

Chapter 30: Extended Day, Extended Learning after School Programming to Support Positive Student Development

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Abstract: Students should not stop learning and developing their academic, and emotional- social skills at the end of the school day. The early stages of a child's life, which are described by human development researchers as 'Formative Years' (Verige,2010), are particularly sensitive and can affect the rest of the child's life as we know. Therefore, if in these early stages of the child's life, the child receives adequate supports for his or her moral and socialemotional development, it will have a positive impact on the psyche and the future of the child and his or her engagement in school and the broader community. The school has the largest role because the student spends most of his or her time in the school. The student must feel safe at school and beyond.

In Saudi Arabia at the end of the school day, students are expected to go directly to their homes. Many of them, however, remain in school and teachers collect the remaining students in the school yard and they remain bored waiting for their parents. Parents may be late to come to school to take their children for several reasons, such as parental engagement in jobs ends late in the day or having important appointments in hospitals or elsewhere, or that the work of the father or mother or both in a remote area and they go a long distance to school. This forces a number of teachers and school staff to stay with the students to supervise to them, causing delays in the return of their teachers as well. Also, the older students in middle or high school may go out of school and do not go directly to their homes, and they may be unsupervised in the streets and neighborhoods until their parents return home. Some parents allow a private driver to come and take their child and are allowed to stay alone with a nanny. Unfortunately, the delay of students in school hinders them from returning to lunch in time and performing their homework. They also disrupt their teachers who have to stay with them.

In fact, some students go out to play in the street, which can be dangerous physically, socially and morally, where some studies indicate that the rate of crime increases in the afternoon after school and some children get bad habits during this period of the day (e.g. Al-Aboudi, 2010). In addition, keeping children with workers such as private drivers and babysitters is negative and may not be safe enough. In other cases, the student may leave with his or her parents on time, immediately after school, but the problem is that it may be difficult for him to review some lessons or perform some duties, and parents are busy providing assistance to their son or lack of specialization in these lessons do not understand them as required. Also, a student may finish studying lessons early, and then the child may be distracted spending the rest of the day with electronic games, as some parents rely on electronics because their children are not allowed to play outside or meet friends. All these things led me to this question: What are effective innovations in extended day and effective ends of the school day that can serve to enhance students' social emotional learning and key community-building skills in ways that are developmentally-sensitive and that promote supportive school environments? Through my observations at Baker School, I noticed that at the end of the school day, some students may stay for post-school programs, which are called the Extended Day or Afterschool Programs (ASPs), while unregistered students go home and their teachers are not associated with students who are late to return home. Parents who cannot come to school early to take their children can register their children on the extended day. In this program many activities are carried out that develop students' thinking and develop their emotional, social and academic skills. It also helps them enrich their hobbies and enhance students' relationships with their friends, where there are many activities such as cooking, art, sports, free play. The Extended Day program also includes activities in the school garden and the theater, in addition to many motor and mental games. I also observed how the Extended

Day program serves to strengthen the needs of students in academic lessons and helps students solve their homework and provides snacks for students. In my view, the extended day or the after-school program is a great idea if it were applied in Saudi Arabia, because it will solve many of our problems as a safe place to play after school, enhance many student skills, help students solve assignments and understand lessons, a provide an alternative to expensive private lessons that cost parents financially and only wealthier families can afford. For adults in the community, after-school programs also provide job opportunities for retired or unemployed graduates, or those who wish to increase their income. After-school programs also provide healthy meals, strengthen social relations between students and school communities, and reduce pressure on teachers. In addition, solve the moral problems that may be caused to students when hanging out of school without supervision. Implementing extended day of support in the school at the end of the day could not only improve school culture and outcomes for younger children especially, but also would influence student character and the rest of the children's lives.

1 Introduction

Learning Theories and Philosophy of Education: The Importance of Developing

Academic and Social Emotional Skills of Students

My project (Extended Day/ASPs) is based on several learning theories, such as Caring and Developmental Theory (Piaget, Dewey), which aims to encourage natural intellectual and emotional growth. Also, Progressive/Experiential Theory (Dewey, Neil, and Levy) which aims to help students become a good citizen in a democracy and innovative problem solvers who will improve society.

