

PARTICIPATION IN LITERARY ACTIVITIES AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL.

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ABSTRACT

Literary activities play a vital role in students' comprehensive development by improving their language and communication skills, promoting cultural awareness, fostering critical thinking, and contributing to their academic achievement and personal development. This study aimed to investigate students participating in literary activities and its relationship to students' academic achievement, and to find out the difference between the students' academic achievement who participate in literary activities and who don't not. The study was descriptive in nature. All Secondary school students in District Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan were the population of the study. Five hundred students were randomly selected. A self-designed questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale was used as an instrument for data collection. The researcher got the students' academic achievement records from the 9th class final board examination transcripts, which the District Bannu Board has recently issued. As descriptive statistics, the researcher used means, and stander deviation, while t-test, Pearson coefficient correlation was used to find out the relationship between students' academic achievement and their participation in literary activities. Results revealed that there is a positive relationship between literary activities and students' academic achievement. Furthermore, the results show that there is a significant difference in the academic achievement of those students who participate and those who do not participate in literary activities. The difference is in the favor of those students who participate in literary activities.

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INTRODUCTION

Literary activities such as debates are essential in developing students' intellectual aspect, and students' confidence grows quickly (Ivanova et al., 2017). Students participating in literary activities such as debates exhibit improved communication and teamwork; they become analytical and creative and solve others' problems best (Nghia, 2017). Students' mental ability grows and develops with debates (Okasha, 2020).

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Literary activities, including debates, quiz competitions, literary essay writing, pamphlets, and wallpapers, are not just about showcasing students' expertise. They also contribute significantly to their overall development (Siddiky, 2019). For instance, students participating in literary co-curricular activities like debates demonstrate enhanced intelligence, persuasion, and teamwork (Vos et al., 2018). Moreover, literature debates are pivotal in fostering young individuals' personality, ethics, and integrity in educational institutions (Singh, 2017). Debates are highly organized to facilitate the development of students' civic, behavioral, intellectual, physical, and mental abilities in society, developing their confidence (Derakhshan et al., 2016). Enrolling students in debate as an extracurricular activity helps these students achieve improved academic results and high scores (Abda, 2017). Students actively involved in literary organs always look for ways to adapt to diverse circumstances and situations; they always do their best to be happy, successful, well-adjusted, and satisfied (Al-Khazraji, 2019). Generally, literary activities analyze students' development from social, educational, and mental perspectives (Bakry & Alsamadani, 2015).

According to Arung and Jumardin (2016) in their work titled "Improving the Students' Speaking Skill through Debate Technique," debate skills are more effective when it comes to teaching tenth-grade students how to speak. Students who possess high intelligence achieve better speaking performance than those who have low intelligence, and teaching speaking at the school level depends on the interaction between techniques and students' intelligence (Tan & Pope, 2007). Through many forms of classroom speaking activities, such as script acting, communication games, survey questionnaires, simulation, and role-play, students can develop collaboration and critical skills (Nurhaida, 2017). Debate as a literary activity makes students become critical thinkers and problem solvers and improves their speaking skills (Malone & Michael, 2018). Students themselves gained a high level of confidence during the training, leading to better academic performance, better communication, and acceptable conduct. Debates immensely helped students become critical thinkers, men of judgment, and best men of public speaking (Ali et al., 2020).

The different forms of activities which are literature, drama, communal services and more, are included in co-curricular activities as well. The sports that have been around the school curriculum, and which have helped the students to develop their physiques are also curricular activities (Miltal, 1999). As per Daniyal et al. (2012), students would perform well academically if they engage in sports as well as creative and literary activities, whereas television watching tends to affect academic performance positively.

Although the importance of co-curricular activities in influencing educational outcomes, there is a notable gap in the literature regarding the specific impact of literary activities on academic achievement, especially among secondary school level in Pakistan. While there have been many studies have explored the general benefits of participation in co-curricular activities, only a limited number have examined the benefits of literary activities, such as Debates, quiz competitions, essay writing, book writing and wallpapers. Furthermore, the majority of research mostly comes from western context, where educational system and culture views towards literacy activities differ significantly from those in Pakistan. Therefore, the main objectives of study were to identify literary activities practiced by secondary school students, to determine the relationship between the literary activities and students' academic achievement, to find out the difference between the

academic achievement of students who participated in literary activities and who did not at secondary school. To accomplish these goals, this study addressed the following research questions.

