me to engage in social engagements	3.16	1.178	12	Medium	3.007	.000
Social skills	3.14	.539		Medium	5.707	.007

It is evident from the table that the mean score for the paragraph that states, “Extracurricular activities contributed to my ability to organize my thoughts when facing problems” was (3.66 out of 5), which is ranked first, and this means that there is a large degree of agreement among the study sample members on this paragraph. The arithmetic means for the paragraph that states, “Extracurricular activities helped me control my emotions” was (2.12 out of 5), which is in last place. This means that there is weak agreement among the study sample members in this paragraph. The arithmetic means for the scale of the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills was (3.14 out of 5), meaning that there is a moderate degree of agreement among the study sample members on the axis of the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills.

This can be explained by the fact that the school administration and teachers are not fully aware of the educational importance of extracurricular activities and the educational goals and development that these activities achieve, and their weak knowledge of the effective impact of extracurricular activities on the teaching and learning process, which exceeds the impact of education in classrooms through academic subjects, in addition to their neglect of the importance of activities. Extracurricular activities are in forming the skills, habits, and thinking methods necessary to continue the teaching and learning process, and participating in the comprehensive development process through trips, radio, school journalism, the system group, and the prayer hall. It also appears that extracurricular activities are not treated as an important element in refining and building students' personalities and developing their abilities to accomplish work. Academy, which motivates students to deal with colleagues, teachers, and society positively. This result is consistent with the study of (Abdulnabi, 2023; Khattabah, 2020), and differs from the study of (Al-Qahtani, 2023; Ghallis and Salem, 2022; Al-Maliki et al., 2022; Nayli and Hussein, 2021; Al-Raqqad and Bashtak, 2020; Al-Otaibi, 2019).

4.2. Results of the second question

The second question states: “Are there statistically significant differences between the averages of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills due to the gender variable?” To answer this question, a “T” test was used for two independent samples, and the following table shows this.

Table 4. T-test results to detect differences in the means of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills due to the gender variable

Scale	Category	Number	Mean score	Standard deviation	T value	Sig.
Social skills	Male	251	3.25	.529	4.542	.000
	Female	222	3.02	.527		

It is clear from the table that the probability value (Sig) corresponding to the “T” test is less than the level of significance (0.05), and it can be concluded that there are statistically significant differences between the averages of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills due to the gender variable, and in favour of Male.

This can be explained by the fact that teachers encourage students to practice extracurricular activities and push them to develop social skills and that teachers benefit from extracurricular activities in acquiring social skills and consolidating them in students, in addition to teachers’ interest in and benefit from cognitive, scientific and cultural issues and emphasizing the necessity of personal and social harmony to bring students to a distinguished level in social skills and increased their ability to express positive emotions appropriately compared to female students. This result is consistent with (Nayli and Hussein, 2021; Al-Raqad and Bashtaq, 2020; Khatatbeh, 2020).

4.3. Results of the third question

The third question states: “Are there statistically significant differences between the averages of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills due to the specialization variable?” To answer this question, a one-way analysis of variance test was used, and the following table shows this.

Table 5. Results of the one-way analysis of variance test to detect differences in the means of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills due to the specialization variable.

Scale	Category	Number	Mean score	Standard deviation	T value	Sig.
Social skills	Scientific	135	3.20	.423	1.806	.145
	Literary	145	3.18	.557		
	Industrial	103	3.08	.641		
	Other	90	3.06	.528		

It is clear from the table that the probability value (Sig) corresponding to the one-way analysis of variance test is greater than the level of significance (0.05), and it can be concluded from this that there are no statistically significant differences between the averages of the study sample members regarding the role of extracurricular activities in developing social skills due to the specialization variable. This can be explained by the fact that students acquire social skills in an equal manner, without paying attention to one specialization over the other, because social skills increase students’ ability to interact and deal with different social situations, and learning social skills is acquired by students through their practice of many examples present in their environment.

5. Recommendations

The study recommends the necessity of reconsidering daily school schedules to allow for the practice of extracurricular activities to a greater extent. The study recommends reducing the teaching burden for teachers, to free up time to allocate a period to practice extracurricular activities. The Ministry of Education must pay greater attention to extracurricular activities, due to their importance to the learner and society at this age. It is important to hold training courses for male and female teachers to enable them to organize extracurricular activities. It is also recommended to provide financial resources, including tools, places, and funds, that contribute to increasing extracurricular activities in various ways.

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