

Reconnoitering the Status of Outdoor Education: A Case Study of Lodhrān-Bahawalpur, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Outdoor education gives opportunities for students to improve the learning methodology, enhance interdisciplinary matters and boost up the relationship with people and the environment. This research study investigates the status of outdoor education, students' and teachers' perception and experience at the college level in the joint District of Lodhrān-Bahawalpur, Pakistan. The study was confined to 50 different public and private schools and colleges, interviewing 150 teachers and 300 students using the cluster random sampling method. The descriptive research methodology was used to compare the analysis of the collected data through SSPS software. The objective of the study was to examine the students and teachers' perceptions regarding outdoor education problems, to explore the major issues of outdoor training programs, to find out the main reasons and causes behind these problems, and to give the recommendation to overcome these problems and possible available solutions for the issues.

Keywords: Outdoor Education, College Education, Financial Issues, Educational Activity

INTRODUCTION

Outdoor education was used in the mid-1940s, and now it is widely recognized for development in personal, social development, and educational skills[1]. Outdoor education means learning skills outside the classroom, such as field study centers, sitting in the garden due to the unavailability of infrastructure[2]. Outdoor education empowers the students to boost their skills from field trips, outings, living together in the hostel, sports competitions, and practical approaches [3]. Teachers utilize camp settings to meet their scholastic targets in outdoor institutions and improve substitutes studies to social advancement and recreation aptitudes[4]. Students have the chance through outdoor education to learn through their senses in a relaxed environment. nature, plants, animals to motivate students to wander and explore[5]. On the other hand, teachers get to know their students and observe their activities in a better

environment where they feel more accessible and relaxed from tension[6]. Outdoor education gives opportunities for students to improve the learning methodology[7], enhance interdisciplinary matters and boost up the relationship with people and the environment [8]. The advantages of outdoor Education in Pakistani educational systems have embraced a wrong methodology towards educating science that gravely influences the idea of the functioning of the students[9]. There are limited resources found in the infrastructure of schools and colleges, such as unavailability of enough rooms and laboratories for students, lack of instruments and chemicals for science students to do experimental work, and teacher qualification is always a matter of concern[10]. Previous research studies expressed a few practices in outside education and realistic training to cover various projects[11]. Although both fields are interdisciplinary, the main contrast is that outside training can be adequately instructed and learned outdoors [12]. There is a constructive outcome of open-air instruction on society as the primary motivation of open-air instruction is to assemble more grounded bonds and relations between social orders by methods for individuals just as social advancement[13]. There is a need to use outdoor education projects for improving such delicate aptitudes as cooperation, critical thinking, chance-taking, confidence, and relational correspondence [14].

The background of the study suggests that outdoor education plays an essential role in developing an adolescent's physical and mental health. Outdoor programs can refine students' abilities as cooperation, problematic resolving, adventuresome, confidence, and social communication [15]. Despite so many advantages, outdoor education has a lot of serious issues and problems, such as departmental, legal, security, transport, environmental and financial issues [16]. The research was designed to identify these problems and provide a possible way to resolve these issues, and the statement of the research is to identify outdoor education problems in Lodhrān-Bahawalpur. The designed study aimed to explore the problems of outdoor education, and the motivation behind this investigation is to investigate how students and teachers experienced outdoor training and learning. The authors have analyzed and elaborate on the primary driver for these issues and sorting out future in-administration courses and outdoor training arrangements.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research methodology was used to compare the analysis of the collected data through SSPS software. This section covers research design, target population, sampling procedure, sample size, research instruments, validity and reliability, data collection procedure, and data analysis procedure.

Research Design

The analyst utilized a clear overview investigates structure. The look into configuration structure involves portraying an issue of intrigue efficiently and equitably. The researcher gathers data to portrays, investigates, and cause the predictor to comprehend the public activity of the example through addressing. This exploration configuration permits the individual to accumulate data from a moderately extensive gathering of cases study is an endeavor to gather information from individuals from the populace to decide the present status of the populace through addressing, either through meeting or poll concerning. A study that examines configuration is a self-report examination, which requires the accumulation of quantifiable data from the example. The authors gathered unique information and included

subjective and quantitative techniques to utilized remedial strategy. Consequently, the review was the most fitting plan to comprehend the examination. This plan was chosen as the most appropriate for this examination.

