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**THE CAPITALIZATION OF LOCAL POTENTIAL THROUGH  
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES DEVELOPED IN REAL  
ENVIRONMENTS**

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**Abstract**

Declared by the WHO on March 11, 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic was accompanied by a number of measures taken to reduce the spread of the virus. Returning to normalcy will certainly have a major impact both on pupils, students and teachers, through dynamic activities carried out in the formal framework of the school but also through extracurricular activities, so that everyone is aware of the benefits of participating in such activities.: the feeling of belonging to a community, the need of the others, co-participation in the formation of their own personality and culture, the integration in society, the creation of a balance between individual and collectivity, as a model of behaviour which is to be reached. This article proposes to present a research project aiming at the implementation of extra-curricular activities having in view the discovery and capitalization of the local potential (cultural, geographical, historical and sport). This way of approaching is more efficient because there is a need to identify the information acquired in the real environments, answering thus to more associated challenges with the students’ theoretical preparation, general experience and design of extra-curricular activities.

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*Keywords:* Capitalization of the local potential, extra-curricular activities, real environments

**1. Introduction**



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Thinking, conceiving, proposing, organising and coordinating the extra-curricular activities represent challenges for every teacher. It is required to have a thorough theoretical preparation, passion and the last but not the least, you should have respect for the teacher' status. Continuing the predecessors' tradition, once arrived at the teacher's desk, the teacher will transmit the interest and passion for the capitalization of the richness of native places, understood under more aspects: cultural, spiritual, historical, geographical, sport and not only.

The present educational system has in view the preparation of the student concerning their personality formation from the psychic, intellectual, physical, emotional point of view, in this direction the curricular and extra-curricular activities are combined (Rohozneanu, 2020).

The involvement of the teaching staff in the conception and organisation of extra-curricular activities in establishing the contents and their assessment, the involvement of some personalities in the proposed demarche represent some conditions which offer them value.

## **2. Problem Statement**

The extra-curricular or extra-school activities come to complete the contents of the Learning master plan and the Curriculum at the school's decision, developing under the attentive supervision and guidance of a specialised and qualified teacher, having as aim to complete the formation of the student's personality, which is ensured by the formal education or the development of other aspects proper to his/her personality.

### **2.1. The extra-curricular activities – dimension of the continuing learning process**

The recommendation on 30 April 2003 of the European Council, by its Committee of Ministers mentions the directions of action aiming the recognition of the equivalent status of the school and extra-school educational activity with that of formal education from the perspective of equal contribution to the development of the child's personality and of social integration, considering them a dimension of the lifelong learning process and recognising that it represents an essential part of compulsory education (Virgil & Ciolcă, 2010).

The recommendation of the European Council (EC) on the 22 of May 2018 regarding the key competences for education and continuous formation highlights "the investment in basic competences is more important than ever. A high level education, including extra-curricular activities based on the holistic approach of competences development, improves the level of results aiming at the basic competences". Likewise, "we must explore new ways of learning adapted to a society which becomes more and more mobile and digital".

### **2.2. The permanent, prospective, formative and axiological character of extra-curricular activities**

Among others, the extra-curricular activities have a permanent character, representing a desideratum of our society in change. From this perspective it is required a model of personality which should adapt to the changes which take place in society but also to capitalize at maximum the personal

capacity, by involving the person who wants to be educated in the continuous demarche both in education and self-education (Țîru, 2012). The prospective character of the extra-curricular activities illustrates the necessary and standard continuation concerning the person's adaptation to the requirements of social perspective. It is required to educate the students "in order to face the requirements of the future, in order to face and answer some unpredictable situations" (Nicola, 2003). The formative character of extra-curricular activities refers to the basis that these activities offer for the improvement and development of the individual from the psychological, cultural and social point of view. In the end, the axiological character of extra-curricular activities is achieved by the operation and their reference to the defining cultural values, as a milestone of their own personality. We must not overlook the difficulties which appear in the development of extra-curricular activities among which we mention: the passivity of the teaching staff; the neglect of the positive impact of the extra-school or extra-curricular educational activity on the development of the student's personality; the perpetuation of an erroneous mentality according to which the student must be integrally dedicated to the study specific to the formal education; minimizing the school and extra-school educational activity by the parents, the teaching staff, bodies of guidance and control; the absence of formation in the field of school and extra-school educational activity; the negative offer of the street etc. (Virgil & Ciolcă, 2010)

