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## TEACHER'S WORKLOAD AND ACTIVITIES IN MONGOLIA

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### ABSTRACT

In Mongolia, secondary school teachers engage in a variety of activities, and work over time. This research aims at understanding teacher's workload in Mongolia. In the survey, the convenient sampling was adopted and covered 82 teachers. The SCAT method was used for analysis of open-ended questions. This research found that, among others, teachers are more likely to engage in administrative, sport and cultural activities during the working hours, and they are more likely to engage in the preparation for the class when working hours are over. More importantly, none of the teachers mentioned three activities: preparing homework/assignment materials for students, formative assessment and personal development activities. These suggest that the major academic and non-academic aspects are likely to be abandoned in the secondary schools in Mongolia, and teachers do not use their time efficiently. Therefore, our research suggests that it is very important to conduct a teacher study observing teacher's activities, and find out unnecessary activities.

**KEYWORDS:** teacher's workload, teacher's activities, child development, personal development, secondary school, Mongolia.

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### INTRODUCTION

In Mongolia, during socialism, schools were more concerned about academic achievements and discipline of children. Today, schools are more likely to spend children's time on sport and cultural activities. For some private schools, sport and cultural activities, and the following successes serve as an advertisement. Therefore, teachers are more likely to engage in non-academic activities. Also, teachers engage in activities which are not included in the rules and regulations. In Mongolia, teachers complain that they engage in a variety of activities and work over time. Teachers spend a lot of time on paper work, which includes preparation of curriculum, research and report. Teachers complain that the curriculum changes every year. The other reason for teachers to find a paper

work as a hardship can be associated with the poor educational level of the teachers themselves. Poor educated teachers might find difficult, and spend more time than expected, to formulate plan, to do research, to prepare own work report and to follow all the changes which are required for the improvement of the schooling.

Despite the above-mentioned circumstances, producing quality teaching is the responsibility of the profession of teachers (Asia Society, 2013). In Mongolia, according to the rules and regulations, out of the teacher's daily working hours, 85 percent should be associated with the implementation of the teaching standard and curriculum, and the remaining 15 percent should be devoted for doing other activities. However, in Mongolia teachers spend less time on other activities than the implementation of the teaching standard and curriculum, and more time on teaching activities (Choisurenet al., 2019)

In our survey, it was assumed that teachers do not use their working hours efficiently. In order to understand teacher's workload and activities, we aimed at analyzing activities which are conducted during working hours, and after working hours. We found that teachers are more likely to engage in non-academic activities during the working hours, and start to work on the academic activities after the working hour is over. Apart from spending their working hours inefficiently, teachers are more likely to leave out the major activities of the child development, the assessment and personal development activities.

We found that teachers tend to miss the major activities of child development. However, we failed to capture the real situation or real picture in schools as our participants were teachers themselves. Therefore, our survey suggests that it is very important to conduct observation of teachers in schools and find out if teachers spend working hours on themselves, families or on unnecessary activities.

Therefore, this paper suggests that in order to improve efficiency of working hours of the teachers, it is important to conduct classroom and non-classroom observations of the teachers, and find out if teachers really have hectic work or they spend working hours inefficiently, on unnecessary activities. Inefficiently.

## **DATA COLLECTION AND METHOD**

During the academic year 2017-2018, the author thought research methodology courses for two (autumn and winter) classes of master students at the Mongolian National University of Education. The majority of master students were secondary school teachers from different aimags (provinces) of Mongolia. As part of research methodology course, we conducted a small scale sample survey on "Teacher development" in the class. Thus the convenient sampling was adopted as data were collected right in the class.

In the class of research methodology, as part of training, students were asked to formulate a questionnaire to collect information on teacher development, but later the author gave the readymade questionnaire to be filled up by the students. The questions were designed mainly with 'yes/no' answers. Following the 'yes/no' answer, 'why' and 'how' questions were formulated. Students of two classes worked on the data separately to finalize their assignment, and at the same time, the author obtained the MS Excel file from the students. Later the author combined the two data sets. As a total, 82 observations were covered in the small scale sample survey, and the unit of observation was the secondary school teachers. At first, all open ended questions were analyzed by the author only. The SCAT (Steps for Coding and Theorization) method, the method for analysing qualitative data, was employed to study complex responses to the open ended questions, like teacher's working hours activities as well as extra hours activities.

