The International Journal of Indian Psychology
ISSN 2348-5396 (e) | ISSN: 2349-3429 (p)
Volume 7, Issue 3, DIP: 18.01.062/20190703
DOI: 10.25215/0703.062
http://www.ijip.in | July - September, 2019

The International Journal of INDIAN PSYCHOLOGY

Research Paper

Duration of Involvement and Types of Extracurricular Activities and Psychological Well-being of the University Students

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ABSTRACT

The present study was designed to explore the psychological well-being of university students on the basis of their duration of involvement and types of extracurricular activities. To reach at the end of the investigation of the study psychological well-being of 370 participants (students engaged in extracurricular activities=185, general students=185) was measured by administering MUNSH scale. The result of the study indicated that the duration of involvement is the best predictor for psychological well-being. The result also revealed that there is no significant difference in psychological well-being among the students of different extracurricular activities groups.

Keywords: *Extracurricular Activities, Psychological well-being, Undergraduate students*

Education is important for everyone to upgrade standards of living, to deals with problems and challenges, to get a better job, and overall to live as a self-conscious and responsible citizen. Since the beginning of the 20th century, education has been not only about the collection of knowledge but also has emphasized the understanding of the value of knowledge, critical thinking, creativity, motivation, social and life skills. The proper development of education advances an individual's emotional, spiritual, social, psychological, intellectual, creative and artistic potential. For these development studying academic courses are not enough. In this regard, extracurricular activities have come to play a significant role in student's improvements. Extracurricular activities (ECA) are activities outside of the core curriculum, such as sports, performing art, social activism, etc. Extracurricular activities are usually defined as learners' activities that fall outside the normal curriculum of an educational institution, they supplement the regular course of classroom instruction and are sometimes organized or conducted with some participation of instructors (Campbell, 1973). According to Shulruf (2010), extracurricular activities related to activities that are external to the core curriculum. In this study, the duration of involvement refers to the intensity of the engagement of different extracurricular activities, such as six months, one year, two years, three years and more than three years. In this study there are four types of

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Received: June 06, 2019; Revision Received: September 29, 2019; Accepted: September 30, 2019

extracurricular activities. These are Sports and Games, prosocial group, volunteer group, and cultural group.

Psychological well-being can be considered an individual's overall feelings based on their own life satisfaction, happiness, fulfillment, contentment, achievement, stress, and coping mechanisms. An individual will be high in psychological well-being in the degree to which he has an excess of positive over negative affect and will be low in well-being in the degree to which negative affect predominates over positive (Bradburn, 1969). According to Pavot and Diener (1993), Psychological well-being refers to the subjective experience of two aspects of one's psychological experience: Emotional or affective experience (i.e., positive and negative affect) and Conceptual or cognitive experience (i.e., satisfaction with life, relationships, work, and leisure). Wright (2010) defines psychological well-being as "a subjective and global judgment that one is experiencing a good deal of positive and relatively little negative feelings or emotions". The relevant literature reviews of the study are discussed below.

Knifsend (2018) conducted a study to examine linear and curvilinear associations of campus activity intensity and psychosocial well-being. The findings also suggest that students may benefit from getting involved as much as they can and that universities may highlight the importance of engaging in activities outside of the classroom through messaging or in-class presentations about the utility of campus involvement. Busseri et al. (2010) conducted a study and found that increasing the amount of breadth in extracurricular involvement predicted higher levels of social support, college adjustment, and optimism. Kavetsos (2011) conducted a study and suggested that increased frequency of engagement in sports is associated with higher levels of happiness. Thoits and Hewitt (2001) conducted a study on volunteer work and well-being using two waves of panel data from Americans changing lives. Results indicated that volunteer work indeed enhances all six aspects of well-being, and conversely, people who gave greater well-being invest more hours in volunteer service.

Markstrom et al. (2005) conducted their research on the relationship between ego development and involvement in structured extracurricular activities. The findings reported that participation in sports, student government, issue groups, and volunteering activities were related to hope, will, competence, purpose, and wisdom. Ussher et al. (2007) found that student's team sports participation is more related to their psychological well-being than an individual's sports. They also said that active leisure is positively related to psychological well-being than passive leisure. Findlay and Coplan (2008) conducted a study and indicated that adolescent's sports participation is positively associated with psychological well-being. Slutzky and Simpkins (2008) also reported that student's team sports participation is positively related to their self-esteem and psychological well-being. Poulin et al. (2013) conducted a study on the association between stress and mortality and revealed that volunteering activities are positively related to subjective well-being. Whillans et al. (2016) conducted a study and reported that subjective well-being and physical health is positively associated with volunteering activities. Finlay et al. (2012) conducted a study and found that well-being is positively related to participation in community service. In this regard, the researchers intended to justify the following objectives.

