



Communication between Students and Teachers in Realization of Extracurricular Activities

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Abstract: Extracurricular activities represent educational, preplanned actions which enable complete confirmation of students' personality as well as development of their communication skills and competencies; whilst they enable the teachers to expand their educational influence. Modern school can't be imagined without innovations or modifications to the entire communicational discourse, since its perspective is to be a progressive model whereat main communicational types of behavior are learnt and formed. The research was carried out at primary and secondary schools in the area of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mostar region) and it included 590 students and 315 teachers. With this empirical research we have tested the presence of a democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic-stimulating communication within the process of putting the extracurricular activities into realization. The goal of our research was to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between evaluations made by students and those made by teachers of primary and secondary schools that a democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication is mostly dominant in the process of putting extracurricular activities into realization. The results we have collected have shown the difference between students' and teachers' perception of dominant communication in realization of extracurricular activities.

Keywords: *Extracurricular activities, communication, student, teacher.*

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Introduction

Successful communication is a two-way process which requires full understanding between the collocutors. However, both level and quality of communication depend on our personal communication skills, since they are a precondition to be understood well. Within the educational process, communication is realized through students' both curricular and extracurricular activities. The teaching quality is directly influenced by correlations between teachers and students, as well as the way they develop their mutual communication and interaction (Ping, 2013). School's turning towards the community and external factors will most completely fulfill the needs of extracurricular activities (Grandic, Letic, 2008). These activities represent educational, preplanned actions which enable confirmation of students' personality as well as development of their communication skills and competencies; whilst they enable the teachers to expand their educational influence. Extracurricular activities should fulfill students' intellectual, emotional, social, cultural, informative, technical and fitness needs (Tomic, 2011). Their contents need to be adapted to students' preferences for certain area of interest, which will at same time fulfill democratic presumption of a private choice referring one's advancement in accordance with individual competencies. Longer the students participate (in extracurricular activities) easier it will be for them to adopt positive interpersonal relations. Realization of extracurricular activities is where the teachers' social intelligence, communication skills and "ability to activate silent students" (Heidmann, 2003:163) are fully exposed. School needs to allow students to involve in various activities which will improve their creativity as well as development of their communication skills.

Through extracurricular activities students can activate their creative potencies which they have not been able to fulfill and expose in the other life segments; and to develop all of their communication skills and competencies. Participation in extracurricular activities helps students to discover and cherish their talents, character and competency development (Duncan, 1996), however a freedom to choose along with motivational mechanism to define the choice make the foundation of it all.

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The role of teachers in process of organization and realization of students' extracurricular activities is to create conditions within those voluntary activities which enable dominant engagement of students. The researches have shown the most unfavorable consequences of authoritarian leadership and autocratic communication in realization of extracurricular activities. Autocratically monitored students are more aggressive, have a humble attitude before the teachers, their feeling of belonging to a certain group is weaker, and they lack in both competencies and initiative (Vilotijevic, 2001:327). In every educational work, particularly in extracurricular activities, it is very necessary to awaken creative and innovative abilities of students, rather than just formally transfer knowledge to them. Creative role in every man's life is very important; therefore it is a duty of every pedagogue and teacher to organize their educational work in a manner to mostly encourage their trainees to be creative and innovative, as well as to take part in development of students' abilities. Maintaining the creativity in school environment is one of the most important tasks of modern school, which must primarily prioritize children's needs, but at the same time the needs of a modern society where at the creativity represent main foundation of progress (Bognar, 2004:269). Extracurricular activities, through communication, allow students to apply knowledge they have gathered at classes and to adopt terms of democratic living (Lunenburg 2010:2). Research study Gardner, Roth and Brooks-Gunn (Gardner, Roth and Brooks-Gun, 2008) has proven that it is extremely important to pay attention on to intensity and level of students' involvement in aforementioned activities.

One of the most basic principles of organization and realization of extracurricular activities is a right to choose activities, whilst their main task is to respect students' individual abilities and preferences; all mainly accomplished by a two-way, voluntary and democratic communication. Practicing the open communication, teachers literally take students' affiliations and preferences into consideration and based on that they form various groups and school teams. Characteristics of extracurricular activities which separate them from teaching process, with reference to organization, are seen in the fact that they are not conducted in classes, but in separately formed groups (Siljkovic, Rajic and Bertic, 2007:127). Programs of extracurricular activities provide students with an opportunity to spend their free time in a quality manner; therefor their main goal is to include as many students as possible, regardless their abilities. The following are some school teams/activities that can positively improve communication, and can be successfully planned and realized at schools: philological team, communicational team, drama school, journalistic team, as well as creativity and IT (Information technologies) teams.