### TEACHING STANDARD ACTIVITY AND WORKLOAD

In Mongolia, according to the rules and regulations, teacher's daily working hours consist of two parts, namely hours devoted for activities which are associated with the implementation of the teaching standard and curriculum (85.0%) and hours devoted for doing other activities (15%). As a rule, teachers spend 3.8 hours per day on teaching (Table 1).

**Table 1. Teacher's daily working hours, by activities**

	Hours	Percentage
Total	8	100.0
<b>Activities to implement the teaching standard</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>85.0</b>
To develop teaching curriculum	2	25.0
To conduct teaching in line with the curriculum	3.8	47.0
To evaluate the implementation of the curriculum	1	13.0
<b>Other activities</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>15.0</b>
To support teaching and instruction activities	0.4	5.0
To ensure teacher development	0.4	5.0
To work with students and other people	0.4	5.0

Source: Rules and regulations of teacher's work cited in Choisurenet al., 2019

In Mongolia, teachers spend, as an average, 9.8 hours on other activities than teaching, and as whole, teachers work for 13.6 hours per day (Choisurenet al. 2019:122). An average hours spend per day of a teacher in other activities than the teaching is given in Table 2, and for some activities, an average hours spend per week, per month, per quarter and per year were converted into an average hours per day.

<sup>1</sup>MNUE

<sup>2</sup>The SCAT method is developed by Prof. Takashi Otani, Nagoya University, Japan. The SCAT form can be obtained from: <http://www.educa.nagoya-u.ac.jp/~otani/scat/scatform-eng.xls>

<sup>3</sup>Cited in the Choisurenet, 2019.

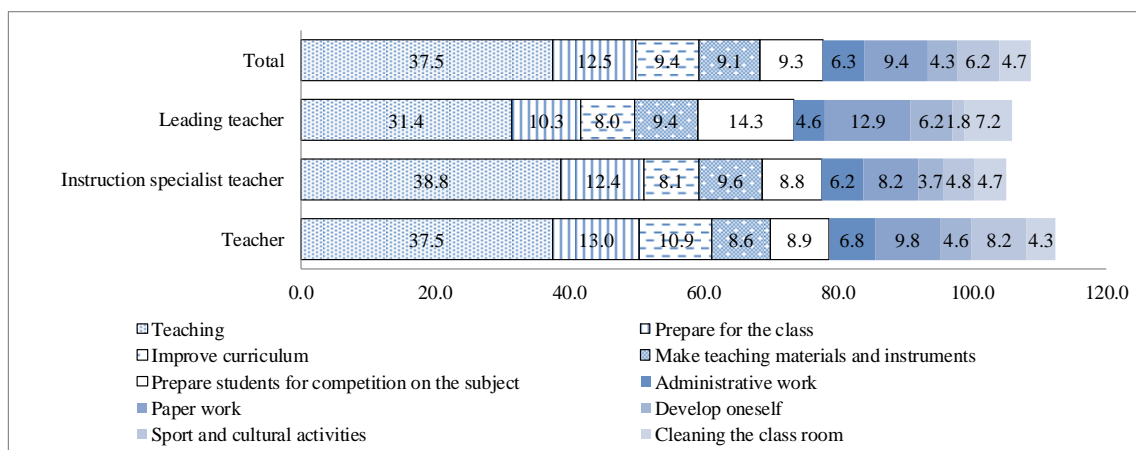
**Table 2. List of teacher's activities**

	Hours
To participate in the activities of the Didactic Method Unit	0.45
To work with students after class hour -extra class hour	0.68
To assess and evaluate student learning activities and outcome	0.74
To work with students who live in the dormitory	0.17
To read and mark notebooks	0.71
To keep record and prepare training related documents: student assessment book, student personnel file, data for research and other information	0.29
To improve teaching environment: class room and school	0.26
To prepare for and participate in the subject matter competition among students	0.28
To work as a teacher-guard	0.27
To prepare book, handbook, etc.	0.19
To work with parents and wider public	0.17
To conduct and participate in cultural and sport events	0.22
Administrative work and elected/volunteer work	0.2
To prepare curriculum for the unit (4-6 class hour)	0.92
To prepare curriculum for the class (40 min or 1 hour)	2.84
To prepare instruction materials and instruments (40 min or 1 hour)	0.65
To prepare homework/assignment	...
To prepare a set of evaluation test or exam materials (40 min or 1 hour)	0.34
To prepare a set of evaluation test or exam materials for unit	0.19
To prepare work related administrative report and research	0.01
To ensure teacher development	0.15
To organize and participate in the training (seminars or workshops) for teachers	0.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.76</b>