Objectives

1. To investigate whether the duration of involvement is the best predictor for psychological well-being.

2. To investigate the differences in psychological well-being among different extracurricular activities groups of university students.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The purposive sampling procedure was used to select the sample of the study. In this study, three hundred seventy participants were selected and essential data were collected from them. Among them, one hundred eighty-five participants were those students who were involved in extracurricular activities. The rest one hundred eighty-five were general students. Extracurricular based respondents were selected from four different extracurricular groups of Rajshahi University. These extracurricular activities groups were Sports and Games, prosocial group, volunteer group, and cultural group. General students were selected from the respective faculties by maintaining maximum similarities with students who involved in extracurricular activities.

Instrument and Scoring

Kozma and Stones (1980) developed the MUNSH scale for measuring happiness. Bilkis Akter adapted the Bangla version of this scale in 2003. The MUNSH happiness scale included 24 positively and 24 negatively balanced items for measuring short time (Affective) and long-term dispositional components. Ten of the questions (PA and NA) were affecting oriented (ABS or Affect Balance Scale) type where asking how the respondents had been feeling in the past month. The rest 14 dispositional items (PE and NE) search the different life experiences where respondents required to reflect back their life. Each item of the questions has three alternative answers. These are Yes, Don't know and No. The value of Yes=2, Don't know=1, and No=0 except 19 and 23 items, in the case of 19 and 23 items Yes=2 and Don't know and No=0. The computation formula of this scale is (PA-NA+PE-NE), the scores vary from -24 to +24. Then a constant of 24 is added to obtain a total MUNSH score to avoid minus scores. Thus, MUNSH Total= (PA-NA+PE-NE) +24. Therefore, the MUNSH score range varies from zero to 48. A high total score indicates a higher level of happiness and a low total score indicates a lower level of happiness.

Procedure

Standard data collection procedure was followed to collect information from the respondents. During data collection, investigators had to take consent cooperation from the participants. While collecting data, participants were introduced about psychological well-being. They were requested to help the investigators for collecting data. Participants were informed of the purpose of the current study and the necessary rapport was established before administering the scale. They have guaranteed the confidentiality of their responses. Firstly, respondents were informed to fill up personal information. Then, the participants were also informed to read all of the items of the scales responsively and to answer appropriately. They are requested to give tick mark in the appropriate box of this scale. They are also requested to fill up all of the items of scales and not to omit any item in the questionnaire and told that there was no right or wrong answer. If the respondent was not clear about any questions, he/she was allowed to ask the researchers any question and researchers gave answer every question raised by them and gave all possible clarification. Although there is no time limit to the completion of the questionnaire, they were requested to full fill their task as soon as possible. After completion of fill up of all items of the questionnaire, the investigators had collected all questionnaire from the participants and checked all them up carefully. At last, the investigators thanked all participants for their earnest co-operation.

RESULTS

The obtained data were analyzed by using multiple regression and t-test as statistical tools through IBM SPSS (version-20). The results of the present study are discussed in the following section.

Table-1: Multiple regression of gender, age, students engaged in ECA, faculty, and duration of involvement on psychological well-being

Independent variable	Beta	*t*	Sig. level
Gender	-.106	-1.450	.149
Age	-.066	-.830	.407
Students engaged in ECA	.033	.453	.651
Faculty	-.093	-1.274	.204
Duration of involvement	.216	2.729*	.007

*Overall F test=2.458, *P<0.05*

From the above table, it is observed that F=2.458 and the p-value is less than 0.05. It is also observed that the duration of involvement is the best predictor for psychological well-being than any others.

Table-2: One way ANOVA for the mean difference of Psychological well-being among different extracurricular activities groups of Rajshahi University

Psychological Well-being	Sources of Variance (SV)	Sum of Squares (SS)	*df*	Mean Squares (MS)	*F*
	Between Group	573.64	3	191.22	2.59
	Within Group	13359.29	181	73.81	
	Total	13932.94	184		

P=NS

The above table shows that mean square of between groups is 191.22 and the within groups is 73.81, the degrees of freedom (*df*) of between groups is 3 and within groups is 181. The calculated value of F is 2.59 and P is >.05. This result indicates that there is no significant difference in psychological well-being among different extracurricular activities groups of Rajshahi University.