Target Population and Sampling Procedure

A target population is defined as the population to which a researcher wants to generalize the study results. In this paper, the author's target population are the students of public and private schools and colleges and the teachers of Lodhrān-Bahawalpur District, Pakistan. Sampling methodology is fundamental, which includes the subject (example of the entire populace). Sampling is the process of selecting several individuals for a study. Sample represents the larger group of the population from which they were selected. The example was chosen through irregular inspecting. The sample population was 50 public and private schools and colleges of Lodhrān-Bahawalpur District, Pakistan, with the selected sample of 300 students and 150 teachers from boys' and girls' schools and colleges.

Research Tool Development

The data collection methods or instruments are the tools used for gathering the information from the respondents. An overview kind of request was made. The data collected in this study has been through the use of questionnaires. The researcher set up the survey for the example to know their sentiment and has built the instruments. A questionnaire for the teachers and students consisted of 29 items that included two demographic items; 27 were close-ended in this study. The questionnaire format was closed-ended or structured with multiple options were given. The options were Agree, neutral, and disagree for acquiring the opinion of teachers. The respondents were asked to select one option among the given according to their free will.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments

Authors broke down the polls and interviews to see whether they would respond to the exploration questions after composing and making the fundamental rectifications. The researcher initially did a guiding examination whereby the instruments were directed in a few center schools and colleges in Tehsil, Lodhrān. Pre-testing was likewise done to survey the lucidity of the instruments or devices and things, with the goal of improved or disposed of questions that neglect to quantify the factors that would be altered. While some future disposed of internal legitimacy alludes to whether the instrument or method measures what should gauge External legitimacy alludes to the generalizability of discoveries is how much the analysis of the information speaks to the marvel. Reliability of an instrument has been characterized as a condition of consistency that the instrument or technique illustrates whatever it is estimating. Dependability is the proportion of the state to which an exploration instrument yields reliable results or information after rehashed preliminaries. The researcher utilized test-retest for consistency of results to utilized the test-rest procedure to give similar respondents surveys on various occasions.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The term data collection refers to the gathering of specific information aimed at proving or refuting some facts. Primary data is usually gathered using several instruments like questionnaires, focused group discussions, interviews, observations, and experimental studies. In this study, the researcher employed questionnaires for students and college teachers. The

researcher dropped all the questionnaires to the respective respondents and personally visited these schools and colleges to collect data. Before collecting data, the respondents have explained the purpose of data research and returned it after completion according to their own will. Firstly, raw data was organized before it could be helpful in any analysis data collected from surveys, interviews, and discussions, which may need editing, coding, and storing in a useful form. Before data analysis, preprocessing of the raw data has been corrected, and harmonized results, and then the gathered data was validated, coded, and entered into a statistical form. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-20) version software by applying statistical techniques of percentage, frequency and mean score were used as tabulated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey was carried out with gender, male and female, to attain the actual status of outdoor education. Female respondents were 68% as compared to 32% male, as shown in Fig 1a. Both gender response is significant as it makes the picture of result clearer and gives the better presentation. Gender-based curriculum messages were found, including arranging values as reported earlier [17,18]. Outdoor education is a healthy activity as it is shown in Fig 1b. It has been observed that 96% of respondents agreed that outdoor education is healthy activity while only 4% showed a neutral response, and 0% did not agree with the survey. As it is reported in literature previously reported showed similar results [19].