Source: Choisurenet al. (2019)

In our survey, it was asked to write down an average percentage of teacher's daily eight working hours which is spend in the activities listed in the questionnaire, and also it was asked to right down if they have different activities. The mean percentage is calculated for each activity for all teachers as well as by professional grade, and it is given in Figure 1. According to the average percentage of daily working hours, all teachers work over time (108.7%). Teachers<sup>1</sup> (112.5%) are more likely to work overtime than the instruction specialist teachers (105.1%) and the leading teachers (106.1%). On the whole, teachers spend 37.5 percent on teaching, which is less than the standard 47.0 percent. The instruction specialist teachers (38.8%) are most likely while the leading teachers (31.4%) are least likely to spend daily working hours on teaching.

<sup>4</sup>In our survey, teachers mainly refer to the young teachers. In our survey, the years of service was a proxy of the professional grade, and therefore, of the teacher development (AriunaaDashtseren, 2022).



**Figure 1. The percentage distribution of teacher's daily working hours, by activity and professional grade**

Apart from teaching, in our survey, activities to implement the teaching standard include to prepare for classes, to improve curriculum, to develop teaching materials and instruments, and to prepare students for competition on the subject. Compared to the standard (85.0%), teachers (77.8%) spend less time on the activities to implement the teaching standard. It differs by professional grade of teachers. Leading teachers (73.4%) are less likely to spend their time on the activities to implement the teaching standard than instruction specialist teachers (77.7%) and teachers (78.9%). Teachers are likely to spend more time on preparing for the class (13.0%) and improving the curriculum (10.9%) than the instruction specialist teachers and the leading teachers. On the other hand, the leading teachers (14.3%) are likely to spend more time on preparing students for competition while the instruction specialist teachers (8.6%) are likely to spend more time on making teaching materials and instruments. However, none teacher did mention that they work on exams and marking notebooks during the working hours, the major activities of the evaluation of the implementation of the curriculum.

As a total, teachers spend 30.9 percent of eight hours on other activities, and it is almost two times greater than the standard percentage which is 15.0 percent of eight hours. Among others, teachers are likely to spend more time on paper work (9.4%). It follows with administrative work (6.3%) and sport and cultural activities (6.2%). On the other hand, teachers are likely to spend less time on teacher development (4.3%). Compared to other professional grade, teachers are likely to spend more time on administrative work (6.8%), and sport and cultural activities (8.2%). On the other hand, leading teachers are likely to spend more time on paper work (12.9%).

In short, our survey suggests that teachers spend working hours less efficiently. During the working day, teachers are likely to spend less time on activities to implement the teaching standard and curriculum but spend more time on other activities, like administrative work, paper work, sport and cultural activities. Especially, young teachers participate in all activities. Therefore, teachers work

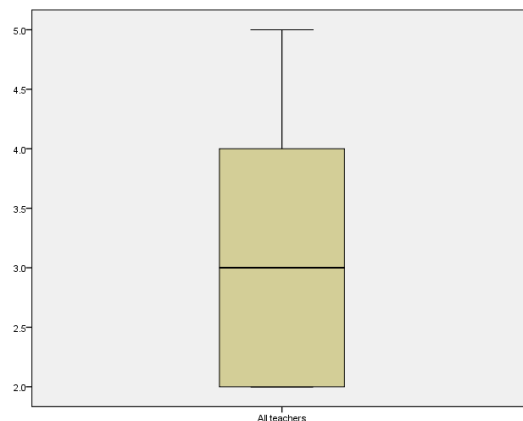
on the implementation of the teaching standard and curriculum when working hour is over. However, none teacher did mention that they work on exams and marking notebooks during the working hours, the major activities of the evaluation of the implementation of the curriculum.

