

## Support from extra-curricular activities to strategic thinkers in private sector companies: with special reference to western province in Sri Lanka

Hashan S. Wimalasiri

Department of Commerce & Financial Management  
University of Kelaniya,  
Dalugama, Kelaniya 11600, Sri Lanka

**Abstract:** *Extra-curricular activities are expanding as clubs, aesthetic, Scouts, drama or theater, youth groups, student council, and club sports, so students have more engagement in these type of activities and companies give high priority for people who engaging these in present decades. Different type of these activities will be having impact to develop students' knowledge about management and risk taking behavior than their studies because these are practical. The people who engage in these type of activities have good career progress but there is significant level of studies in Sri Lanka to recognize advantage of engaging these. Objective of this research is to recognize the significant impact or support of extracurricular activities for the management to come up with good strategies and to lead the companies. Questions of this are what are the importance of the extra-curricular activities? What are the characteristics of the good strategic manager? Is there any significant relationship above importance and characteristics? Therefore this research paper will examine how the strategic thinkers in Private Sector Company get support from extra-curricular activities for their career life. In this study an interpret philosophy as the researchers view and the respondents view has adopted. Qualitative case study methodology was used answer the questions. By this study, it has been analyzed the experience of 30 strategic level managers in private sector companies in manufacturing industry. Importance extra-curricular activities which strategic thinkers, as top managers and business leaders get help to their career can recognize and what qualities can develop through activities for make better strategists. Also will find how the education curriculum change to make good strategists and how companies need to recognize strategists for their need picking a job seeker.*

**Keywords:** Extra-curricular activities, strategic thinkers, top managers, strategists, curriculum

### Introduction

With the development of global education system and subject related activities, they have been given significant chances for the students to gather as a clubs, societies, unions and associations just like general public clubs with having significant support from community, institutions and governments. In the United States, participation in organized activities is a normative experience for many youth. In recent national surveys, more than 70% of children and adolescents report participating in one or more organized activities over the past years (Mahoney et.al 2006 ; Feldman & Matjasko 2005). This participation in Sri Lanka has been increasing after end of the 19th century. According to the (UNICEF Sri Lanka, 2004) Involvement in extracurricular activities is important in development of psycho-social competence, generation of self-esteem etc. It is important to note that, a little more than half (52%) of the adolescents were involved in extracurricular activities in Sri Lanka. Importance of these activities have lot of dimensions, it has been suggested by (Eccles J. , 2003) that participation in voluntary, school-based, extracurricular activities increase school participation and achievement. This happens because it facilitates: a) the acquisition of

interpersonal skills and positive social norms, b) membership in pro-social peer groups, and c) stronger emotional and social connections to one's school. It then stands to reason that participation may contribute to an increase of wellness in mental health, improved students' engagement in school and achievement, strengthen their long-term educational outcomes and find that participation may decrease problem behaviors. Academic clubs which is included the clubs that were represented by debate teams, foreign language clubs, math, or chess club, science fair, or tutoring in academic subjects. What the researchers found was that participating in these clubs was related to higher educational success and potential for successful occupational outcomes. Therefore, this paper will indicate how private companies gain these benefits from their employees. It has measured job characteristics at ages 25-26. The job with a future scale assessed the extent to which the participants considered themselves in career path job; the job autonomy scale assessed the degree to which participants could make important decisions about what they did at work, had the opportunity to use their ideas and imagination in their jobs, and were their own boss (Eccles J. , 2003). In order to provide effective leadership – a strategist should optimally control (directly or indirectly) decisions

that are both strategic and controversial. This result reflects a broader theme that open disagreement is a key driver of the link between strategy and leadership. Therefore this research is to identify that hidden values and importance of extra-curricular activities have significant level of impact for the strategists in private sector companies in Sri Lanka.

The purpose of this study is to document how strategists get support from ECA to their career life with the experience of their prior ECA behavior and how they get value from that to behave as strategists. That is because involvement in extra-curricular activities can influence development in academics, social skills, and high school completion. Also 99% recruitment criteria of a company follow these ECA to catch up right employees. Therefore this is the real time to start studying company level value for these ECA engaged employees and how can make benefit throughout the company performance. In recruitment procedure it has a lack of identification criteria the employees who need to have qualities to being top strategist of the company. In order to find solutions for the lack of the knowledge this research is stated under the problem of how is the support of ECA to the strategists in a private sector companies.

### Review of Relevant Literature

There are terms that are used throughout the literature review that need to be defined for clarity of understanding. These terms are:

#### Extra-curricular activities-

Organized student activities connected with school, university, clubs and any institution usually carrying no academic credit (Wilson, 2009).

#### Structured Extracurricular Activities –

Highly structured activities that emphasize skill building, in which the skill attained increases in complexity under the guidance of competent adult leaders (Wilson, 2009).