Children are by nature more inclined to learn in creative and innovative way, i.e. they constantly explore, ask questions, conduct tests etc... briefly - they communicate. The most important question is how creative, friendly and attentive the teacher is, and whether he is capable of playing the role of an organizer, conductor and leader of certain extracurricular activity, regardless of various administrative and other limits. Extracurricular activities need to contribute in expanding the students' interests (Vidulin-Orbanic, 2008:86) because extracurricular activities provide students with an opportunity to request and research, to prove and confirm their personalities, and to acquire reputation in their classes, groups and schools. Participation in aforementioned activities is firstly voluntary and it all starts from students' interests, desires, preferences and talents. Such activities are unrestricted by rigid programs, grades and fear of failure, so students participate with intention to widen their knowledge and spend both useful and pleasant time away from school obligations.

In order to create positive working atmosphere inside the class, it is necessary to change communication between students and teachers, because creativity-based relationship between them require teacher to show readiness to allow one thing to lead to another, i.e. to be ready to accompany the child into an adventure. Teachers need to become closer to students, talk to them, listen to them, and accept students' suggestions and opinions. It is important to emphasize that extracurricular activities are, prior to all, the activities of students. Therefor it is them who should express their free and creative roles within mentioned activities. However, an important fact is that extracurricular activities are a part of systematized and organized educational school process, thus they can't be given to students' will only. In order to achieve better results in those activities, it is important that teachers adjust their work so that they create a direct communication which will encourage and stimulate children, in a creative manner, and at the same time will make a favorable working atmosphere in a certain group. During realization of extracurricular activities, a good teacher will respect students' individuality and will try to develop students' communicational potentials, in accordance with each student's competencies.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

We have outlined an empirical non-experimental research of communication between students and teachers in process of putting extracurricular activities into realization, whilst respecting the contents of theme-related and relevant author's papers as well as previous tangent explorative researches. The aim of our research was to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between evaluations made by students and those made by teachers of primary and secondary schools that a democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication is mostly dominant in the process of putting extracurricular activities into realization. Our main method in this research

was a “survey” method which is very often used at pedagogic researches. We have used this method to question opinions, beliefs or interests of students and teachers involved in preparation and realization of extracurricular activities. We therefore have defined the hypothesis of our research, as follows: **“We presume there are no statistically significant differences between evaluations made by students and those made by teachers of primary and secondary schools that a democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication is mostly dominant in the process of putting extracurricular activities into realization”.**

Sample and Data Collection

The empirical research was conducted at public schools in the area of southern Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mostar Region) and it included students and teachers from 7 primary schools and 7 secondary schools. Sample included 905 examinees (590 or 65,19% of total students population and 315 or 34,8% of total teachers population).

Data Collection Tools

The data collection tool we have used in this research has been created in accordance with a defined research goal, task and hypothesis. We intended to examine the communication between students and teachers during the process of putting extracurricular activities into realization, so we created an identical Likert scale (SPKVA), which required the examinees to express the intensity of certain accuracies referring to communication in extracurricular activities, using the answers: *always, often, sometimes, rarely* and *never*. The scale for both students and teachers contained 12 assertions/claims and it referred to the presence of democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication.

When evaluating the democratic communication in extracurricular activities, the examinees (both students and teachers) have assessed the intensity of appearance and presence of certain indicators, for the topics:

4. *Students choose their own extracurricular activities*
6. *Teachers talk to students in an open and friendly manner*
7. *Teachers develop democratic communication*

When evaluating the voluntary communication in extracurricular activities, the examinees (both students and teachers) have assessed the intensity of appearance and presence of certain indicators, for the topics:

3. *Teachers and students treat each other with respect and consideration*
8. *Teachers develop voluntary communication in realization of extracurricular activities*
11. *Teachers organize mediatory exercises as part of realization of extracurricular activities*

When evaluating the partnership communication in extracurricular activities, the examinees (both students and teachers) have assessed the intensity of appearance and presence of certain indicators, for the topics:

1. *Students take active part in realization of extracurricular activities*
9. *Teacher's communication with students is based on mutual consideration and tolerance*
10. *Teachers use polite tone in realization of extracurricular activities*

When evaluating the pedagogic stimulating communication in extracurricular activities, the examinees (both students and teachers) have assessed the intensity of appearance and presence of certain indicators, for the topics:

2. *Students are free to ask questions when in need of assistance or explanation*
5. *Teachers stimulate students to get involved in realization of extracurricular activities*
12. *Teachers stimulate students to conduct two-way communication*

After completion of the assessment, a test research was conducted in order to determine metric characteristics of used data collection tools/instruments: reliability, validity, discriminant value and objectivity. Processing the sample of 200 examinees (120 students and 80 teachers) and using the statistical program SPSS 21, we have determined the reliability of our instruments to be $r = .844$ Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Discrimination of the assertions/claims has been calculated by item-total correlation; meaning the correlation of results collected at certain assertion/claim and

results collected at the entire assessment. All of the assessments with significant correlations contribute to the assessment process, and their discrimination is at a satisfying level. Final version of the scale has got a distribution which significantly differs from the normal version; this has been proven by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test which resulted as $D = .082$, $df = 200$, $p = .002$, or Shapiro-Wilk test which resulted as $D = .958$, $df = 200$, $p = .167$. The objectivity of used assessment scale was provided by a precisely defined method of grades, i.e. assessment, as follows: answer “*always*” was given 5 points, “*often*” was given 4 points, “*sometimes*” was given 3 points, “*rarely*” was given 2 points and “*never*” was given 1 point. The validity of data collection tools/instruments has been established the way that experts for methodological relevance of data collection tools were analyzed by the factor analysis. By Varimax rotation we managed to extract 9 factors that explain 63,34% of variances of the argument on communication in both traditional teaching process and innovative systems.

Statistical Analysis

Collected data was statistically analyzed by program SPSS 21 and represented by frequencies and percentages. The difference between assessments made by students and those made by teachers has been determined by χ^2 test (Chi-squared test), wherein the value of significance level up to 0.05 ($p \leq 0.05$) is taken into consideration for a statistically significant difference.

RESULTS OF RESEARCHES AND DISCUSSIONS

Extracurricular activities of students require both students and teachers to take active part in their realization. School which offers its students with various extracurricular activities can achieve additional educative influence, with the goal to make students’ free time outside the school as quality as possible. Realization of extracurricular activities will surely be better and more successful if teachers develop democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication.

Democratic communication means that both students and teachers participate together in realization of extracurricular activities’ program. Only equal, equally worthy and equally appreciated people are able to converse with each other in a creative and mutually satisfying manner. Students and teachers must be equally considered and respected, so that they can successfully converse and realize the extracurricular activities. Modern pedagogy-related findings in the area of education and communication emphasize a great significance of voluntarism at everyday communication. It is now known that the use of voluntary communication skills prevents violence and conflicts at school, which can occur between students, but also between students and teachers. The techniques of voluntary communication, which are learnt through education on conflict prevention in realization of extracurricular activities, do prevent violence or conflicts between students. Voluntary communication in realization of extracurricular activities requires willingness and motivation of both students and teachers to communicate and take responsibility for private actions. Partnership communication is actually a partnership within the communication, which means that students are involved in making decisions about how and where the extracurricular activities are to be realized, and what will they contain; nevertheless the final decision is always on the teachers, since they are professionals. Development of tolerance and mutual consideration of students is a key path to establish successful partnership communication. The goal of pedagogic stimulating communication is not only to pass a certain message on to students, during the process of realization of extracurricular activities, but to make that information motivate students to get active. Every type of communication, whether it is personal, two-way, democratic, verbal, not verbal, direct etc., can be pedagogic and stimulating if it’s realized in a proper manner. During the realization of extracurricular activities, this communication results in better relationship between students and teachers. It requires skills of both speaking and listening, in order to accomplish mutual understanding.

The following table represents the assessment made by students on democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication as well as its presence in realization of extracurricular activities.

Table 1. Students’ assessment on communication in extracurricular activities

No	Communication in extracurricular activities	Examinees	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
1.	Democratic comm.	Students	22	3,7	37,3	6,3	125	21,2	187	31,7	219	37,1	590
2.	Nonviolent comm.	Students	38,3	6,5	43,7	7,4	109	18,5	192	32,6	206	35,0	590
3.	Partnership comm.	Students	13,7	2,3	36,3	6,2	125	21,2	221	37,4	194	32,9	590
4.	Pedagogic stimulating comm.	Students	21	3,6	47,7	8,1	127	21,6	207	35,1	187	31,7	590

The above presented results show us that, in accordance with students' opinion and assessment, a democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication is dominant in realization of extracurricular activities.