### TEACHER'S EXTRA WORKING HOURS

Teachers are busy during the working hours, doing teaching and engaging in administrative work, like attending in the meeting. Once the working hour is over, teachers sit down, and start to work on the preparation for the class. In our survey, out of 82 teachers, 68 teachers say that they work for extra hours (Table 3.). As mentioned earlier, teachers work for 13.6 hours per day, and it gives that teachers work for 5.6 extra hours per day in Mongolia. In our survey, according to median, as an average, teachers work for 3 extra hours per day. According to the maximum value, few teachers work for 5 extra hours, and due to this, mean (3.04) is slightly greater than the median, and the extra hours data is positively skewed ( $a_3=0.57$ ). In terms of spread, the interquartile range equals to 2 hours as the lower quartile is 2 hours and the upper quartile is 4 hours. The median is situated exactly in the middle of the box plot, and the middle of body of the extra hours data is symmetrically distributed (Figure 2). In other words,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of teachers work for 2-4 extra hours. Furthermore, the shape of box plot suggests that the majority of teachers work less than 4 extra hours. The minimum value equals to the lower quartile, and therefore, the coefficient of kurtosis ( $a_4=-0.54$ ) shows that the tail at the lower end of the distribution of extra hours data is fat. In other words,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of teachers work for less than 4 extra hours, and only  $\frac{1}{4}$  of teachers work for 4-5 extra hours.

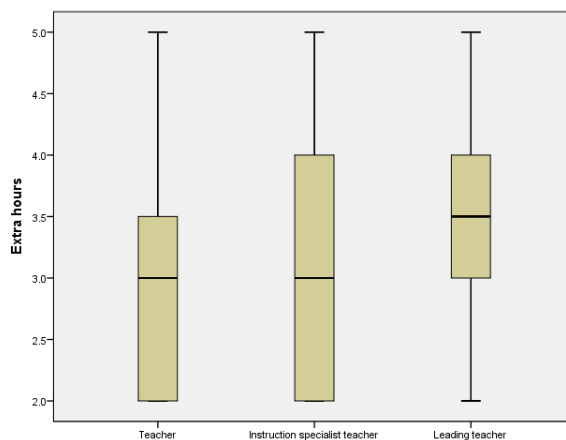
**Table 3. Descriptive statistics of teacher's extra working hours**

	Total	Teachers	Instruction specialist teachers	Leading teachers
<b>Order statistics</b>				
Minimum	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Median	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.50
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Range	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
IQR	2.00	1.50	2.00	1.00
<b>Mean based statistics</b>				
Mean	3.04	2.91	3.10	3.50
SD	0.94	0.85	1.01	1.05
Skewness ( $a_3$ )	0.57	0.50	0.66	0.00
Kurtosis ( $a_4$ )	-0.54	-0.63	-0.50	-0.25
Sample size	68	33	29	6



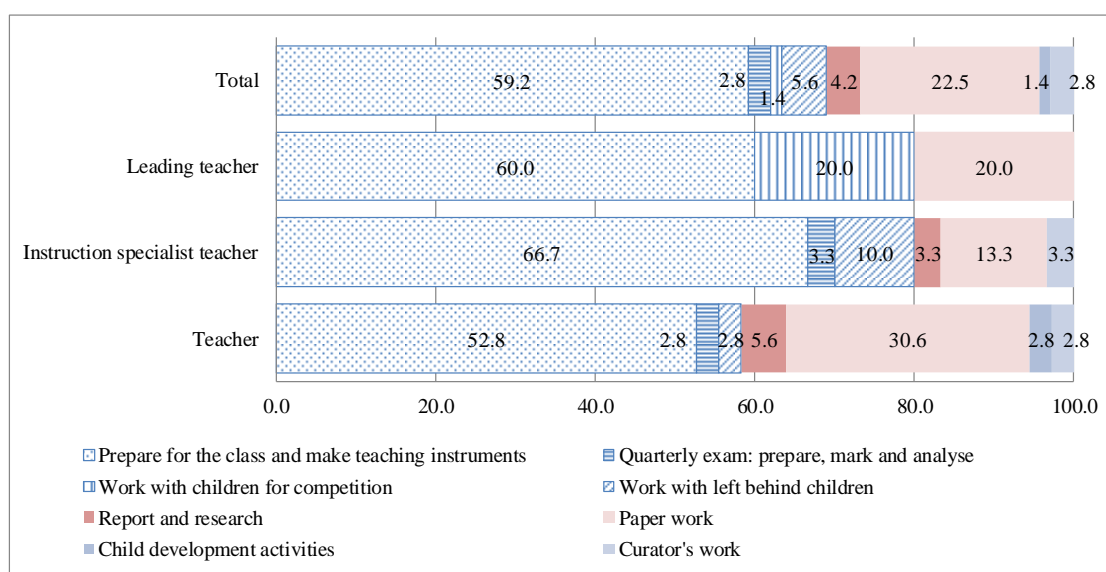
**Figure 2. Box plot of teacher's extra working hours**

