

Promotion of Values and Cultural Preservation through Co-Curricular Activities in Mizoram

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Abstract

In Mizoram, cultural identity and community values play a significant role, schools serve not only as centers of academic learning but also as vital spaces for cultural transmission and character formation. Hence, this paper explores the co-curricular activities available in the Secondary Schools of Lawngtlai and Champhai Districts and their role in promoting values and preserving cultural heritage in Mizoram. This study following a qualitative approach investigating how co-curricular activities contribute to the development of essential values while also preserving and celebrating the rich Mizo cultural heritage. The findings reveal that most schools lack activities focusing on cultural promotion while most of the available activities stress mainly on value inculcation. The study emphasises the need for educational policies that emphasize culturally relevant co-curricular programs, which have the potential to enhance both individual character and cultural continuity in a rapidly modernizing society.

Keywords: *Values, Culture, Co-curricular Activities, Cultural Preservation, Holistic Development*

Introduction

In an era of rapid globalization and cultural blending, preserving cultural identity and instilling core values in younger generations has become a huge priority for educators and communities. Schools, as primary institutions for shaping future citizens, hold a unique role in this area, particularly in regions rich in cultural diversity. Education serves as a powerful tool for nurturing values and preserving cultural

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heritage, particularly in multicultural societies. Secondary schools play a crucial role in shaping students' character and instilling a sense of cultural identity. In the districts of Champhai and Lawngtlai in Mizoram, India, where diverse ethnic groups and rich cultural traditions coexist, the education system holds a unique responsibility to promote values that uphold social harmony and respect for heritage. Within this context, co-curricular activities emerge as a vital channel for cultural preservation and value-based education. Co-curricular activities help develop students' holistic development and assist in developing critical skills and abilities to be successful and happy in 21st Century life and workplaces. Therefore, the importance of co-curricular activities is immense during school and college education (Sarkar,2024). A teacher's contribution towards fostering genuine values is a challenging task in view of the stifling academic pressure he usually faces in his job. Still, co-curricular activities should be made an integral part of curriculum (Venkataswamy, 2017).

Co-curricular activities, which complement academic learning, encompass a range of practices such as music, dance, sports, debates, art, and community service etc that offer students opportunities to engage deeply with their culture and values. Culture and value-based co-curricular activities expose students to different cultures and traditions. This way, they expand their cultural awareness and respect (Cole, 2023). Through activities like indigenous dance, traditional crafts, local sports, and cultural festivals, students can explore, experience, and embrace the cultural richness of their heritage. These activities provide a dynamic space for students to experience and embody traditions while developing essential life skills, including teamwork, empathy, leadership, and civic responsibility. In regions like Champhai and Lawngtlai, where students' backgrounds and values are closely tied to local culture, such activities can be instrumental in both promoting positive values and preserving cultural heritage. Some co-curricular activities can deepen learners' understanding of their cultural heritage. Events like drama, folk songs and dances, exhibitions, and religious observances are good opportunities for students to learn about their culture better. This encourages global cohesion while enhancing an awareness of one's own national identity as well (Unis Hanoi).

The purpose of this research is to explore the types of co-curricular activities which are present in the schools and their effectiveness in fostering values and preserving cultural heritage in the secondary schools of Champhai and Lawngtlai districts. This study aims to understand how various co-curricular programs contribute to student's character development, cultural awareness, and appreciation of their heritage. By analysing the practices, challenges, and outcomes associated with co-curricular activities in these districts, this research seeks to highlight the ways in which schools can integrate value education and cultural preservation into

the educational experience, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and culturally enriched learning environment.

Rationale of the Study

With the growing globalization and modernization traditional cultures, values, and identities of nations around the world face impacts. This has brought new opportunities and challenges for the preservation and transmission of culture and values, particularly for indigenous and rural communities. Co-curricular activities, such as traditional arts, sports, literature, and community-based projects etc play a key role in this process by strengthening cultural awareness, and imparting ethical values to the younger generation. This study examines the type of co-curricular activities which are present and their roles in promoting values and preserving cultural heritage among secondary school students in Champhai and Lawngtlai districts. With globalization and modernization our traditional values and identities are being defied and there is an urgent need to reinforce cultural pride and ethical foundations among younger generations. By investigating how these activities are integrated into the school curriculum, this study aims to provide insights into enhancing cultural education and value transmission, which are essential for sustaining cultural identity and strengthening social bonds.