#### Strategic thinkers/ Strategists

Leaders who lead the modern companies in strategic behavior with skills and qualities for achieve the vision (Birshan, 2014 )

Extracurricular activities are activities that students participate in that do not fall into the realm of normal curriculum of schools. They are found in all levels of schools. There are many forms of extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs, governance, student newspaper, music, art, and drama. Extracurricular activities are totally voluntary so students that do not want to participate in them do not have to. Lunenburg (2010) states that “Extracurricular activities serve the same goals

and functions as the required and elective courses in the curriculum. However, they provide experiences that are not included in formal courses of study. They allow students to apply the knowledge that they have learned in other classes and acquire concepts of democratic life.” Extracurricular activities have many positive effects on education. The positive effects that extracurricular activities have on students are behavior, better grades, school completion, positive aspects to become successful adults, and a social aspect. Extracurricular activities began in the United States in the 19th century (Casinger, 2010). At first they were just an additional part to the normal academic schedule for the year. Extracurricular activities usually had some practical or vocational interest that was included into the activities. The first extracurricular activities those were well known in schools started at Harvard and Yale University (Casinger, 2010).

Lot of highlighted benefits can identify when studying the literature about the extracurricular activities. The study of Massoni (2011) describes these benefits as six effects like this. The first effect that extracurricular activities have on education is behavior. Students who participate in extracurricular activities have reduced behavior problems. In sports, they show discipline in drills, practices, and routines. They have a responsibility to perform those tasks correctly, whether it is basketball or football plays, dance routines, or signals in baseball. When students perform these things correctly they are rewarded for their good behavior and they take pride in their accomplishments. Because of the pride they achieve, they gain better self-respect, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Education world states that “Participation in school activities, especially athletics, leads to higher self-esteem and enhanced status among peers, which some argue is deterrent to antisocial behavior” (Brown M. D., 2000).

Skills development from extracurricular activities has not only demand in the country, but also globally focused to share the knowledge workers, leaders to a companies who have good capabilities develop from internationally accepted way. Global talent management study of (Karin 2015) as the central actor within the talent system, the mechanism by which an employee contributes value may seem obvious and to be primarily through in-role performance. The study of (McDermott, et al 2011) article considers leader development as an ongoing process of personal development have studied five ways; the first of five is leader development oriented themes that we address in the paper. The second is an ongoing issue facing leaders – achieving a work life balance. The third examines the role emotions play in enhancing the development of leadership skills and behaviors. The fourth theme considers whether leadership is an individual or collective activity.

Finally, the last theme addresses the assumption of universality of leadership by examining the effect contextual and individual differences have on leadership development. Whether leaders were born or made, underpinned by the interaction between personal characteristics and life experiences. Our findings align with the developmental model of leadership in which life experience contributes to the development of leadership behavior.

### Methodology

According to the study; basics of qualitative research of Strauss, & Corbin, (2014) there are many valid reasons for doing qualitative research. One reason is preference and/or experience of the researchers. Some persons are more oriented and temperamentally suited to doing this type of work. Some researchers come from disciplines (e.g., anthropology) or have philosophical orientations (e.g., phenomenology) that traditionally make use of qualitative methods: another reason, and probably a more valued one, for choosing qualitative methods is the nature of the research problem. In addition, qualitative methods can be used to obtain the intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional research methods (Strauss, & Corbin, 2014).

Qualitative studies devote less space to procedure and more to description because less emphasis is placed on identifying a single truth. Through presentation of numerous specifics, the qualitative account shows how the concrete facts of the situation fit the explanation proposed. The persuasive strategy has two parts. First, the reader must be convinced that the researcher has become immersed enough in the setting to know it well. Second, sufficient concrete detail must be provided to permit comparison with the reader's own experience to see if the findings "make sense." This strategy fits with a view which holds that bias can be minimized but not eliminated and that in any case there are multiple realities that are socially constructed (Firestone, 1986).

Choosing a study sample is an important step in any research project since it is rarely practical, efficient or ethical to study whole population. The aim of all quantitative sampling approaches is to draw a representative sample from the population, so that the results of studying the sample can then be generalized back to the population (Marshall, 1996). The participants who was selected for this study had experience in strategic level positions and had been able to describe and communicate their feelings and thoughts about their previous experience on extracurricular activities in manufacturing industry companies in western province Sri Lanka.

The sample was a purposefully selected group of 30 strategic level managers and leaders of private sector companies in western province, with having prior experience on extracurricular activities. Generally, the goal in quantitative research is to obtain large, representative samples and to generalize findings to populations. This is not the case in qualitative research; where purposive sampling of one or a few cases (i.e., individuals, groups) is more appropriate (Onwuegbuzie, & Daniel, 2003). More specifically, Creswell (2002) has recommended that qualitative researchers should interview 15–30 people during a grounded theory study.