Compared to other professional grade, the leading teachers are more likely to work for extra hours, both in terms of level and spread. As an average, leading teachers work for 3.5 extra hours per day. The mean is equal to the median, and the extra hours data is symmetrical ( $a_3=0.00$ ). In terms of spread, the interquartile range equals to 1 hour, and it is lower than that for instruction specialist teachers (2 hours) and teachers (1.5 hours). The median is situated exactly in the middle of the box plot, and the middle of body of the extra hours data is also symmetrically distributed (Figure 3). In other words,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of leading teachers work for 3-4 extra hours, and it is greater than that for for instruction specialist teachers (2 hours) and teachers (1.5 hours). Furthermore, the shape of box plot suggests that the teachers are likely to work for less extra hours than the instruction specialist teachers and the leading teachers. The minimum value for the teachers equals to the lower quartile, and therefore, the coefficient of kurtosis ( $a_4=-0.63$ ) shows that the tail at the lower end of the distribution of extra hours data for teachers is fatter than that for the instruction specialist teachers ( $a_4=-0.50$ ) and the leading teachers ( $a_4=-0.25$ ). In other words,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of teachers work for less than 3.5 extra hours, and only  $\frac{1}{4}$  of teachers work for 3.5-5 extra hours.



**Figure 3. Box plot of teacher's extra working hours, by professional grade**

Teachers work for extra hours to do things which cannot be postponed and which are important. In our survey, in order to find out the activities which teacher's do during the extra hours, a question was designed as "If you work for extra hours, on what activity are you most likely to engage?", and 71 teachers give response to this question. During the extra hours, teachers are most likely to engage in activities to implement the teaching standard, except the teaching. As a total, 69.0 percent of all teachers engage in activities to implement the teaching standard (Figure 4). Among others, teachers are most likely to work for extra hours to prepare for the class and to make teaching instruments (59.2%), including marking secondary school students' notebooks (12.7%). It follows with working with left behind children (5.6%), working on quarterly exam (2.8%) and working with children for competition (1.4%).



**Figure 4. Teacher's activities in extra working hours, by professional level**

Compared to other professional grade, during the extra hours, the instruction specialist teachers are most likely to prepare for the class and make teaching instruments (66.7%), and to work with left behind children (10.0%). The leading teachers are most likely to work with children for competition (20.0%), and do not work with left behind children. On the other hand, the instruction specialist teachers as well as teachers (with no grade) work with both children, for competition and left behind.

With regard to activities other than the implementation of the curriculum, teachers are most likely to engage in paper work (22.5%), and it follows with preparing report and research (4.2%), curator's work (2.8%) and child development activities (1.4%). Compared to other professional grade, during the extra hours, among activities other than the implementation of the curriculum, teachers, with no grade, are most likely to engage in paper work (30.6%) while the instruction specialist teachers are least likely (13.3%). Also teachers, with no grade, engage in child development activities as well as in curator's work while the instruction specialist teachers do not



engage in child development activities. On the other hand, during the extra hours, the leading teachers do paper work (20.0%) only, and do not engage in report and research, child development activities and curator's work.

In short, as an average, teachers work 3 extra hours, and the leading teachers are most likely to work for extra hours. During the extra hours work, teachers mainly prepare for the next class but they are least likely to engage in child development activities. Instruction specialist teachers are most likely to prepare for the next class, work with left behind children and work on the quarterly exam materials. Leading teachers are most likely to prepare children for the competition while (young) teachers are more likely to engage in child development activities and paper work.