Research Questions

- 1) What are the types of co-curricular activities practiced for value inculcation in Secondary Schools of Champhai District?
- 2) What are the types of co-curricular activities practiced for value inculcation in Secondary Schools of Lawngtlai District?
- 3) What are the types of co-curricular activities practiced for Cultural Preservation in Secondary Schools of Champhai District?
- 4) What are the types of co-curricular activities practiced for Cultural Preservation in Secondary Schools of Lawngtlai District?

Objectives of the Study

- 1) To find out the types of co-curricular activities which are practiced for value inculcation in the Secondary Schools of Champhai District
- 2) To find out the types of co-curricular activities which are practiced for value inculcation in the Secondary Schools of Lawngtlai District
- 3) To find out the types of co-curricular activities which are employed for cultural preservation in the Secondary Schools of Champhai District
- 4) To find out the types of co-curricular activities which are employed for cultural preservation in the Secondary Schools of Lawngtlai District
- 5) To give recommendation based on the results of the study

Methodology of the Study

Research Approach- The study follows Descriptive Survey Method and is Qualitative in nature.

Sample- The study follows Stratified Random Sampling Method for drawing the sample and the sample consists of six schools. Three from the district of Champhai and three from Lawngtlai District

Tool of the study- For the present study Check List was used by interviewing the headmasters of the schools.

Findings

Objective 1:

The following table shows the kind of co-curricular activities which are used for value inculcation in the Secondary Schools of Champhai. The schools are represented as A, B, and C

Table 1

Co-curricular activities for promotion of values

| Sl no | Items | A | B | C |
|-------|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Social Service | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 2. | Seminars and Workshops | | ✓ | |
| 3. | Cleanliness Drive | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 4. | Work Education (eg gardening etc) | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 5. | Debate and discussion | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 6. | NCC, NSS | | ✓ | |
| 7. | Scouts and Guides | | | |
| 8. | Arts and Crafts | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 9. | Library Class | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 10. | Gospel Crusades | | | |
| 11. | Blood Donation | | ✓ | |
| 12. | Services during Calamities | | | |
| 13. | Awarding prizes (eg- student of the year) | | ✓ | |
| 14. | Different Student Clubs | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 15. | Sports | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

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| | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | Morning Assemblies: | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 16. | Morning Prayers | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Oath pledge | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 17. | Field Trips/ Excursions | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 18. | Participatory program- dance, drama | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 19. | Mentoring needy students | | ✓ | |
| 20. | Physical Exercise | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 21. | Creative Writing- poetry, stories etc | | ✓ | |
| 22. | Singing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 23. | Painting | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 24. | Quiz | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 25. | Charity Events | | ✓ | |

Interpretation:

The table reveals Champhai's strong commitment to value-based education through different activities.

Activities like Social Service, Cleanliness Drives, Sports, Morning Assemblies (including prayers and pledges), Field Trips, and Different Participatory Programs, Singing, Painting and Quiz are common across all schools. These activities promote essential values like community service, teamwork, patriotism, environmental awareness, cultural appreciation, and intellectual curiosity.

Certain schools place emphasis on activities like Work Education (gardening), Debate and Discussion, Arts and Crafts, Library Class, Student Clubs, and Physical Exercise. These activities foster creativity, responsibility, and academic involvement, contributing to well-rounded character development in students.

One school offers activities such as Seminars and Workshops, NCC/NSS, Blood Donation, Awards (like Student of the Year), Mentoring for Needy Students, Creative Writing (poetry, stories), and Charity Events. These activities help build a sense of community, responsibility, and personal growth.

Activities like Scouts and Guides, Gospel Crusades, and Services During Calamities are not currently included in the programs at any school in Champhai. Adding these could broaden the range of value-based education opportunities.

Objective 2:

The following table shows the kind of co-curricular activities which are used for value inculcation in the Secondary schools of Lawngtlai. The schools are represented as D, E, and F

Table 2

Co-Curricular Activities for promotion of values

| Sl no | Items | D | E | F |
|-------|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Social Service | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 2. | Seminars and Workshops | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 3. | Cleanliness Drive | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 4. | Work Education (eg gardening etc) | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 5. | Debate and discussion | ✓ | | |
| 6. | NCC, NSS | | | ✓ |
| 7. | Scouts and Guides | | | |
| 8. | Arts and Crafts | | | |
| 9. | Library Class | | ✓ | |
| 10. | Gospel Crusades | | | |
| 11. | Blood Donation | ✓ | | |
| 12. | Services during Calamities | ✓ | | |
| 13. | Awarding prizes (eg- student of the year) | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 14. | Different Student Clubs | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 15. | Sports | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Morning Assemblies: | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 16. | Morning Prayers | | | ✓ |
| | Oath pledge | ✓ | | |
| 17. | Field Trips/ Excursions | | ✓ | |
| 18. | Participatory program- dance, drama | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 19. | Mentoring needy students | | | ✓ |
| 20. | Physical Exercise | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 21. | Creative Writing- poetry, stories etc | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 22. | Singing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 23. | Painting | ✓ | ✓ | |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| 24. Quiz | ✓ | ✓ |
| 25. Charity Events | | |

Interpretation:

Activities such as Social Service, Sports, Morning Assemblies (including prayers and oath taking), Participatory Programs (dance, drama), Singing, and Physical Exercise are common in all the schools. These activities help promote values like community service, teamwork, discipline, cultural appreciation, and physical well-being across the district.