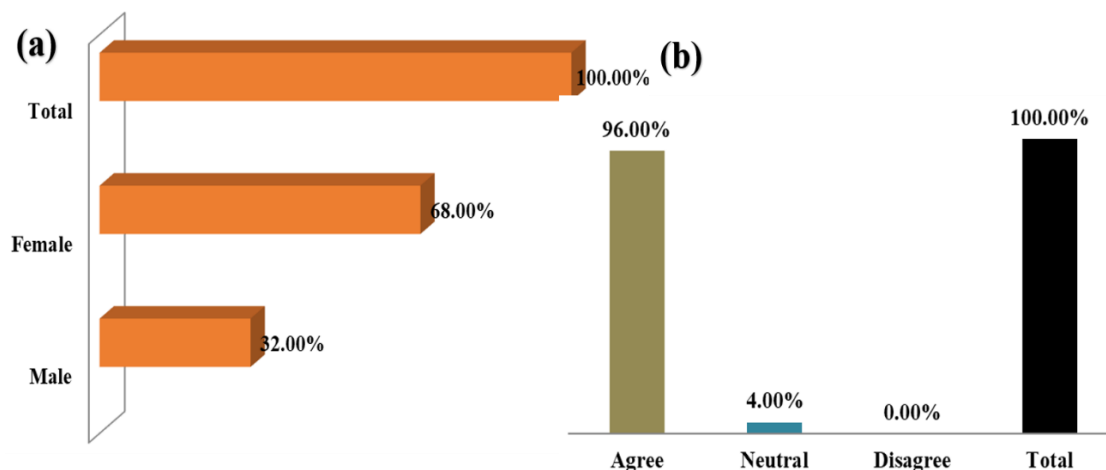


Figure 1: (a) Outdoor education learning of gender distribution (b) Outdoor education learning a healthy activity

The safety of children is a major concern in outdoor programs, as Fig 2 (a) showed 82% of respondents agreed to the students' safety concerns in outdoor programs. 18% showed a neutral response, and 0% showed that none of them disagreed about safety. The presence and value of risk in outdoor and adventurous activities and sports in safety-conscious societies, especially concerning the education of children and youth [20]. In case of another essential question about expenses of the transportation and other relevant items. From Fig 2 (b), parents cannot afford the expenses of outdoor activities. It has been observed from the respondent results about the expenses of outdoor learning that parents cannot afford apart from tuition fees, so they do not allow their children. There were yes or no options and 52% responded

agreed, 34% showed a neutral response, and 14% disagreed that common barriers confronting outdoor and experiential education of teachers and presented strategies for surmounting them [21].

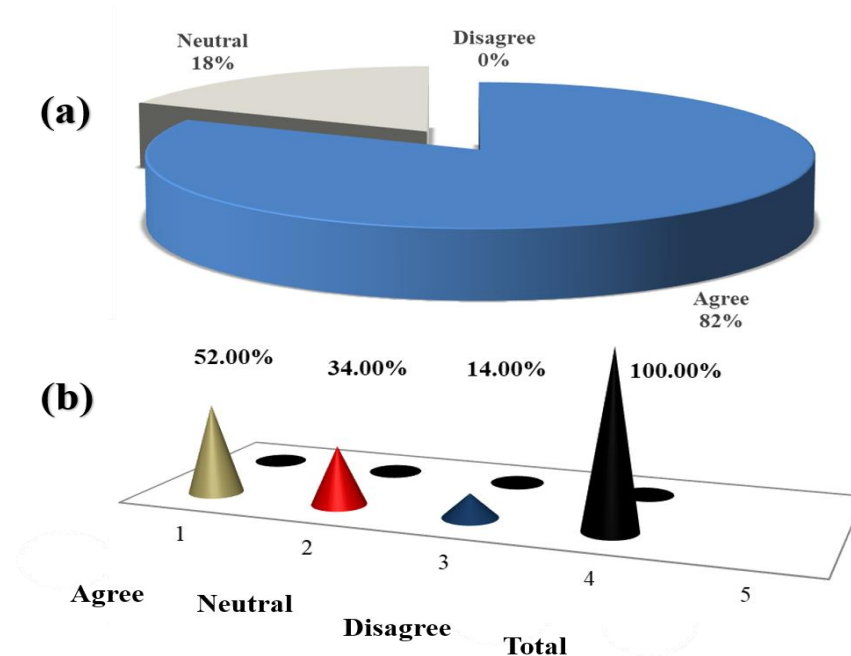


Figure 2: (a) Outdoor education and safety of children (b) Parent not allow their children to go for outdoor education

Furthermore, environmental factors like rain or high temperature also strongly affect the outdoor learning process with departmental or legal permission for school and college learners. Results are shown from Fig 3(a) about the effect of environmental factors like high temperature or rain on the outdoor process. The majority of the respondents, about 76%, agreed with the statement, 16% showed a neutral response, and 8% disagreed that the environmental factor does not influence studies. The respondent gives comments that the learning or education process cannot stop in any severe condition. It has been observed that time spent outdoors is limited chiefly to environmental factors.