The research study utilized semi-structured interview of twenty strategic level managers and leaders in manufacturing sector, western province in Sri Lanka. Each participant's interview lasted between 45 minutes and 1 hour. In addition, five telephone interviews held by the researcher and similarly e-mail messages were also got from them. The interviewer's skills, combined with a semi-structured interview format enable them to maintain a more conversational atmosphere and trusting empathic relationship with interviewees.

There are three main categories of data in grounded theory research: field data (notes), interview data (notes, recordings, transcripts) and any existing literature and artifacts that may be useful to the research (for example, written correspondence between managers within a business, or any potentially useful ephemera). Copious notes and/or detailed tape recording transcripts need to be undertaken and to examine these data several times from a variety of perspectives in order to develop the most rigorous explanations of the phenomenon being studied (Douglas, 2003). The data gathered, coded and compared the information, using Glaser and Strauss (1967, 2009) guidelines for constant comparison in theory development. The centerpiece of grounded theory research is the development or generation of theory closely related the context of the phenomenon being studied (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Glaser and Strauss (1967) outline a method of theoretical sampling (jointly collecting, coding and analyzing data before deciding what to collect next and where to find it. Grounded theory includes the following key analytic strategies that provide the outline for the conduct of this study. Inductive analysis, analysis on site, Open-coding, Axial coding and Selective coding.

### Findings

Reference to that the data collection procedures were direct interview, telephone conversations and E-mail conversations. It all guided by interview protocol which design was according to research problems and objectives. This interview protocol has analyze here under four main topics, these topics names as case1, case2, case3 and case4. For

these analysis researcher used the Italic type font to the ideas which is in interviewees words. Also interviewees are not mentioned in this real names because need to protect their privacy and if two or more have same idea It is not mention otherwise documentation repeat with same things. This area have not much literatures so researcher is directing to the future studying areas with increasing existing body of knowledge. According to the interviewee's ideas and literature that have researcher define the theoretical framework as an objective of this research.

### **Case 1: Skills of Strategists**

Under this case discussed the extra-curricular background of the strategist with previous engagements, experiences from their childhood and what skills they have developed. Without getting bias or false for that researcher deeply got details about their extra-curricular engagement. But here only shows the significant details about the interviewee.

*Every time I had at school I go to the computer lab, I was always at the computer lab learning lot of things in my self. I was a Chairmen of the computer society for 3 years in Royal College. All the other guise waiting for free time to watch a movie. At that time I went to the computer lab for my studies, I always like that. Also I came to home as soon as and get my lunch then start building robots, I'm very much like in electronics. I wait to do project stuff. From the childhood I have always been when I finished the school stuff, I waiting for that extra work. When I went to the university same thing. I studied on USA, in free time I was working at restaurants, KFC, Pittza from that also I got too much experience with covering my school fees. Another thing I can't rest, that's the key thing I always keep this extra works for my make relax in my mind, because I interest on it (Mr. DH).*

*I was a captain of the 1<sup>st</sup> 11 cricket team, won the cricket colors, played 1<sup>st</sup> 15 rugby, basketball football as my sort curriculum, also I was a captain of a English debating team, member of a Sinhala debate team, president of a English literature union, international understand director of Interact club at school, Head prefect, president of media unit, also I had 1th place in 3 years form all island impromptu speech competition. (Mr. SR)*

(Larson R. W., 2000) Many traditional societies provide a progressive set of steps that socialize youth into the roles and responsibilities of adulthood, whereas in Western society there is

marked discontinuity between what we expect of children and what we expect of adults, especially with regard to initiative.

*From my school age I was engaging extra-curricular activities, mainly I was with the rugby as field activity. Than that I was in societies like chemistry club, environmental club, broadcasting unit, inventors club, maths society & science club. After the school I was the president of my batch in old boys association. In my university time gavel club, career fair, small time spend with aisac club, also organized the exhibition with my department. (Mr. MA)*

According to researchers sample 30, all the strategist have engaged some kind of extra-curricular activity such as sports, social works, club activities, voluntary workings, union programs, helping animals etc., being innovators, part time workers, student leaders, public speakers, organizers of activities, animalists like different roles. From these engagement they have identified what they like, what they can do cannot do.

### **Case 2: Support from extracurricular activities to behavior**

In here identify the behavioral change come up from the extra-curricular activities to the top level managers and to the leaders of a manufacturing sector. To get real answer for this researcher discuss their behavioral highlights and give some key characters who develop such skills. With reference to (Feldman A.F., & Matjasko J.L., 2005) Researchers investigating extra-curricular activities have long been interested in the relationships between participation in these activities and the social outcomes, academic achievement, and educational attainment of adolescents. Stemming from decades of investigation by sociologists, this line of inquiry has uncovered positive associations between participation and adolescent functioning.