1. What different literary activities are secondary school students participating in District Bannu?
2. Is there exists any relationship between literary activities and the academic achievement of students at the secondary school level?
3. Is there any difference between the academic achievement of students at the secondary school level who participated in literary activities and those who did not participate?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The main purpose of the study was to investigate participation in literary activities and its relationship to students' academic achievement at secondary school level Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The study was descriptive in nature. Hence, the survey research design was adopted for this study. Avwokeni (2003) explains that survey design involves collecting data from subjects without imposing conditions or treatments. Researchers ask for information through questionnaires. To design a survey, examine the population and if homogeneous, select a sample, choose respondents, and construct a questionnaire to collect data.

Population

The study sample consisted of male secondary school students from the District of Bannu, KPK, Pakistan. Kamal (1996) asserts that a statistical population refers to the whole set of individual components or things that possess specific characteristics of interest. The word "target population" refers to a specific subset of the overall population from which conclusions are sought to be made.

Sample size and sample technique

A random sample of 500 participants was selected from 20 secondary schools in District Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The researcher selected 25 participants from each school, following John Carry's (1984) recommended sample size table. The researcher employed a simple random sampling technique to select the respondents.

Table No. 1 displays the sample of participants selected from 20 secondary schools.

Total Number of Boys Secondary Schools	Total Numbers of Sampled School	Total Number of Respondents	Respondents from Each Sampled School
50	20	500	25

John Curry (1984) formula rule of thumb used for the determination of sample size

Rule of Thumb for selecting a sample from a population

10-100 100%

101-1000 10%

1001-5000 5%

5001-10000 3%

10000+ 1%

Source: (Curry, J.1984) Professor of Educational Research, North Texas University

Instrumentation

Data collection was conducted using a self-developed questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed with the help of a literature review, around many aspects of literary activities. To measure the respondents' responses, the researcher used the Five-Point Likert Scale, which included the following options: "Never," "Seldom," "Sometimes," "Usually," and "Always." These options were given the following values.

Table 2: A rating scale for the questionnaire

Serial Number	Scale	Values
I	Always	1
Ii	Usually	2
Iii	Sometime	3
Iv	Seldom	4
V	Never	5

Pilot study

The pilot study plays a crucial role in ensuring the quality of research. The primary objective of this investigation was to validate the research tool before initiating the main study. Burns and Grove (2001) stated that validity measures the truth or falsity of data obtained using a research instrument, encompassing both internal and external validity of the measuring instrument. In order to validate this tool, the initial draft was administered to a panel of ten experts, comprising six educationists, two psychologists, and two linguists. The experts provided valuable feedback on aspects such as tool conceptions, wording, and phrases. Subsequently, the suggested corrections were incorporated into the tool, resulting in the final draft. The ultimate version of the research tool was refined based on the experts' valuable suggestions.

The reliability of the research instrument means consistency, which is very important for collecting accurate data (Polit & Hungler, 1999). It also describes the degree to which the instrument administered independently produces equivalent results under similar circumstances (De-Vos, 1998). To assess the reliability of the research instrument, the researcher personally distributed and administered the questionnaires to a total of sixty (60) respondents. The reliability of the study was evaluated using the Cronbach's alpha value. Items with a total item correlation of .25 or less were excluded from the questionnaire. After removing eleven items, the final set of retained items remained thirty, demonstrating a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .90.

Table 3 shows the Cronbach Alpha value in tabular form

O.	VARIABLE	CRONBACH'S ALPHA VALUE
1	literary activities	.90

Data Collection Procedure

The student's academic achievement was obtained from their final 9th class Board exam detailed marks certificate (DMC) recently issued by the concerned Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Bannu. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the subjects.

Data Analysis Technique

The data was accurately evaluated using the Statistical Software Package for Social Science (SPSS version 24). As descriptive statistics, the researcher used means, and stander deviation, while t-test, Pearson coefficient correlation was used to find out the relationship between students' academic achievement and their participation in literary activities.

RESULTS

Table 4. Mean score of literary activities (N= 500)

S. No	Statement	M	SD
1	Participate in Tableau at school	2.00	1.57
2	Take part in speech competition at school	2.16	1.53
3	Contribute in essay and story writing competition at school	2.37	1.66
4	Enjoy book Reading at school	3.94	1.58
6	Being a part of national anthem competition team at school	2.47	1.60
7	Take active role in a play or drama at school	1.97	1.45
8	Participate in Qirat Competition at school	2.35	1.63
9	Participate in Naat competition at school	2.21	1.55
Overall mean score		2.43	.94

The above table shows that the highest-level mean score of Enjoy Book Reading at School (M = 3.94) and standard deviation (SD = 1.58) on average, participants express a high level of interest in Book Reading at school and the lowest mean score of participate in Naat Competition at School (M = 2.21) and Standard Deviation (SD = 1.55) the mean score indicates a moderate interest in Naat competition at school. The overall mean score for students' participation in literary activities is (M= 2.43) and (SD=.94). This suggests that students seldom participate in literary activities. The mean score falls within the range of seldom=1.51 to 2.50.