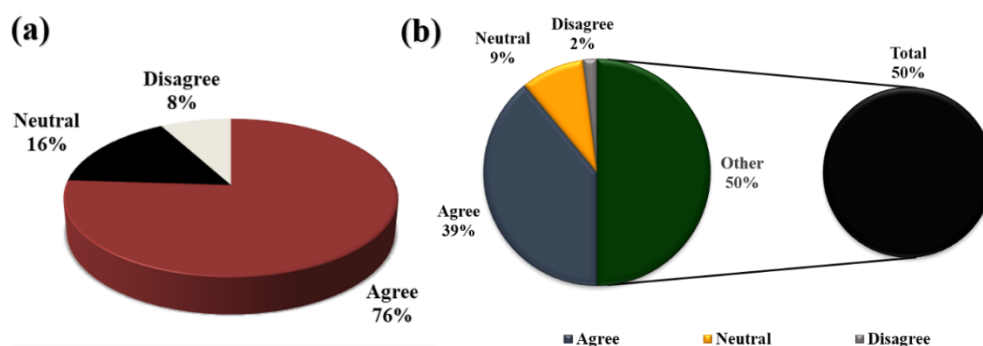


Figure 3: (a) Environmental factors like rain or high temperature affect the outdoor learning process (b) Departmental or legal permission influences outdoor learning

Outdoor education is a matching educational method based on direct engagement with the outdoor environment and nature to improve knowledge, skills, behaviors, attitude, and physical activity[22]. However, another question response given by students' parents is shown in Fig 3(b) about the influence of departmental or legal permissions on outdoor learning. 39% of respondents disagreed, 9% showed a neutral response, and only 2% of them disagreed, while 50% did not reply to anything. The previous work regarding environmental factors has observed that outdoor education with departmental permission is relaxing for teachers and parents to allow students to learn without any fear [23]. Outdoor learning enhances the literacy rate, which is very effective for the country or family progress. Results are shown in Fig 4(a) about the contribution of outdoor learning subsidizing to enhancing the literacy rate. 62% of respondents agreed, 24% showed a neutral response, and 14% disagreed that the pattern of learning of any nation towards progression for development (Youngberg 2015). The current quality of outdoor learning is good, and respondents were asked whether it is good or not to respond if they agreed or disagreed, 40% agreed, 36% showed a neutral response, and 24% disagreed Fig 4(b).

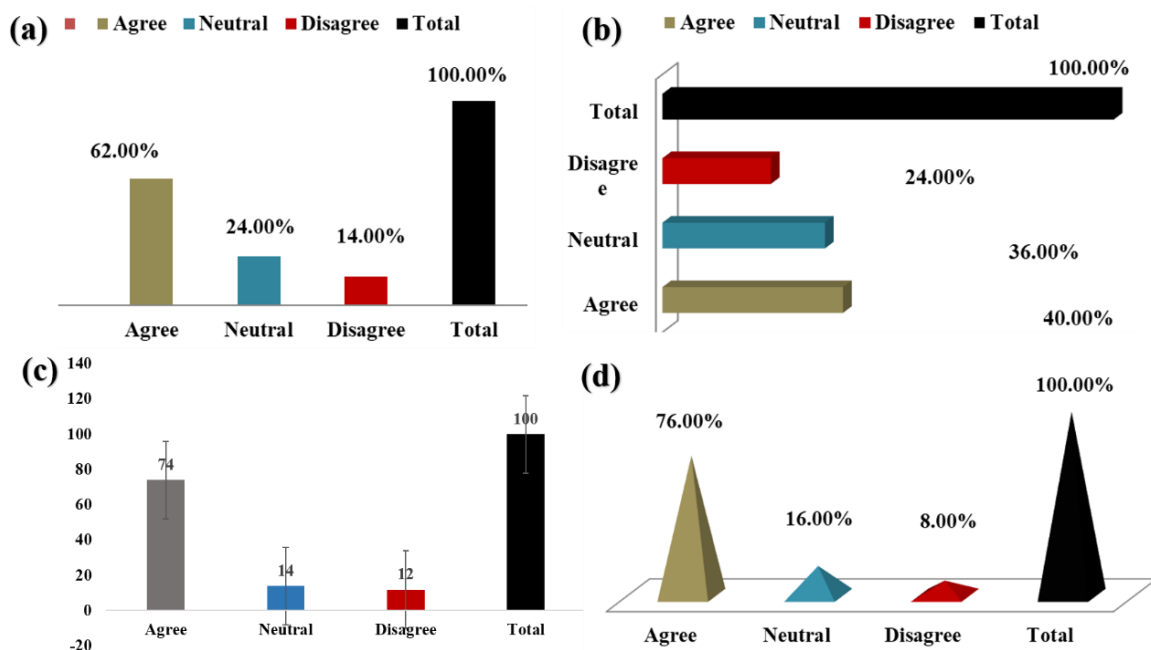


Figure 4: (a) Environmental factors like rain or high temperature affect the outdoor learning process (b) Departmental or legal permission influences outdoor learning