*Even today my business is in success and I get so many opportunities from the peoples for invest in different areas, but it is not technical related therefore I'm not interested. Because I can't enjoy it. I'm not work with my company as my business I try to enjoy the technical side, it decide my business. (Mr. DP)*

*I care about the employees. Caring for others is something that I was used to do from my childhood itself. As a result there's unity among my team members. They work with each other and the organization with utmost respect and love. We cannot work without humans, thus I appreciate the human element in every employee. When I was about 12 or 13 years old, I saw that the servants in our*

*house did not have anything to do after they finish their daily chores, such as cooking. I felt sad for them. So I collected money by selling some parts of computers and purchased a black and white television for them. They were extremely happy. That is the kind of culture which I use to build my company. (Mr. DH)*

*I hardly ever think of myself as a woman in business or a woman in any other role I play. I just do what I can do to the best of my ability. However, there are instances I know where many have to face such obstacles but the main thing is to be strong and to fight for what you believe. Women have and continue to contribute a lot to society and the world. Anyone who cannot treat a woman as an equal has weaknesses within themselves which they try to hide by how they treat a woman. (Mrs. OG)*

*I Learnt from ECA, love what I'm doing, be happy doing what, respect what others are doing, a sense of achievement, Should be content, have made a difference in their lives and the lives of others for the betterment of the society. (Mr. SW)*

The theory, characterized by (Bronfenbrenner U., 1979, 1986, 1998) as a bio ecological model, views an individual's heredity as joining with multiple levels of the surrounding environment to shape development. Extracurricular activities are not isolated from other developmental contexts; rather, they are embedded in schools and communities and influenced by families and peers. Exploring this overlap, such as the degree to which any benefits or costs of these activities vary in different types of families, peers, schools, or neighborhoods, would better capture the idea of social ecology, a web of intersecting developmental contexts.

### **Case 3: Recognize the relationship of skill development and extracurricular activities**

To check this researcher mainly study the behavior of strategists when he recruiting, training and develop his employee. Because they can express real idea about third party or the view on third party than him. Thereafter examine personal attitude of them to express believe on extra-curricular activities they have engaged.

*I focus on the attitudes of the candidates in interviews. Some candidates have false attitudes when they face an interview. But when I discuss about his /her extracurricular activities and background I can decide whether he/she is the right person for the particular post. It's normal for students to do part time jobs. Most of them have financial problems. Even I worked in places like KFC, Pizza Hut and*

*coffee shops when I was in USA. A person who can say he/she had to do part time jobs in order to assist his finances are the most humble people you can meet. And you can recognize such a person according to the way he treats his employees regardless of their ranks. (Mr. DH)*

Findings from our study suggest that Taiwanese college graduates of business schools with experience of being core members in extra-curricular activities are more likely to positively evaluate their employability in terms of attributes such as communication, leadership, creativity and self-promotion skills (Laua et al. 2014)

*When I'm selecting an employee for my company, I consider extracurricular activities by the way that person is lack of the of the education qualification. Because I know the person who has the qualities like, high responsible, self-problem solving behavior, and he gets final results not the problems. Sometimes we are met the people who always requesting guidance for the problems which arise, really they are lack extracurricular and social behavior (Mr. MA)*

These activities can also work to build professional skills that a classroom alone cannot always foster. A leadership-oriented club, for example, will help students to learn essential skills in management and delegation, while a debate or speech club will provide additional public speaking practice for students (Eccles J. S., & Barber B. L., 1999).

*I like to give advice to the students which are doing A/L pass your exam as your best effort with everything that can you do in school time. After that spend the same effort & time to build up your personality. Lot of graduates applicants apply for same job, also corporate need higher polished qualifications because employee represent the company to outside. Therefore our selection criteria based on student's personality with his talent. To test that we give priority for extra-curricular activities. (Mr. MC)*

### **Case 4: Support from extracurricular activities to strategic thinkers**

More than other positions in a company top manager, CEO, Managing directors, leading character of a company is different. Because they are the key roles or final decision makers, strategy designers and leaders in a company. Strategic roles of a top manager or a leader of a company can be change according to the environments, personal characteristics, and competition in the industry. The sample of this research is under the manufacturing sector companies in western

province in Sri Lanka which have huge competition, dynamic environment, and high level of contribution to the national income. Therefore the top management strategic role is not easier in this field and their experience, responsibility, working capacity decide firm growth and success. To behave a company as a public listed company also need high level of capacity and contribution to economy than private company.