Schools such as D and E focus on Work Education (such as gardening), Cleanliness Drives, and Painting, reinforcing environmental awareness, creativity, and a hands-on approach to learning. Seminars and Workshops as well as student clubs are also available in Schools E and F, encouraging academic engagement and personal growth. D and F schools encourages students by recognizing their achievement by awarding prizes and promotes creativity and self-expression through creative writings.

School D offers activities that promote civic engagement like Blood Donation, Services During Calamities, and School E offers Library Classes and Field trips which provide additional academic support and curiosity. School F offers NCC/NSS and Mentoring Needy Students which help develop leadership skills, discipline, and peer support.

Activities, such as Arts and Crafts, Scouts and Guides, Gospel Crusades, and Charity Events, are not currently included in any schools in Lawngtlai.

Objective 3:

The following table shows the kind of co-curricular activities which are used for Cultural Preservation in the secondary schools of Champhai. The schools are represented as A, B, and C.

Table3
Co-Curricular Activities for Promotion of Culture

| Sl no | ITEM | A | B | C |
|-------|--|---|---|---|
| 1. | Field Trips (visiting historical sites, museums etc) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 2. | Folkdance/ Hnam lam | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 3. | Cultural Games | | ✓ | |

| | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|
| 4. | Folksongs | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 5. | Cultural Functions | | ✓ | |
| 6. | Celebrating Cultural Festival | | ✓ | |
| 7. | Cultural Exhibitions | | ✓ | |
| 8. | Work Experience (eg. Buh thlei etc) | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 9. | Social Service | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 10. | Seminars/ Workshops | | ✓ | |
| 11. | Crafts work | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 12. | Weaving | | ✓ | |
| 13. | Debate and Discussions | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 14. | Essay/Article Writing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 15. | Cultural Clubs | | ✓ | |
| 16. | Dramas and Plays | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 17. | Painting/Drawing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 18. | Creative Writing- Story, Poetry,Article,essay, | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 19. | Song composition | | ✓ | |
| 20. | Culture related Quiz Competition | | ✓ | |
| 21. | Fancy Dress | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 22. | Dance and Music Competitions | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 23. | Hnatlang | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 24. | Pawnto | | | |
| 25. | Mizo incheina hak ni (traditional attire day) | | ✓ | |

Interpretation:

All the three schools participate in Field Trips (to historical sites and museums), Folkdance, Social Service, Debate and Discussions, Essay/Article Writing, Painting/ Drawing, and Creative Writing (including stories, poetry, and essays). These activities collectively promote connection with their roots, cultural awareness, creativity, and social responsibility among students.

School A focuses on Work Experience, Debate and Discussions, Dramas and Plays. These activities reflect an emphasis on community engagement, practical learning experiences, and enhancing public speaking and performance skills.

School B shows a great performance participating in almost all of the activities except Pawnto. Present activities include Cultural Functions and Celebrating Cultural Festivals Cultural Clubs, Cultural Exhibitions, Seminars and Workshops, Weaving, Song Composition, Culture related Quiz Competitions, Mizo incheina hak ni, which are not present in other schools. These activities promote a strong sense of community and cultural identity, emphasizing community involvement and cultural celebration, creating an environment where students can connect with their heritage through active participation and creates awareness for the needs of cultural appreciation and preservation.

School C includes activities like Folksongs, Craftwork, Fancy Dress and Dance and Music Competition these activities promote opportunities to showcase the culture and creates opportunities for cultural engagement.

