



THE ROLE AND OPPORTUNITIES OF FOREIGN EXPERIENCE IN ORGANIZING EXTRA-CURRICULAR EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

This article analyzes the role of extracurricular activities in the personal, social and professional development of students based on foreign experience. Practices in higher education institutions in the USA, Finland, Germany, Japan and South Korea were compared. The results of the study showed that extracurricular activities effectively contribute to the development of students' soft skills, creativity and professional readiness. These experiences are also important as an important methodological direction for the education system of Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Extracurricular activities, soft skills, foreign experience, student development, pedagogical approach.

Introduction

Today, modern higher education institutions are not limited to providing academic knowledge, but also fulfill the task of preparing students as successful and adaptable individuals in society. In this regard, extracurricular activities - sports, arts, science clubs, volunteering and professional programs - are becoming an important tool in the formation of personal, social and professional competencies of the student. These activities serve to increase soft skills (communication, leadership, teamwork), creativity, stress management and adaptability to the labor market. In response to the demands of digital



transformation and the global labor market, linking extracurricular activities with digital competencies is also of particular importance.

In the higher education system, the comprehensive development of students not only through classroom activities, but also through extracurricular activities has become an urgent issue. These activities enrich the curriculum, increase motivation, develop personal and professional skills, and ensure integration into society. Scientific sources (Herrera, Paisan, Chicaiza, Garcia) emphasize that extracurricular activities serve to develop creativity, leadership, and divergent thinking. Also, the use of digital technologies in the modern educational process, training students in media and digital literacy, are inextricably linked with extracurricular activities. In the current conditions of globalization and competition, higher education institutions must fulfill the task of not only imparting knowledge, but also forming personal qualities, social activity, and competitiveness in the labor market. Therefore, organizing extracurricular activities on the basis of a systematic, purposeful, and innovative approach is an important factor in student success.

Methods

This study was conducted with this goal in mind, based on scientific articles published between 2015 and 2024, reports of international organizations (UNESCO, OECD), government agencies, and official websites of universities. At least 10 primary sources were selected for each country, and literature review and content analysis were used as the main methods. Extracurricular activity programs of selected universities were studied electronically, and the data obtained were grouped into four categories through thematic analysis: form of activity (sports, scientific, social, digital), source of funding (state, sponsorship, university budget), mechanism of influence on the student (soft skills, motivation, employment), and assessment system (credits, certificates, additional scholarships). Each source was independently coded by two researchers, and discrepancies were resolved by consensus, which increased the reliability of the results. The SWOT analysis method was used to determine the aspects in which foreign experience can be adapted for higher education institutions in Uzbekistan, and recommendations were developed on this basis.



Results

US experience. Extracurricular activities at American universities are very wide. Sports competitions, art and music programs, volunteer projects, science and technology clubs, student government, startups and innovation projects - all this allows students to develop their interests, improve leadership, critical thinking and teamwork skills. Many universities evaluate soft skills along with GPA.

Finnish experience. In this country, students participate in various social events (festivals, trips, master classes), sports competitions, cultural programs, professional development seminars, networking and volunteering. Extracurricular activities are mainly organized through student unions (Ylioppilaskunta), associations and clubs. This process serves to integrate students into society, improve professional skills and develop personal interests.

German experience. In Germany, sports, cultural, social activities, interest clubs, student exchange programs, part-time jobs, psychological support services are widespread. Universities and student associations (for example, EF Education First) coordinate extracurricular activities. Through this, students have opportunities for personal development, a healthy lifestyle, work experience, and language development.

Japanese experience. Along with sports (baseball, judo, kendo) and cultural (ikebana, tea ceremony, orchestra) clubs called “bukatsu”, there are also informal groups called “sakuru”. Such classes, organized through universities and student clubs, develop discipline, teamwork, creativity, and social skills. In the Japanese education system, extracurricular activities are conducted on the basis of very strict discipline.

The South Korean experience. Clubs, cultural events, sports competitions, volunteer and work experience programs are widely implemented here. Universities and student organizations enrich students with cultural experiences and social connections in addition to academic education.



These results suggest that successful extracurricular activities rely on structure, resources, and student motivation . In the United States and Germany, credit systems increase student participation, in Finland and Japan, cultural traditions stabilize these activities, and South Korea has expanded the scope through digital technologies . For the higher education system of Uzbekistan , linking clubs and volunteer programs in universities with a credit or certificate system, expanding funding through public-private partnerships, creating online communities that unite students on digital platforms, and introducing a system of indicators to assess the personal and professional development of students are recommended as the most flexible directions. These approaches serve to increase student activity and competitiveness in the labor market, while at the same time demonstrating the need to adapt to local conditions rather than completely copying a foreign model.

Table 1 (country experiences)

Country	Main directions	Organizers	Skills to be developed
USA	Sports, arts, volunteering, science clubs, startup projects	Universities, student government	Leadership, critical thinking, innovative thinking
Finland	Social events, professional development, volunteering	Student unions (Ylioppilaskunta), clubs	Networking, professional training, teamwork
Germany	Sports, culture, student exchange, part-time work	Universities, student associations	Personal development, language competence, work experience
Japan	"Bukatsu" - sports and culture, "Sakuru" - informal groups	Universities, student clubs	Discipline, teamwork, creativity
South Korea	Clubs, cultural events, volunteering, work experience	Universities and student organizations	Academic enrichment, cultural experience, social connection

Discussion

Analysis shows that the main benefits of extracurricular activities are personal development, professional preparation, leadership, healthy lifestyle and intercultural communication. At the same time, the abundance of activities and strict discipline (especially in Japan) can sometimes require more time and



dedication from students. However, it is also necessary to establish a system of incentives to increase student motivation. The use of foreign experience in higher education in Uzbekistan, in particular the integration of digital and distance forms, increases the effectiveness of extracurricular activities. The teacher should organize the lesson in such a way that the process of independent learning of students is combined with extracurricular activities. For example, combining scientific circles, startup projects, online courses, volunteer programs creates a wide range of opportunities for students.

Conclusion

are an important factor in the comprehensive development of students, making them competitive in the labor market. Foreign experiences can also be useful for the education system of Uzbekistan in introducing modern trends. When planning these activities, it is necessary to take into account the needs of students, modern digital technologies and opportunities for international cooperation. These opportunities **ensure** not only the academic development of the student, but also his **social, cultural and professional growth**.

foreign experiences, we can observe that extracurricular activities can increase the effectiveness of education, and in each country these activities are adapted to national values and social needs. The best approach for our homeland, Uzbekistan, is to adapt international experiences to local conditions.

studying foreign experiences, we recommend the following within the framework of this research work:

support for extracurricular activities in higher education institutions. Organization of scientific projects, innovation clubs, specialized circles, implementation of practical training in cooperation with employers.

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