Table No. 5 shows the correlation between literary activities and students' academic achievement

Literary Activities	Pearson Correlation	1	.136**
	Sig. (Two-Tailed)		.002
	Sample Size	500	500
Academic Achievement	Pearson Correlation	.136**	1
	Sig. (Two-Tailed)	.002	
	Sample Size	500	500

The Pearson correlation was found to be significant at 0.01 level.

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Table 5 shows the Pearson Correlation between literary activities and students' academic achievement $r = .136^{**}$ and p value = .002 at a significant level of .05. The p -value less than .05, which means that there is positive relationship between literary activities and students' academic achievement.

Table-6 Comparison between students who participated in literary activities and those who did not.

	Variables	N	F	p	t	M	SD
Literary Activities	Participate	203	15.99	.000	7.582	24.39	8.76
	Not participate	297				19.09	6.83

The above table shows the mean (M) scores of the students who participated and those who did not participate in the literary activities are 24.39 and 19.09, respectively, with standard deviation (SD) 8.76 and 6.83. F value 15.99, P value .000 and t value 7.58 found significance at .05 level of significant which indicates that there is a significant difference in the academic achievement of those students who participate and who do not participate in literary activities. The difference is in the favor of those students who participate in literary activities because their academic scores were found to be better than those who do not participate.

DISCUSSION

Results revealed that secondary school students participate, on average, in literary activities. This finding is supported by Larasaty (2019), who described that artistic writing activities seldom involve students in poetry writing. Further, Astrid (2017) stated that students engage in writing activities, particularly when given peer feedback. The reason may be that participation in these activities can enhance their skills (such as critical thinking, communication, and creativity) or enhance their academic performance. In that case, they may be more motivated to engage actively.

Our findings indicated a significant relationship between students' academic achievement and literary activities. This finding is supported by Balan (2019) and Wang (2022), both found that reading habits and engagement, particularly in paper books, positively influence academic performance. Mallmann (2021) further supports this finding, there is a positive relationship between extracurricular activities and academic performance. Moreover, Aprilia (2020) found that reading interests directly affect students' achievement and motivate them. Participation in literary activities increases the student's motivation and engagement toward better learning. This positive attitude toward learning can have a significant effect on academic achievement and create a more favourable learning environment.

Findings revealed a significant difference between the academic achievement of students who participated in literary activities and those who didn't participate in literary activities. The difference favours those who participate in literary activities. This finding, supported by Fox (2019), stated that students who were highly engaged in co-curricular activities had higher GPAs and were less likely to have academic deficiencies. Further, Bataw (2022) also found that students who participated in various co-curricular activities had higher academic achievement. Engagement in literary activities, students develop the abilities of imagination, creativity, and empathy, which are the fundamental qualities of learning. Students

who engage in literary-based activities may approach learning with a creative mindset, resulting in more creative problem-solving and a better understanding of the academic material.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to investigate participation in literary activities and its relationship to students' academic achievement at secondary school level in district Bannu, KPK, Pakistan. The survey research design was used in this study. A random sample of five hundred participants was selected from twenty secondary schools. The researcher's self-developed questionnaire was used for data collection. The student's academic achievement was obtained from their final 9th class Board exam detailed marks certificate (DMC) recently issued by the concerned Board. For analyzing the data, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were employed. The results indicated that students seldom participate in literary activities. Results also show that there is a positive relationship between literary activities and students' academic achievement. Further, the results revealed that there is a significant difference in the academic achievement of those students who participate and those who did not participate in literary activities. The difference is in the favor of those students who participate in literary activities.

LIMITATION

In this study, we proposed a selected set of literary activities like debates, speech competitions and writing competitions. However, it could be narrow in scope, and other activities not mentioned in the study might be equally important in respect of academic achievement. The study mainly relied on the quantitative data. Therefore, it did not include the qualitative data, which may be significant in students' perceptions towards literary activities, experiences of academic achievement.

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