### **3. Research Questions**

- What is the extent in which the extra-curricular activities contribute to the student's preparation concerning the formation of his/her personality from the psychic, intellectual, physical, emotional point of view?
- How can the extra-curricular activities contribute to learning, observing and keeping the local identity in the national and European context?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The paper proposes to present the way in which a program of extra-curricular activities developed in real environment (natural landscape) can contribute to the discovery and capitalization of the local potential, preparing the participants having in view the formation of their personality from the psychic, intellectual, physical, emotional point of view taking into account that these activities suppose many times an interdisciplinary or pluridisciplinary approach.

### **5. Research Methods**

The research methods used are methods of data gathering: questionnaire-based survey and, respectively, the design of a research project with a view to proposing extracurricular activities

#### **5.1. Methods of data collection**

We choose research-action, achieved in two stages (Bocoş, 2017): *the diagnosis stage*: the identification and analysis of problems, stating the research questions and *the therapeutical stage*: the proposal of answers to the research question by a project of extra-curricular activities, meant to optimize this type of activities.

In order to state the answers to the research questions: *What is the extent in which the extra-curricular activities contribute to the student's preparation concerning the formation of his/her personality from the psychic, intellectual, physical, emotional point of view?* and *How can the extra-curricular activities contribute to the learning, observing and keeping the local identity in the national and European context?* We have used the inquiry based questionnaire. The questions have aimed the involvement of 108 teaching staff, who teach in the primary cycle in schools of Caraş-Severin County, in the organisation and achievement of extra-curricular activities. Among them, 106 organise at least once a year a trip, visit, hiking and only two teachers are involved in the organisation/participation in school camps (we had in view the school camps with multiple themes). At the same time, 102 teachers organise visits to memorial houses very seldom or never, only six of them stating that they organise constantly these visits.

## 5.2. Methods of analysis and data presentation

The answers received from the teaching staff to whom the questionnaire was applied have determined the design of a research project that has in view the proposal of extra-curricular activities which should take place in a camp. The activities are thematically presented, according to the fields we had in view and the students' age level: the primary cycle, especially the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades. Likewise, we presented the types of assessment of the extra-curricular activities of the project.

## 6. Findings

The project we propose includes extra-curricular activities which, from the perspective of the prevalent educational dimension, are: cultural, sport, moral education, intellectual education, artistic. By this project, we desired to research the benefits of the students' participation in extra-curricular activities, the way in which learning after school differs from learning in school and the promising approaches of their programming outside school. For such a project to become reality we have to define a *conceptual framework*, a context in which all the arguments for such a demarche should be displayed: the promotion of local cultural values by different educational activities; the capitalization of cultural education approached in school by means of non-formal activities, in the spirit of diversity respect; the development of the student's personality by highlighting cultural, artistic aspects by capitalizing the aesthetic side of objects which make up the surrounding world, by offering real models; approaching and applying some visible connections between the realities of Caraş-Severin county; organising the students' physical activity outside the classes of their school timetable, by using instructional-educational contents which complete the national curriculum.

The activities that the project-camp contains have an interdisciplinary character, among them we can find Romanian language and literature, civic education, arts, physical education.