### THE MISSING ACTIVITIES: CHILDREN'S PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

In Mongolia, teachers are more likely to engage in the activities to implement the teaching standard, but less likely to engage in the child development, including the disciplinary work (Oyun-Erdene and Zolzaya, 2019:168). In our survey, teachers' working hours as well as extra hour's activities, which are given in the previous section, suggest that teachers are least likely to engage in the child development activities. Teachers do not engage in the child development activities during the working hours, and only 1.4 percent of teachers engage in the child development activities during the extra hours (Figure 5). It suggests that the child development activities are likely to be abandoned in the secondary schools in Mongolia.

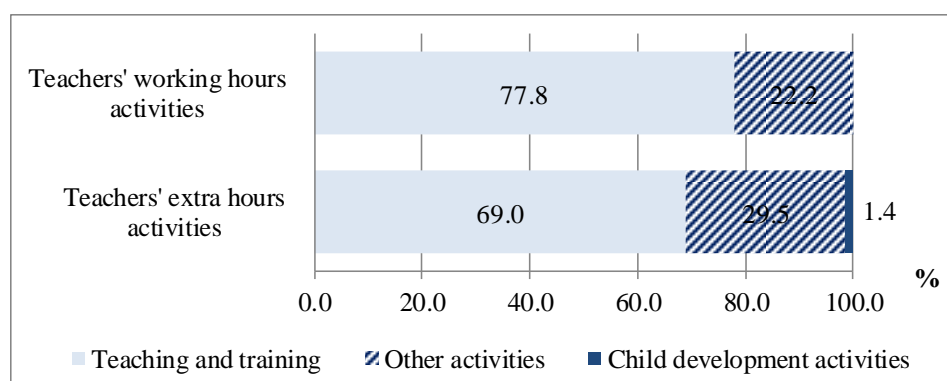


Figure 5. Teachers' working hour's activities and extra hours activities

Furthermore, teachers merely mentioned that they engage in the child development activities, but did not mention any specific activity which is devoted for the child development. Child development activities are likely to be conducted during the extra hours as extra curriculum activities. Among others, the child development activities include the personal development activities. Personal development refers to developing communication skills, social and emotional skills, emotional intelligence, healthy mind, body, lifestyle and personalities, and self-esteem. It also refers to being able to identify one's own strengths and weaknesses, to change habits and attitudes, to avoid negative behavioral traits, to optimize concentration capacity, to socialize with

different persons, to define a system of values, to maintain motivation for a longer time, and many more. Personal development fosters discipline and punctuality, flexibility, friendly nature, eagerness to help others, respecting teachers, parents and others, expressing themselves fluently and respectfully, willingness to learn, learning to develop more skills, ability to communicate assertively, to solve conflicts, to evaluate oneself objectively, to express emotions properly in interaction with others, to set goals and follow them, and to develop self-confidence. Personal development involves students to evaluate oneself, learn more about their interests and work towards achieving them, and build a confidence. Personal development can act as a stepping stone for graduates looking to join the workforce. In order to evolve in the personal development activities, teachers need to understand personality-traits (Anderson, 1968) and psychological situation of the children.

Personal development can be seen, among others, through one's body language, behavior and communication skill. The emotional problems of children are likely to be reflected in aggressive behavior, lying, stealing, school phobia, anxiety or depression (Opre A., 2006 cited in Herman, R.I., 2015). Personal development can be fostered through social interaction, ethics and principles. Schools need to focus all aspects, academics and non-academics. Schools have an important role for the personal development of their students, managing their physical and emotional well-being. It is desirable that the schools to have personal development programmers for students as part of their schooling curriculum. Since 2012, in Romania, the personal development curriculum has been implemented for preparatory class, first grade and second grade of secondary schools. Teachers appreciate the implementing of the personal development subject in the core curriculum of the Romanian education system and they also recommend a higher number of teaching hours for this subject (Herman, 2015). The main purposes of personal development activities of students include developing social-emotional competence, interpersonal relationships, purpose and integrity, managing emotions (positive and negative), achieving autonomy and independence, and establishing identity. The content of personal development subject can include domains like expressing emotions in interaction with children and adults, self-knowledge, healthy lifestyle, positive attitudes towards self and others, personal hygiene, using skills and specific attitudes for learning in the school context, specific aspects of the organization, learning and preparation children for life, managing routines and workloads, learning skills and attitudes, and exploring jobs. In Mongolia, teachers complain about secondary school student's moral while they do not conduct personal development activities.