*I was able to improve my creativity through my work/creations. For instance, if I built a robot it's creative or if I make a movie, it is also creative. The foundation to all these amazing activities arose from the things that I like. I took my timeouts in the form of side projects – ideas that he spun into action over late nights fuelled by pots of coffee. One of these was sithiyama.com, a Java-based site that would pinpoint places on a map of Sri Lanka. To do this, he painstakingly scanned in real maps of Sri Lanka, assembling a massive image piecemeal, and had his friends assist with the data entry – everything from schools to bus stands. This was in 2000. Back then, Google was still just a search engine. Sithiyama turned out to be an unprecedented hit. Indeed, it was so impressive that it landed my job at Microsoft, a fantastic break. I went in as a software architect. (Mr. DH)*

*My parents are middle class; they are not from rich families. Thus I made my life experiences a motivation to work hard and come to this position. But I realized that you cannot go further without paper qualifications. The biggest challenge that I face after that was, 'how to complete the professional exams?' I'm proud to say that my morale helped me a lot to face these challenges. Whatever the educational qualifications I possess now is mainly gathered owing to my self-confidence. (Mr. DS)*

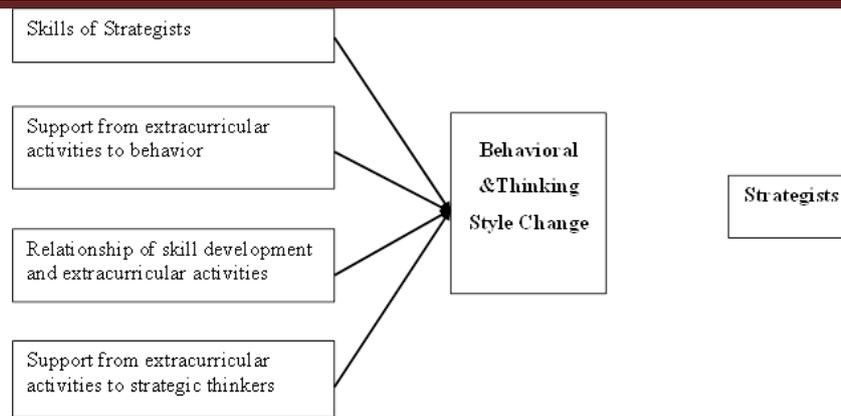
*There are a lot of tactics and things like that I have to apply. This is a very competitive market and Sri Lanka's opportunities are now very high. There*

*are so many opportunities coming up. So the most important thing is to retain people, which is very difficult, because nowadays people come with different experiences, exposure, and all that. So unless we get to know people personally, it is difficult to retain them. So, one of our tasks is to identify people who might leave the company, find out what their problem is and help them. This is how you make people get closer to you and get what you want. That is the skill you must have. Sometimes I do personality building here. How to be friendly, how to talk and how to dress, things like that. I also teach how to deal with the customers and how to do presentations, which is very important. I am deal with one particular cluster. Whatever their positions are, I have to be close to these people. (Mr. CR)*

With references to the above idea of Strategist whom researcher interviewed have mainly identified their taste of work, in other words they have engaged the career path what they love to engage, from that they make well identification what they can do & cannot do, for these all strategists make their basement from extra-curricular activities. As an examples childhood spend making robots and computer repairing Mr. DH graduate as a software engineer, now he is CEO of electronic equipment manufacturing company. The persons who is like to be with social teams, friends and who has public speaking characteristics working as consultants, Human resource managers. The interviewees who has much engaging sport related activities have energetic personalities, tactical behaviors in their career behavior.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Main objective of this research is to introduce theoretical framework according to the data gathered from the field for the future studies. The Discovery of Grounded Theory (1967), was specifically aimed at developing social scientists' capacities for generating theory. Therefore this study also introduce theoretical framework according to figure 4.1 and following detail description for that.



According to the framework in figure 4.1, it mainly shows the impact of each variable and the relationship among them. As a qualitative research study this relationship is a final output under the theory which represents the whole study. In here, to be easy to continue detail discussion of this theory with the factors of this model.

➤ **Skills of Strategists**

Extra-curricular activities (ECA) which the key factor come up throughout the research. Extra-curricular activities are organized student activities connected with school, university, clubs and any institution usually carrying no academic credit (Wilson, 2009). Participation in structured extracurricular activities provides important opportunities for social, emotional, and civic development during adolescence (Eccles J. S., & Barber B. L., 1999). Some research has contrasted use of structured leisure time with use of unstructured leisure time. Examples of structured activities including sporting teams, drama clubs, academic clubs, church groups, and service activities, and can be based at school or in the community. In contrast, unstructured activities refer to more passive types of leisure including watching television, ‘hanging out’ with friends, and listening to music. When it is compared with unstructured leisure, structured activities have consistently been found to be more developmentally beneficial. Both of these structured and unstructured ECA, develop the qualities like team work, handling pressure and stress, self-motivation, ethics, leadership, self-control, life balance, discipline, working into a plan, creativity etc.