Table-3: The summary of Post Hoc Tests (Tukey) of different extracurricular activities types and their psychological well-being

ECA groups	ECA groups	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Sports and Games	Prosocial groups	1.05556	1.81118	.937
	Volunteer group	-2.80000	2.21823	.588
	Cultural group	-2.82857	2.13754	.549
Prosocial groups	Sports and Games	-1.05556	1.81118	.937
	Volunteer group	-3.85556	1.81118	.148
	Cultural group	-3.88413	1.71140	.109
Volunteer group	Sports and Games	2.80000	2.21823	.588
	Prosocial groups	3.85556	1.81118	.148
	Cultural group	-.02857	2.13754	1.000
Cultural group	Sports and Games	2.82857	2.13754	.549
	Prosocial groups	3.88413	1.71140	.109
	Volunteer group	.02857	2.13754	1.000

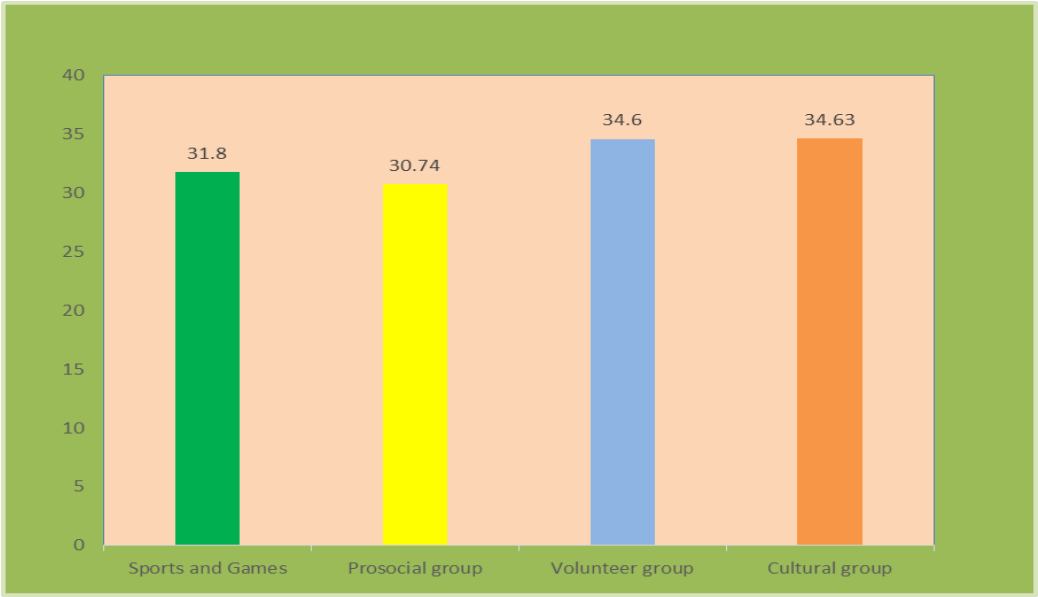

Figure-1: Graphical representation of mean scores of Psychological well-being among different extracurricular activities groups of Rajshahi University

DISCUSSION

The main objective of the present study was to investigate whether the duration of involvement is the best predictor for psychological well-being. Toward this end, psychological well-being of 370 (students engaged in extracurricular activities=185, general students=185) undergraduate students of Rajshahi University was measured by administering of MUNSH Happiness scale. It is observed that the duration of involvement is the best predictor for psychological well-being than any others variables (Table-1: $F=2.458$; $P<0.05$). This result is consistent with the findings of the earlier study of Knifsend (2018), Busseri et al (2010), Kavetsos (2011), Thoits and Hewitt (2001). The relationships with peers and adults formed through extracurricular activities are important in fostering interpersonal competence that leads to higher self-esteem and greater future developmental outcomes. Duration of involvement in extracurricular activities also improves student's social support, good adjustment ability, optimism and reduces their anxiety, stress, and depression relatively long time. That is why the duration of involvement may be the best predictor of psychological well-being.

Results also indicated that there is no significant difference in psychological well-being among the students of different extracurricular activities groups (table-2: F=2.59, *df*=3, 181; and P>0.05). This result is consistent with the findings of the earlier study of Markstrom et al. (2005), Ussher et al. (2007), Poulin et al. (2013). Probably different extracurricular activities may equally help students to progress their self-confidence, intellectual development, cognitive moral development, positive attitude, internal locus of control. That's why psychological well-being would same among different extracurricular activities groups.

In conclusion, the researchers suggest that the duration of involvement in any extracurricular activities increase the psychological well-being of the students. The investigators also suggest that university authority should take necessary steps in this regard.

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Acknowledgements
This article is the partial part of the M.S. thesis. The thesis has been financially supported by the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Government of Bangladesh.

Conflict of Interest
The author declared no conflict of interests.

How to cite this article: Hossan. R., Khan. M.H.A, & Hasan. T (2019). Duration of Involvement and Types of Extracurricular Activities and Psychological Well-being of the University Students. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, *7*(3), 580-586. DIP:18.01.062/20190703, DOI:10.25215/0703.062