Thus, for Romanian language and literature we had in view some activities which concern a side less (or at all) approached in the school curriculum: the capitalization of the literature of the Banatian patois writers (a literature unique at national level). In this direction we propose an itinerary which contains more localities of Caraş-Severin county where the writers of Banatian speech were born, lived and created: at Cârnecea – Petru Petrica, at Comorâste – Paul Miclău and Pau Târbăţiu, at Bocşa – Tata Oancea (Petru E. Oance), and at Zorlenţu Mare – The House of the writers of Banat patois. Some of these places are set up, others are in course of setting up and others are not set up. It is an invitation for both the teaching staff and the authorities to think about financing projects in order to re-consider the status of these peasant-writers and from the perspective of setting up some documentation points – memorial houses – in order to offer information concerning this unique phenomenon. Once the places and the type of poetry created by these authors were discovered, we propose their capitalization under at least two aspects: reading the accessible poems, learning and reciting them in the camp, for the beginning, then in the framework of the “Father Oancea” Festival of creation and interpretation in Banat patois which takes place in Bocşa, respectively the attempt of the students to create themselves such verses/ poems. By this type of activity we had in view the perception and understanding of Banat words and their significance; understanding the phenomenon of thematical and compositional diversity of literature; learning about the main representatives of Banat literature in general, of the literary creation in regional patois especially; familiarizing the children with the literary works written by writers of Banat language that our County had; visiting some memorial houses of the writers in Banat language; the creation and development of the interest for the works in Banat patois.

Concerning the physical education/sport we propose, first of all, recreational gymnastics each morning. Then, in order to visit the places on our itinerary, we recommend biking, and on the Dognecea Mountains we can go hiking and do activities of touristic orientation, a good communication between participants representing an essential condition (Rohozneanu, 2019). During the free afternoons, we propose the organisation of some matches/games: handball, football, volleyball, chess, which should contribute to the creation of friendships, relationships of collaboration, cooperation (Mood et al., 2007). When possible, the students can do rafting on the fast mountain rivers. Kanellopoulou et al. (2021) states that the sport connected activities should be promoted by public health policies.

There is always need of information about the established objectives and the results obtained. Feedback represents the basic principle of the communication activity, respectively efficient teaching-learning-assessment (Bocoş & Jucan, 2019). Regarding the assessment of the project activities, it would be desirable that they offer the students the possibility to prove what they know (a set of knowledge) and what they can do (the way of applying knowledge). In this context, the assessment aims at the elaboration of some essays/compositions; building some explanatory alternatives to the received messages; the debate on some problems seized by the students; systematic observation of the students’ activity and behaviour; self-assessment; reciting poems in Banat language.

Another way of assessment that we propose is represented by the achievement of a portfolio which should contain information about the “visited” Banat writers, texts in Banat language, photos of the visited places but also from the hiking, form touristic orientation, the matches, drawings representing

aspects that impressed them etc. The texts in Banat language could be reunited in a brochure – made by the students under the guidance of the teaching staff present in the camp.

The last but not the least, we bear in mind the organisation of a festivity – in the last evening of the camp, in which we should highlight the conservation and promotion of popular traditions and preserving the national identity through poems in Banat language, popular dancing and costumes, this having as purpose, among others, the conservation and promotion of Romanian national values in the context of belonging to the European Union.

## 7. Conclusion

Applying such a project would highlight the benefits of the extra-curricular activities from the perspective of local (cultural, geographical, sport) potential capitalization by the students in the primary cycle. Knowing, acquiring and reciting poems in Banat language, the song, game and traditional costume from this part of the country represents an indicator of the preservation of our national identity. The richness and variety of the relief, the fauna and flora, personalities, customs and traditions of the place, all these outline the unique and original picture of Banat on the map of Romania.

The extra-curricular activities are positive elements (Heaslip et al., 2021) for students, having an important role in both the teacher's activity and the students' because they come to complete the information acquired by the students during the classes, they offer the possibility to visit certain touristic objectives of cultural heritage, enlarging the horizon of knowledge, awaking students' interest for reading literary works and reciting poems. By visiting a writer's memorial house, the students develop feelings of admiration, appreciation, gratitude for that personality's creation, directly coming in touch with the place where the writer lived and achieved his works.

By all the proposed activities we promote fair-play, team spirit, self-understanding and self-esteem and the sport games aim at stimulating motivation, emulation, interpersonal relationships and social integration, influencing and forming the human character regarding correctness, courage and modesty, contributing to the students' preparation having in view the formation of their personality from the psychic, intellectual, physical and emotional point of view.

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