Where when the school day ends and a student goes to an academically enriching and psychologically and socially safe environment, then this will positively affect the student's behavior and overall development. Patton (2000) found that, the health of the minds of young people and their good composition are heavily influenced by the school environment, so that they will be good and positive if the school's psycho-social environment is good and vice versa. Their mental health and composition will be poor if the school environment is negative. As well as when students feel connected and communicate well with others, and when students feel the interest of adults and their observation of them, all affect students' mental health outcomes. In addition, my project is based on Constructivist and Social Constructivist Theory (Dewey, Piaget, Plato and Vygotsky). These theories argue that students develop skills and acquire new knowledge especially from the students around him or her and through participation in activities and games with peers. Kiraly (2000) found that

“individuals have no choice but to create or construct meanings and knowledge through participation in the interpersonal, intersubjective interaction that the philosopher Richard

Rorty has called the ‘conversation of mankind’ [Rorty 1979]" (p. 4).

The Problem: Obstacles and Problems that Students, Parents and Teachers Face at the

End of the School Day

I chose this project because I believe that in Saudi Arabia, there exists a number of problems that our students suffer after the end of the school day. Many parents are delayed to come to school to receive their children, impacted by parents' work schedules and commitments, or because of distance and commuting challenges, because of emergency situations facing parents, or having appointments in hospitals, or other things which would be an obstacle for parents to return to school in time and take

their children. Left on their own, children lack safe places after the end of the school day, which provides them with the necessary care and support. Also, students do not find a stimulating place that provides appropriate activities that enhance their academic, emotional and social skills. The teachers have no other choice in these cases to gather students late in the school yard. In these circumstances, everyone is sitting and waiting for the parents in boredom. This delay also affects teachers where every day there is a group of alternate teachers after the school day who are forced to sit with students until the last student leaves. This causes teachers to delay returning to their homes, other jobs and appointments or taking their children from other schools. In many cases, students may leave school at the end of the school day but do not go directly to their homes where we see them in grocery stores, shopping, playing or hanging out in the streets in the afternoon without supervision. Unsupervised students are vulnerable to many risks and problems, such as getting involved in drugs or cigarettes or the arguments which leads to fights or even murder sometimes, which can occur between students after leaving schools without supervision from adults. According to Asma al-Aboudi (2010), violence or quarrel among students is a global phenomenon. In fact, Asma al-Aboudi (2010) underscores that the United States, Malaysia, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia have high rates of this phenomenon compared to other countries. Asma al-Aboudi (2010) reports that according to the Ministry of Interior in Saudi Arabia, 82 percent of all incidents were the result of school violence. A study of 12-18-year-old students in public schools in Ohio, USA, found that "school connectedness," or the feeling of closeness to school personnel and the school environment, decreased the likelihood of health risk behaviors during adolescence, including cigarette use (Bonny and colleagues, 2000). When students do return home, they may need help while studying lessons or doing homework. However, in many cases, they do not find anyone to help them or support them, because of lack of parental involvement or because parents do not understand enough lessons especially in the advanced stages of study. It is also a problem that some parents do not allow their children to go out to play with their friends for fear of the dangers they may be exposed to. Parents do not find a safe place to play their children forcing them to keep their children at home all day long without access to ageappropriate social development. The child finds nothing to enjoy or benefit in his free time, so many children spend their time playing with electronic devices, which studies have proven to be harmful to children. For example, according to Rowan (2017), the use of technology by children causes them psychological, physical and behavioral disorders. Overuse of technology has also been shown to impact diseases such as diabetes and obesity

(Rowan,2017). Also, the frequent use of technology causes hyperactivity in children, autism, delayed growth, learning difficulties, anxiety and sleep disturbance (Rowan,2017). In addition, the isolation of children and their lack of participation in play with others negatively affect the development of emotional and social skills with others.