Students' assessments of all mentioned types of communication are pretty equal, i.e. not one communication type significantly deviates from the others. If we make analysis based on the categories, it is obvious that most negative answers were given to "voluntary communication" (6,5% of students). Pedagogic stimulating communication got most of the "rarely" answers (8,1% of students). Students gave the same number of answers "sometimes" to two types of communication in realization of extracurricular activities: democratic and partnership communication (both got positive assessment from 21,2% of students). Partnership communication got most of the "often" answers (37,4% of students); whilst democratic communication got most of the "always" answers with 37,1% of students' positive assessments. We can be satisfied by the results we collected, since they show, in accordance with students' assessment, domination of democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication in the process of putting extracurricular activities into realization.

Teachers used same data collection tool to assess their own communication manner, i.e. their opinion about the communication in realization of extracurricular activities. The data we collected are shown in the following table.

Table 2. Teachers' assessment on communication in realization of extracurricular activities

No	Communication in extracurricular activities	Examinees	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
1.	Democratic comm.	Teachers	0	0,0	0,75	0,2	13,3	4,2	105	33,5	195	62,1	315
2.	Nonviolent comm.	Teachers	2,33	0,7	4,33	1,4	28	8,9	107	34,0	173	55,0	315
3.	Partnership comm.	Teachers	0,33	0,1	1,33	0,4	9	2,9	97,3	30,9	207	65,7	315
4.	Pedagogic stimulating comm.	Teachers	0,33	0,1	2	0,6	14	4,4	122	38,8	176	56,0	315

While assessing the communication in realization of extracurricular activities, teachers have expressed a great doze of positivism about presence of democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication.

Such positive assessment of the teachers was that certain negative answers did not get any of the teachers involved in N315 research to pick them. The answers "never" and "rarely" did not get any positive assessment from the teachers. Similar case is with the answer "sometimes" wherein only exception is the voluntary communication, which got 8,9% of teachers' positive assessment. Pedagogic stimulating communication got most of the "often" answers, and partnership communication got the greatest percentage of teachers' positive answers for the option "always" (65,7%). The teachers have assessed that democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication is absolutely dominant in the process of putting extracurricular activities into realization.

In order to get more relevant data on topic whether there is a statistically significant difference between evaluations made by students and those made by teachers about communication in realization of extracurricular activities, we have calculated the χ^2 test; the result we got was $\chi^2 = 87,40$ and it is bigger than limit values at level 0,05 $\chi^2 = 11,1$ as well as at level 0,01 $\chi^2 = 15$, for the corresponding degrees of freedom ($df=5$). This result brings us to the conclusion that there is a statistically significant difference between the assessments made by students and teachers at primary and secondary schools about communication in realization of extracurricular activities. Therefore **we can reject** our previous hypothesis which stated: **"We presume there are no statistically significant differences between evaluations made by students and those made by teachers of primary and secondary schools that a democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication is mostly dominant in the process of putting extracurricular activities into realization"**.

Although our research did show the domination of democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication in process of realization of extracurricular activities, there is still a difference between assessments made by students and those made by teachers. Teachers acted in a subjective manner, lacking self-criticism. Democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication is a skill that can be adopted, trained and improved.

CONCLUSION

Students' free time and their extracurricular activities within the school share one characteristic – a voluntary participation. Providing rich and various compositions of extracurricular activities, it is possible to have an additional educational influence at school, with a goal to make sure that students spend their free time, away from school obligations, as quality as possible, without violent communication. During the realization of extracurricular activities it is important to help students develop and cherish the sense of quality communication. Every conversation that lacks quality is imposed, endangering, insincere and is avoided. We speak involuntarily when we must speak, when we can't avoid conversation, when we are forced to speak to someone, and when the other person decides on topic, beginning, end and manner of conversation. Our research did determine the domination of *democratic, voluntary, partnership and pedagogic stimulating communication in realization of extracurricular activities*.

Teachers should strive to conduct a conversation whilst paying respect to the collocutor, and at the end such conversation can be linked to a voluntary communication. Process of educating students about communication needs to be composed of mostly empirical, democratic, voluntary, partnership learning, without imposition. That way in realization of extracurricular activities students become more active, free, equal and responsible participants; they develop creative way of thinking and show more self-initiative. Students then start to think independently, ask questions, give answers, creates etc., because they learn in the atmosphere of understanding and support, without fear or anxiety to discuss and develop their competencies; as well as no fear to develop partnership and equality based relationship with their teachers.

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