➤ **Support from extracurricular activities to behavior**

The data which were collected to research have been highlighted four main qualities and some important qualities developed through ECA by strategist to their career improvement. First one is understand the favor. It means ECA engagement happen according to the preference of each. From

that they identify what they love to do eventually and continue it to most of the time as their career. As second the sense of environment is developing experience of students to behave in dynamic and different environments through ECA. It is because most of the activities have no specific place or specific persons. This location and personal environment sense make much more benefit to be a strategist also to make success in life. Next, quality of social connections represent the chance of getting social, this quality more important to the students who have anti-social behavior. They can be social and the social students can be more social with the persons who met with these ECA. Final main point is developing creativity of students because as mentioned above ECA are chosen according to the preference of each. Therefore students choose what they like to do and they contribute much effort of these ECA and automatically increasing creativity of them. For instance, Mr. DH is a key person to show creativity, from the childhood he was engaging with making robots, working in computers what he interested. The majority of this research has been conducted in the United States, with scholars from a variety of different disciplines including sociology, education, leisure studies, sports psychology, and human development finding developmentally positive outcomes associated with participation in structured extracurricular activities. Educational benefits have attracted a great deal of attention. There is a clear link between activity participation and levels of attachment, engagement, and satisfaction with school, with adolescents who participate in extracurricular activities reporting significantly higher levels of these indicators (Eccles J. S., & Barber B. L., 1999).

➤ **Relationship of skill development and extracurricular activities**

Generally emotional qualifications (EQ) is focused in recruitments than intelligence qualifications (IQ) since pay attention on emotional stability than intelligence. Even International companies tend to focus on EQ than IQ when they recruit employees.

On the other hand SL criteria haven't come in to this stage yet and usually look at both. But at present have to pay attention on the emotional stability, attitudes and etc. It's not mean saying recruit people who are not qualified in IQ tests, just because they have an attitude or emotional stability that requires for the post. In present give 50%-50% attention to IQ and EQ. Because companies were understood that knowledge can improve through training but heavy to develop other soft skills. So strategists believe students who have engage in sports are challenge oriented, who has public speaking background is good in presentation and customer relations. Just like different aspect reflected by these ECA engagement of the human behavior.

➤ **Support from extracurricular activities to strategic thinkers**

Strategists have good identification of their taste of work, in other words they have engaged the career path what they love to engage, from that they make well identification what they can do & cannot do, for these all strategists make their basement from ECA. The persons who like to be with social teams, friends and who have public speaking characteristics are working as consultants, Human resource managers. The interviewees who have much engaged with sport related activities have energetic personalities, tactical behaviors in their career behavior. Reference to (Birshan, et al, 2014). Wide range of global organizations and strategists, a growing recognition that traditional strategic-planning processes are insufficient to absorb the shocks and disruptions characterizing their markets and to stimulate the ongoing deliberation that a top-management team requires. Increasingly, they recognize a need to rethink their approach to strategic planning and to embrace a more frequent strategic dialogue involving a focused group of senior executives. Effective organizations seem to be transforming strategy development into an ongoing process of ad hoc, topic-specific leadership conversations and budget-reallocation meetings conducted periodically throughout the year. Some organizations have even instituted a more broadly democratic process that pulls in company-wide participation through social-technology and game-based strategy development. All of these environments and conditions have to manage the top manager and they need good behavioral & decision making qualities for that.

➤ **Behavioral & thinking style change**

With representing many beneficial qualities, ECA build up a person as much as possible to the environment making behavioral and thinking style change. Understanding of the strategists about this change arise from ECA as how to add value after this engagement, how interview processes giving priority for that, how life balance become, team work, how can respect people, leadership &

responsibility come up etc., as literature shows. According to Eccles & Barber (1999), theory and research on positive youth development emphasizes the transition of human development, and suggest that cultivating positive, supportive relationships with people and social institutions encourage healthy development. Considering this perspective, organized activities, such as extra-curricular activities, can encourage healthy development because of the support and opportunities that are presented compared to less positive after school options for teens. Students who participate in structured activities are more likely to respect diversity, play by the rules, and contribute as a member of a team whether it is sports, scouting or clubs.

Thinking styles can be defined as an individual's preferred way of using their abilities and of processing data (Sternberg, 1997). Thinking styles affect not only one's form of creativity, but also one's outlook and path in life. Sri Lankan culture is different more than western countries because children are under the parents until the marriage normally it belongs to age 25-30. With the free education system and parents guidance education context plays a major role in students' life from the childhood to the end up in higher education. This influence also affects to the ECA of children, parents or elders guide but research interviewee's idea with that was the parents or protectors of them have not much influence on selecting ECA but they can make a significant influence if student missed up their educational life by the reason of ECA. This is general situation in a society, therefore elders also need proper understand or knowledge to guide these activities because they are the influencers or the key roles in student's life.

From this behavioral change normally after the age of 19, after the secondary school life student decides how their life should continue, for that it has a direct influence from ECA background of each. In here 3 categories mainly decide according to the student's level of priority to the engage in improve the knowledge and engage to improve the ECA. It is represented the students who are giving less priority to improve their academic knowledge than ECA engagement. Because of this priority, in most of the time they convert ECA to their career, like professional cricketers, musicians, photographers, racing drivers etc.