Previous Research on the Extended Day: Importance of Offering Safe and Supportive

Afterschool Programming

Kahen, Nagaoka, and Brown (2001) found that post-school programs represent an opportunity to improve students' academic, and social emotional skills but only some postschool programs provide enriching opportunities that encourage positive academic development of youth beyond what they receive during a normal school day, the researchers argue that most post-school programs offer more social emotional supports than during regular school hours. According to researchers Weissberg and Durlak (2007),

Children and young people are more vulnerable to problems and risk in the hours they spend after school without supervision. Academic and behavioral problems increase including drug abuse (Weissberg & Durlak, 2007). But on the positive side, opportunities for developing academic and social skills increase with post-school programs. Weissberg and Durlak (2007) found strong support for these programs from parents, especially parents who are busy for hours and cannot be with their children immediately after school. They also found that test scores for students with low incomes increased with these programs, including reading and math skills (Weissberg & Durlak, 2007). Lauver (2002) argues that poor areas are in particularly need for quality post-school programming because they lack safe parks and activities suitable for children. In his study, Lauver (2002) focused on the evaluation and analysis of postschool entertainment programs on a sample of 227 students. Lauver (2002) found that the relations between the employees in these programs and the students participating in them were positive and that the parents were very satisfied with it. The time spent by students in positive activities also increased their academic degrees. In addition, students spend less time on watching television after they participate in post-school programs.

In a different study, after analyzing 4 types of care that children receive after school

(formal after-school programs, mother care, informal adult supervision, and self-care) for a sample of 216 children from low income learners, Ponsler and Vandell (1994) found that children who participated in post-school programs improved their academic outcomes. Their social relations with others also improved compared with children who received other caregivers. The activities attended by these students also varied, and the activities they practiced were numerous such as academic activities and enrichment lessons. And they spent less unsupervised time watching TV and playing outside compared to other children. Thus, the time spent by these children in these activities was closely linked to their academic success and their emotional and social relationships, which also demonstrated improvements. In summary, these studies speak to the importance of ASPs or implementing the extended day after school to help develop students' academic skills and enhance social emotional skills, provide recreational activities for children in a safe place and opportunity to keep children away from watching television and electronic games. In addition, the extended day is a good solution for busy parents.

The Purpose of Capstone/ Specific Aims:

As reviewed above, previous research suggests that implementing the extended day or after-school programs is important because it will have an impact on the development of students' academic skills and social emotional skills, promoting positive youth development and increased student safety. In this capstone, I argue that the extended day /ASPs will solve many problems in Saudi Arabian society. Our students will find safe places characterized by care and enriching activities after the end of the school day, where students' academic functioning will be enhanced and their social emotional skills will be strengthened. Students will find a number of academic specialists who provide support and assistance in homework, thus, improving academic grades and developing reading, writing, mathematics and others. Students will find a variety of activities to meet their needs and wishes, because these postschool programs include activities such as sports activities, theater, cooking, handicrafts and drawing, as well as free games and competitions among children. The social, emotional and personal relations of children are also strengthened, Parents who are busy for long hours during the day will be reassured that their children are in good hands. There will also be no

delay for teachers who have to stay with students who are late to return home. These programs will provide career

opportunities for unemployed graduates who have not found jobs as well as an opportunity for retired teachers to return to work and benefit from their long experience in the development of youth and children. An important benefit to enrolling students in these programs is to keep them away from watching TV or playing electronic games for a long time may reach the limit of addiction which causes health, behavioral and psychological problems for children and youth (Rowan,2017). These programs also eliminate high-priced private lessons for students after school, and to keep students away from the dangers of wandering around the streets. The author Asma Al-Aboudi (2010) mentioned some solutions to this danger, such as the existence of various activities for students during and after the school day. Building off of the previous research and these reports on the scale of the problem, I argue in this capstone that children in Saudi Arabia should have the opportunity to access extended day programming. In most cases, salaries are paid to employees by the parents according to the number of hours the child is registered. The period starts from the end of the school day directly until 6:00 pm, and may begin early before the beginning of the school day for those parents who have to bring their children early to school. Healthy meals are provided to students during this program, and the students are divided according to their age. Further details about the action plan and steps needed to implement extended learning into Saudi Arabian schools are elaborated on below.

Action Plan:

Implementing Extended Day Learning Programming in Saudi Arabian Schools

The current capstone paper argues that extended day programming is a key pillar of student success and long-term academic and social-emotional development. Implementing extended day programming in Saudi Arabian schools to provide care for students after the school day, and to support students psychologically, emotionally and socially is essential to be able to achieve the vision of education in Saudi Arabia which aims to enhance 21st century skills for students, such as writing, reading and speaking skills. In addition to the skill of communication, cooperation and critical thinking through activities offered to students in post-school programs.