Objective 4:

The following table shows the kind of co-curricular activities which are used for cultural preservation in the secondary schools of Lawngtlai. The schools are represented as D, E and F

Table4

Co-Curricular Activities for Promotion of Culture

| Sl no | ITEM | A | B | C |
|-------|--|---|---|---|
| 1. | Field Trips (visiting historical sites, museums etc) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 2. | Folkdance/ Hnam lam | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 3. | Cultural Games | | ✓ | |
| 4. | Folksongs | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 5. | Cultural Functions | | ✓ | |
| 6. | Celebrating Cultural Festival | | ✓ | |
| 7. | Cultural Exhibitions | | ✓ | |
| 8. | Work Experience (eg. Buh thlei etc) | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 9. | Social Service | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 10. | Seminars/ Workshops | | ✓ | |
| 11. | Crafts work | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 12. | Weaving | | ✓ | |
| 13. | Debate and Discussions | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 14. | Essay/Article Writing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

| | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|
| 15. | Cultural Clubs | | ✓ | |
| 16. | Dramas and Plays | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 17. | Painting/Drawing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 18. | Creative Writing- Story, Poetry,Article,essay, | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 19. | Song composition | | ✓ | |
| 20. | Culture related Quiz Competition | | ✓ | |
| 21. | Fancy Dress | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 22. | Dance and Music Competitions | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 23. | Hnatlang | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 24. | Pawnto | | | |
| 25. | Mizo incheina hak ni (traditional attire day) | | ✓ | |

Interpretation:

Painting/Drawing is offered at all three schools which highlights a focus on artistic expression and celebrate cultural beauty

Social Service and Debate and Discussion are present in both D and F indicating a shared emphasis on community involvement and service as well as cultural engagement through public speaking. B and C offers Fancy Dress which celebrates and displays the cultural attire. Hnatlang and Mizo incheina hak ni are available in A and B demonstrating a commitment to social engagement and community service and celebration of local culture.

In School A Essay/Article Writing, and culture related Quiz competitions are present. These activities focus on written expression and fosters cultural knowledge. School B offers Creative Writing which emphasizing written cultural preservation. Folkdance, Folksong and Seminars/ Workshops are present in school C, these activities showcase a focus on traditional Mizo music and dance and suggest structured programs related to culture.

Recommendations

- 1) Though Champhai shows great performance in most of the value inculcated activities. Activities such as Scouts and Guides, NCC/NSS which instils teamwork, leadership and essential life skills and Services during calamities and Charity Events which would provide students with opportunities to develop empathy, compassion, and a sense of duty towards others as well as activities

which promotes morality and faith such as Gospel Crusade should be worked on and given more focus.

- 2) Just as the District of Champhai, Lawngtlai District also needs stress on activities such as Scouts and Guides, Gospel Crusade and Charity Events. The district also lacks the presence of Arts and Crafts which would promote creativity, artistic expression, craftsmanship and enhance their cognitive and fine motor skills. By adding these activities, Lawngtlai schools can offer a more comprehensive and holistic experience, emphasizing creativity, leadership, faith, and community involvement and foster strong moral values.
- 3) Champhai has rich cultural co-curricular activities. However, work must be done on creating cultural clubs in all the schools which would make it easier to transmit and learn different cultural dances and folksongs as well as celebrate different cultural functions. This will allow students to explore cultural topics within their curriculum, it will also enhance their understanding and appreciation of their cultural identity.
- 4) Schools in Lawngtlai District needs much work and focus on cultural related activities. Field trips to different Historical sites can help students develop a bond with their cultural heritage by providing them with firsthand experiences and foster a sense of cultural identity. Organizing cultural games encourage participants to engage with traditional customs and practices in a fun and interactive way. Work experience and crafts work enhances their practical skills while deepening their understanding and appreciation of traditional practices and values. Cultural clubs can serve as platforms for students to actively engage with their heritage, encouraging the exploration and celebration of cultural traditions through various activities and events. By implementing these activities, the schools can foster a richer cultural environment, and promote the preservation of local traditions and values.

Discussion and Conclusion

From the findings of the present study the districts of Champhai and Lawngtlai have shown good performance in their co- curricular activities regarding value inculcation and efforts have been made in this area. The Secondary Schools in Champhai district demonstrate a well-organized and effective approach to instil values through co-curricular activities. The active participation in important activities ensures that all students develop fundamental values making Champhai's approach holistic and impactful in fostering well-rounded, value-oriented students. Schools in Lawngtlai offer a wide variety of activities that promote personal, academic, and

civic values. Incorporating more diverse activities, like Charity Work and Scouts and Guides, NCC/NSS, Arts and Crafts etc, could further support students' development and enhance value-oriented learning.

The Secondary Schools of Champhai by offering a diverse range of co-curricular activities foster an environment where students can explore their cultural heritage, engage in community service, and develop creativity and critical thinking skills. This not only helps in preserving cultural practices but also equips students with essential life skills. Regarding the district of Lawngtlai, though some activities are present regarding cultural preservation it is desirable that more cultural related activities as well as culture related games be practiced as further expansion of cultural and community-based programs would further enrich student's educational experiences and strengthen their cultural identity.

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