➤ **Strategists**

Final point of this framework is strategist who came up who has ECA background making it balance with the education life. A strategist is a person with responsibility for the formulation and implementation of a strategy. This education or knowledge improving is beneficial to behave in top level. If anyone became owner of the company he gets management support that has knowledgeable background. By the way these strategists must need

the qualities developed from ECA background not only for being strategists, but also behave and remain as strategists. The person who gives nearly 50/50 priority for ECA engagement and education life, they have good life balancing qualities than others also they can be a good strategists. The person who gives high priority for their knowledge development than ECA engagement also can be a strategists. This is not always saying that they give less priority for ECA, in other words most of the time some people from the childhood engage in different kind of activities with their preference, then they were understood the working capacity of him/her and use that effort to develop educational knowledge, and also some people select academic path according to their favor in ECA such as Mr. DH, from the childhood he likes to behave with technology, therefore he has selected math stream for A/L and graduation. Thus students who love their ECA find a way to be always with that.

### Conclusion

Engagement in activities of a student life from the childhood is very important, and that can be academic or other than academic works, such as hobbies, sports, family trips, and picnics etc. With the development of education system in decade before 1990, these activities engaged in students mainly in two categories one is academic also called curriculum and second is extra-curricular activities. After 1990 this was converting to mix it means educationists add some ECA to academic relates, and now some activities are in part of the academic curriculum. Therefore importance of these ECA are getting increase day by day, making more benefits in students life, activate lot of minds to hold future world and so forth. On the other hand private sector and public sector companies are converting to give same priority for the academic and for ECA when selecting employees for the companies for most of the positions. Researcher identified both of these environments and tries to build a relationship how companies get benefits from the employees who have engaged in ECA in their previous students' time. In order to find that researcher found out the top managers in the strategic positions in a company, because the deciders of the company strategies and most of their down level employees are followers.

Objective of this research is to construct a theoretical framework to show the link between ECA behavior and behavior of strategists. It is also important to identify skills that develop from ECA and to recognize the role of a strategists in Private Sector Company. Therefore research questions are based on these objectives to find out how is the support from ECA to strategic thinkers. Relatively this study is important there is no specific way to identify top level manager or his background in selecting process, also company spend too much money for doing training and development of the

employees not only technical employees as well as management staff. If there is way to identify job seekers who has right attitudes and skills and also company have good understand about the value of ECA engaged employee that will make benefit for everyone. The research was conducted under the qualitative methodology, Strauss, & Corbin, (2014) there are many valid reasons for doing qualitative research. One reason is preference and/or experience of the researchers. Some persons are more oriented and temperamentally suited to doing this type of work. Sample of this study is 30 top managers from manufacturing sector listed companies in Colombo stock exchange. Only Western Provincial companies researcher have selected, interview methods of those were in-depth interview method with using interview protocol for direct and E-mail interviews. This protocol was based on four cases as skills of the strategist, support from ECA to behavior, relationship of skills development from ECA and support from ECA to strategic thinkers. From these cases made a flow to the final theoretical framework.

The data gathered, coded and compared the information, using Glaser and Strauss (1967, 2006) guidelines for constant comparison in theory development. The centerpiece of grounded theory research is the development or generation of theory closely related to the context of the phenomenon being studied (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Glaser and Strauss (1967) outline a method of theoretical sampling (jointly collecting, coding and analyzing data) before deciding what to collect next and where to find it. Grounded theory includes the following key analytic strategies that provide the outline for the conduct of this study. According to that inductive data analysis, analysis on-site, open coding, axial coding and selective coding steps were used.

According to these ideas theoretical framework build up, in figure 4.1 all the cases have been discussed made the changes in strategists' behavioral and thinking style. Thinking styles can be defined as an individual's preferred way of using their abilities and of processing data (Sternberg, 1997). From that changes have influenced to be a strategist, but according to the interviews they have qualities come up from ECA or develop from other training and also academic success made after drop out university engagement. Only to behave in a strategic positions strategist need experiential and academics knowledge, the people who follow ECA after the secondary school levels most of the time what they love into their career as cricketers, professional sportiest, musicians, travel guides, artists as well. Therefore to be good strategists and to behave long term as strategists it is needed a good behavioral background from the attitudes as well as social and environmental sense.

---

## Recommendations

### Generalize Importance of Extra-curricular Activities

It is needed to generalize importance of ECA development which fulfill the quality building than academic teaching. Also the country like Sri Lanka have parents' guidance to the students' life up to end of the higher education. Because of that most of the students select their path according to the influence of the parents, but if there is a way to identify students what they love to do, what they really can do through these ECA and it makes much benefits than present situation.

### Making Facilities to develop Extra-curricular Activities

Facilities to do these ECA also not equally distributed among the educational institutions. Therefore it is needed the guide to the educational institutions to develop ECA environment for the development of the students with good instructions and facilities.