Fig 4(c) illustrates the respondent's view about teachers' behavior and support are important for outdoor learning. A maximum number of people agreed (74%), whereas 12% disagreed, and 14% showed a neutral response that the teacher's personality and attitude influence outdoor learning. Outdoor learning has become a significant part of every society around the globe. Research indicates that outdoor knowledge can improve education and mental health consequences; studies have also identified several fences providing such experiences, the most prevalent being teachers' confidence[24] In Fig 4(d), 78% respondents showed positive response in favor of outdoor learning as it gives them new experiences and help to explore the nature, as it shown in above figure, 8% disagreed, and 16% responded neutrally.

In current research studies, there was variation in response of participants regarding the outdoor learning, one of them is outdoor education is a wastage of money and time, only 10% of respondents agree that it is wasting of money and time while 62% did not agree with the statement of outdoor learning expenditure. Education expenditures is a neglected area; therefore, it needs to improve more as the money investment in outdoor education need to focus and raised many questions to solve it[25] as 14% give the neutral response. Another question during the survey about outdoor activities focus on non-academic activities. The observation described that the 26% students and teachers are agreed that students are attracted to non-academic activities, while 36% disagreed with this statement, and 38% showed a neutral response. Keeping in mind that non-academic activities are very important to teach students via sports, traveling, or other ways that could be very useful [26]. Travel cost does not affect outdoor learning as respondents were asked about the effect of the travel cost on outdoor learning. The results illustrated that 18% agreed that travel cost did not affect their outdoor learning while 48% disagreed, and 34% showed neutral responses about travel costs and outdoor education. Similarly, public transport matters in outdoor learning. From survey results of the perception that public transport matters in outdoor learning. Respondents result shows that 56% agree with it, 22% disagree, and 22% show neutral responses when asking about outdoor education. In the last, Government funds should be raised for schools to conduct outdoor learning. The response of participants shows that government should raise funds for schools to conduct outdoor learning. A maximum positive response can be seen that 90% agreed and only 4% disagreed, whereas 6% showed a neutral response regarding the government funds raising demands.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. Students would be able to develop communication and numeracy skills by working outdoors., so sports and outdoor learning programs should be a compulsory part of the curriculum.
2. Parents do not allow their children to attend outdoor activities because they cannot afford the expenses apart from the tuition fee., so Govt. funds should be raised for schools to conduct outdoor learning.
3. Teachers' behavior and support effects outdoor learning, so proper training should be given to teachers that Teachers should have a friendly attitude with students to make students feel happy, confident, and communicate.
4. As the safety of children is one of the major concerns in outdoor programs, and proper training should be provided to understand the outcomes of outdoor education—suitable supervision and senior management support help in conducting outdoor learning programs.
5. Nowadays, media and political supports substantially impact society, so they have to support and promote outdoor education programs.
6. Suitable outdoor education facilities like safety, transport, residency, and cost-effective activities will be helpful to support these learning programs.

CONCLUSION

The study found that Outdoor Education is an essential and healthy activity that enhances literacy and student self-esteem. The result of the study highlighted those major problems of outdoor education include department and legal issues, environmental factors, financial status of the student, traveling and residency cost, student security, teachers' behavior management, and time issues. It was concluded from the comparative analysis of data that Government funds should be raised to conduct outdoor learning, and suitable facilities should be provided to overcome financial issues related to travel and residential costs. It is also established that students would develop communication and numeracy skills by learning outdoors, and attending more outdoor learning programs should be a compulsory part of the curriculum. Furthermore, suitable supervision should be provided, and management should arrange proper training programs for the teachers and students to understand the outcomes of outdoor education.

LIMITATION OF STUDY

Although study was completed successfully but still there were limitations which hinder to collect the accurate data such as emergence of Covid-19, willingness of students to filled the questionnaire, insecurities to provide correct information, unavailability of funding, religious boundaries, lack of time and commuter illiteracy.

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