**Table 4. Teacher’s working and extra hours activities**

Working hours only	Extra hours only	Both working and extra hours	Missing activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching</li> <li>• Sport and cultural activities</li> <li>• Improve curriculum</li> <li>• Administrative work</li> <li>• Cleaning the class room</li> <li>• Teacher development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and mark notebook</li> <li>• Quarterly exam: prepare, mark and analyse</li> <li>• Work with left behind children</li> <li>• Child development activities</li> <li>• Report and research</li> <li>• Curator's work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for the class</li> <li>• Make instruction materials and instruments</li> <li>• Prepare students for competition</li> <li>• Paper work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for assignment/ homework</li> <li>• Formative assessment</li> <li>• Personal development activities</li> </ul>

Apart from the personal development activities, student assessment activities, the crucial activity for the implementation of the teaching standard and curriculum, are likely to be abandon. Teachers do not engage in student assessment activities, both summative and formative, during the working hours, but do them only during the extra hours (Table 4). During extra hours, teachers read and mark secondary school students’ notebooks, and work on the quarterly exams. Teachers are less likely to engage in the preparation of assignment and homework for students and the formative assessment, as they did not mention these activities.

Finally, although teachers work for extra hours and engage in variety of activities, they tend to abandon the most important academic and non-academic activities of the child development, the assessment and the personal development.

## CONCLUSION

In Mongolia, according to the rules and regulations, teacher’s daily working hours mainly devoted for activities which are associated with the implementation of the teaching standard and curriculum (85.0%), and teachers spend 3.8 hours per day on teaching. According to our survey, all teachers work over time, and more likely to engage in other activities then the teaching. Young teachers are more likely to work overtime than the instruction specialist and the leading teachers. Also our survey suggests that teachers spend working hours less efficiently. During the working day, teachers spend more time on other activities then the teaching, like administrative work, paper work, sport and cultural activities. Especially, young teachers participate in all activities. Therefore, teachers engage in the activities on the implementation of the teaching standard and curriculum when the working hour is over. None teacher did mention that they work on exams and marking notebooks during the working hours, the major activities of the evaluation of the curriculum implementation. This suggests that the major academic aspect is likely to be abandon during the working hours in the school.

According to our survey, as an average, teachers work 3 extra hours, and the leading teachers are most likely to work for extra hours. During the extra hours work, teachers mainly prepare for the next class. Compared with other teachers, the instruction specialist teachers are most likely to prepare for the next class, work with left behind children and work on the quarterly exam materials; the leading teachers are most likely to prepare children for the competition; and the young teachers are most likely to engage in child development activities and paper work. Teachers are least to engage in child development activities, during the extra working hours only. This suggests that the major non-academic aspect, the child personal development, is likely to be abandon in the school. In Mongolia, teachers are less likely to engage in the child development, including the disciplinary work (Oyun-Erdene and Zolzaya, 2019:168). In Mongolia, teachers complain about secondary school student's morale while they do not conduct personal development activities.

Thus, although teachers work for extra hours and engage in variety of activities, they tend to abandon the most important activities of the child development, the assessment and the personal development. In Mongolia, academic work is not sufficient as not all teachers mark student notebook, and non-academic work is not sufficient as there is no time for child development and no curriculum on personal development. For the schools in order to focus all aspects, academics and non-academics, teachers need to spend working hours more efficiently. Teachers complain that they are doing a lot of work while they tend to ignore the most important activities. In order to overcome this problem, there is a need to conduct teacher study: need to conduct observation of teacher's activities in the school and match it with what they are saying; need to study what type of paper work (or report or research) they do, and need to find out reasons why teachers find these paper work as difficult; need to conduct classroom and non-classroom observations; and need to formulate special curriculum on the child personal development.

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