Implementation of the extended day project will go through several stages and steps. Also, there will be several supporters and participants at each stage such as the education office, the school administration, parents and students participating in the program, and some members of the community who want to work in the extended day program. For example, important supporters and participants would be the graduates, the retirees who have experience in education or teachers who want extra income for them, business men supporters or volunteer community members. The extended day program will also require some facilities, such as the playground in the school, some classes, cafeteria, gym, art room and school theater. The program will also need some tools like printer, paper, pens, color and mental games as well as games for motor sports such as football, basketball and billiards also books and stories. It is important to provide healthy meals. Therefore, as with any project, the extended day will need a budget to begin its implementation. The following table illustrates these components:

The Steps/ the phases	The time	The budget
1- Take permission from officials	Two weeks	-

2-Assessing readiness of my school to serve as pilot.	Two weeks	-
3- Make meeting with stake holders(school Administration- parents –students- business men- nonprofit organization)	One week	-
4- Advertising: for parents who want to register their children and those who want to employ in the project	One month	-
5- List the names of registered students and the number of hours of registration of each student in the program	One week	-
6-- Preparing the place in the school and the tools we need in the project	One month	\$5,000
7- Evaluate the effectiveness of the project	During the period of implementation of the project (formative evaluation) and at the end of the project (summative evaluation)	-
8- Creating plan for scale-up of Extended Day	One week	-

Evaluation and Assessment

To determine the effectiveness of the extended day project and its success in achieving its objectives, we will need to complete an evaluation. In the formative assessment I can measure the extent of success through several points:

1. Distribution of form/ survey to parents to determine their satisfaction with the program;
2. Communicate with teachers and student guides to see how well the students who have been enrolled in the program improve their skills and how well they do their homework As well as to see how improved their social relations with their schoolmates
3. Data analysis; and
4. Comparing the results of the tests of students enrolled in the program before joining the program and after enrollment
5. In this assessment I will measure the extent of success by:
6. Comparing the achievement level/test results for students registered at the beginning of the program with their achievement level/test results at the end of the implementation of the program;
7. Comparing the achievement level/test results for students enrolled in the program with achievement level/test results for students not enrolled in the program.

Conclusions

In my opinion, the implementation of the extended day program in Saudi Arabia will have a positive impact especially on improving the academic skills of students, in addition to developing their emotional and social skills, in line with the aspirations and objectives of education in Saudi Arabia. Students will find caring people after school who provide them with support and help to resolve duties and understand lessons. Students will enjoy many different activities with their peers. The impact of this program will extend to parents as they will feel comfortable and attentive about their children by being in a safe place after the end of the school day. Because in this century one income is not enough for the family so both parents are forced to work, when the children return from school, they do not find anyone to meet at home. Most importantly, the impact of this project will not be limited to students only. It will also have a positive impact on some members of society who want additional income. I imagine how our lives after this project will be stable and safer where parents will focus on their work without worrying about their children, thus increasing their productivity. Also, teachers' relationship with their students will be better. Because through this program students will be able to solve their homework and study their lessons and thus will improve the level of students' education skills. In addition, the rate of crime and problems will be reduced which can occur between students after leaving schools without supervision from adults. As I described in the introduction, according to Asma al-Aboudi (2010), violence or quarrel among students is a global phenomenon. In fact, Asma al-Aboudi (2010) underscores that the United States, Malaysia, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia have high rates of this phenomenon compared to other countries. Asma al-Aboudi (2010) reports that according to the Ministry of Interior in Saudi Arabia, 82 percent of all incidents were the result of school violence. With all these great benefits for the extended day project, I am afraid that there are some obstacles that stand in front of it, such as the lack of interest of parents to register their children in the program because of the presence of financial fees or the refusal of officials responsible for implementing the program at

school. Lack of financial support at the beginning of the project to equip school facilities for various activities could also be a barrier.

Finally, it is important to mention that Saudi Arabia already does have some programs similar to the extended day but the big gap is that it starts late in the evening and not after school directly. The other gap is that these programs do not take place in the same school but parents must transfer their children to a center in the neighborhood that includes students from different schools. Therefore, I am confident that implementing my extended day project would be a positive solution to these gaps and help address a critical need in Saudi Arabian schools and society overall.

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