### Guide students to do beneficial Extra-curricular Activities

Students also need to make knowledge about benefits and life balance come up from these ECA and how the industry make value through these ECA.

## Educationists need to study

Existing studies are not much published on this area not only in Sri Lanka but also in worldwide, so this make much opportunity who is interest, researcher recommends to make new knowledge on this.

### Suggestions for further researches

- Making changes and expanding this study for future researches can be done using qualitative or quantitative methodology.
- This study is only based on 30 sample size in manufacturing sector companies, these type of researches can be continued with increasing sample size than this and using all the sectors in stock market like service, constructions, tourism agriculture etc.
- Study can expand to the all island research in same sector or other sectors.
- Same study can be done long term basis just the study like, that a student engaging ECA while he/she is studying, then starts doing a job after graduating at the age of 25; thus it can be done a long term research to see where he/she will be when he/she is 45 years old. Sometimes this research can show the difference between the accomplishments of a student who did ECA and a student who did not do them.

## Reference

- Birshan, M. G. (2014). Rethinking the role of the strategist. *McKinsey Quarterly*, 9.
- Bronfenbrenner U. (1979). *The ecology of human development*. MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspective. *Developmental Psychology*, 22, 723-742.
- Bronfenbrenner U. (1998). The ecology of developmental processes I n R. M. Lerer (Ed.) *Handbook of child psychology. Theoretical models of human development*, 1, 993-1028.
- Brown, M. D. (2000). Science or soccer? -- how important are extracurricular activities?, Retrieved February, 13, 2011. Retrieved from Education World website: [http://www.educationworld.com/\\_curr/.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/_curr/.shtml)
- Casinger, J. (2010). College extracurricular activities: the history of activities. Retrieved from <http://www.articledashboard.com//Extracurricular-Activities--the-History-of-Activities/>
- Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Douglas, D. (2003). Grounded theories of management: a methodological review. *Management Research News*, 26(5), 44 - 52.
- Eccles, J. S. (2003). Extracurricular Activities and Adolescent Development. *Journal of social issues*, 59(4), 865-889.
- Eccles, J.S., & Barber, B.L., (1999). Student council, volunteering, basketball, or marching band: What kind of extracurricular involvement matters? *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 14, 10-43.
- Feldman A.F., & Matjasko J.L. (2005). The Role of School-Based Extracurricular Activities in Adolescent Development: A Comprehensive Review and Future Directions. *Review of Educational Research*, 75(2), 159-210.
- Feldman, A. F., & Matjasko, J. L. (2005). The role of school-based extracurricular activities in adolescent

- 
- development: A comprehensive review and future directions. . *Review of Educational Research*, 75, 159–210.
- Firestone, W. A. (1986). *Meaning in Method: The Rhetoric of Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. . Philadelphia, Pa: Research for Better Schools, Inc., .
- Glaser, B. G. (1992). *Emergence vs forcing: Basics of grounded theory analysis*. Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). The discovery of grounded theory. *London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson*.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (2009). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Transaction Publishers.
- Karin A. K. (2015). "Global talent management". *Journal of Global Mobility*, 3(3), 273-288.
- Larson R. W. (2000). Toward a Psychology of Positive Youth Development. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 170-183.
- Laua H. H., Hsub H. Y., Acostac S. & Hsud T. L... (2014). Impact of participation in extra-curricular activities during college on graduate employability: an empirical study of graduates of Taiwanese business schools. *Educational Studies*, 40(1), 26- 47.
- Lunenburg, F. C. (2010). The decision making process. In *National forum of educational administration and supervision Journal* (Vol. 27, No. 4, pp. 1-12).
- Mahoney J. L., Harris A. L., & Eccle, J. S. (2006). Organized activity participation, positive youth development, and the over-scheduling hypothesis. *Society for Research in Child Development: Social policy report*, 20,1-30.
- Marshall, M. N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family Practice*.
- Massoni, E. (2011). The Positive Effects of Extra Curricular Activities on Students. *ESSAI*, 9, 84-87.
- McDermott, A., Kidney, R., & Flood, P.,. (2011). Understanding leader development: learning from leaders. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 32(4), 358-378.
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J. & Daniel, L. G.,. (2003). Typology of analytical and interpretational errors in quantitative and qualitative educational research. *Current Issues in Education [On-line]*, 6(2). Retrieved from <http://cie.ed.asu.edu/volume6/number2/>
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J.,. (2014). *Basics of Qualitative Research, Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (Second ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Sternberg, R. J., & Grigorenko, E. L. (1997). Are cognitive styles still in style?. *American psychologist*, 52(7), 700.
- UNICEF Sri Lanka. (2004). *National Survey on Emerging Issues among Adolescents in Sri Lanka*. Limited, Medistat Research (Pvt) .
- Wilson, N. L. (2009). Impact of Extracurricular Activities on Students. *American Psychological Association*, 5th edition , 39.