

**CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RUHAAMA COUNTY, NTUNGAMO
DISTRICT**

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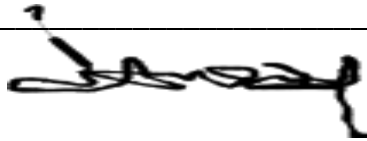
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DECLARATION

I Kasasira Abias do hereby declare that this dissertation on “Co-curricular activities and student’s academic performance in selected secondary schools in Ruhaama County, Ntungamo District” is entirely my interest and desire, except where acknowledged and that it has not been submitted in before to any other university or institution of higher learning for any award.

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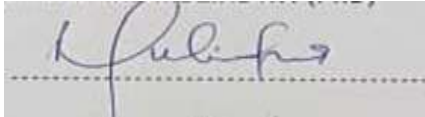


APPROVAL

This Dissertation titled, “Co-curricular activities and student’s academic performance in selected secondary schools in Ruhaama County, Ntungamo District” has been submitted for examination with my approval as candidate’s university supervisor.

REV. DR. RICHARD MULINDWA (PhD)

Signed:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in blue ink. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'R. Mulindwa'. The signature is written on a light-colored background with a horizontal dashed line below it.

Date: -----12/08/25-----

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BRMS - Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards

GPA - Grade Point Average

SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TEAP - Total co-curricular activity participation

ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of participation in co-curricular activities on student's academic performance in selected secondary schools in Ruhaama County, Ntungamo District, Uganda and explored the influence of various demographic and home background factors on this participation. It also established the correlation that exists between co-curricular activities' participation and students' academic outcome. The study was guided by three primary objectives:

1. Assessing the impact of demographic factors such as age and class on students' academic performance.
2. Evaluating how students' home backgrounds including parental marital status, education, and socioeconomic status affected their academic performance.
3. Determining the relationship between co-curricular activities' participation and learners' academic performance.

By using a mixed-method approach, the research analyzed quantitative data through statistical tests and correlation analysis to address the hypotheses that demographic factors and home backgrounds did not significantly influence co-curricular participation, and that participation did not significantly affect academic performance. The findings revealed that while demographic factors like age and academic class were significant predictors of co-curricular participation, other factors such as gender, parental marital status, and socio-economic background did not have a substantial impact. The study concluded that there is significant positive relationship between co-curricular activities' participation and better learners' academic outcome. The study recommends that it is essential for schools to provide financial support or subsidies for students from low socio-economic backgrounds; and areas of further research were suggested.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Co-curricular activities are beneficial to students in various ways such as; providing opportunities towards applying their knowledge, expertise and technical skills, developing new interests and abilities, as well as strengthening their social skills and organizational competence (Korir, 2023). Learners also acquire vital practical expertise by taking part in several co-curricular activities in relation to their academic studies. Participation in such co-curricular activities provides students with expertise and a competitive advantage in their future careers (Bailey et al. 2023). Existing research mainly focuses on the academic goals and benefits of learners' participation in co-curricular activities. While there are studies on the general benefits of co-curricular activities, this study aims at investigating the specific impact of these activities on students' academic Performance. This study adequately provided information on the specific effects of co-curricular activities' participation on academic performance which can help educators, policymakers and school administrators to make informed decisions and design effective programs that can be integrated as part of the learning experiences to elevate academic performance.

1.2 Background to the Study

This segment of the study presents four sub-sections: historical, theoretical, conceptual and contextual background as detailed hereunder:

1.2.1 Historical Background

World-over, participating in co-curricular activities is occasionally perceived as a drain on time, potentially diverting students' focus on their academic work (Broh, 2022). Consequently, some schools opt not to offer sports and other co-curricular pursuits. This can lead to a scenario where some students prioritize studying over participating in these activities, hindering their engagement (Chudgar et al. 2015). Therefore, there is a need to help students recognize the significance of participating in co-curricular activities for their future careers and to encourage their interest and involvement in such pursuits.

The involvement of children in co-curricular activities in developed countries (Italy) has been noticed to have contributed significantly to their overall development and promote a healthy lifestyle. Through such activities, children acquire essential physical, social, and cognitive skills (Choi, 2024). Engagement in physical activities has been recognized to yield various positive outcomes, encompassing both physical and mental health, social well-being, and enhanced cognitive and academic performance (Bailey et al. 2023). Similarly, research conducted in rural India revealed that schools offering a greater variety of co-curricular activities tend to produce students who excel in mathematics compared to schools with fewer of such activities (Chudgar et al. 2015). This involvement extends to participation in sports, games and other school-based sponsored events. Notably, learners who are consistently get exposure to drama, music, and dance tends to outperform their counterparts who lack such exposure (Cash, 2019).

In Africa, numerous studies (Broh., Poh-Sun Seow & Gary, 2024) have also explored the correlation between participation in co-curricular activities and academic outcome. Total co-curricular activity participation (TEAP), referring to involvement in such activities broadly, has been linked to improvements in grade or points, higher educational aspirations, increased college attendance, and reduced absenteeism (Broh et al. 2024). Early examinations of the significant effect of sports participation on academic outcome yielded inconsistent findings while contemporary research still presents varied evidence. The majority tend to suggest a positive association between athletic involvement and academic success (Bailey et al. 2023). However, one study did not indicate that, apart from certain subgroups and outcomes, sports participation generally doesn't correlate with educational achievement, nor does it significantly affect grades or standardized test scores among the general school-going population (Broh, 2022). Despite this negative finding, many studies in Sub-Saharan schools demonstrate a positive correlation between sports' participation and academic outcome. Broh et al. (2024) posts that learner getting involvement in interschool sports also fosters their development and social connections among fellow learners, guardians, parents, and the schools, which clearly explains the presence of positive impact on academic outcome. Similarly, longitudinal surveys on sports within school premises have also proposed that such engagements contribute to improved grades of learners and weekly test scores (Broh, 2022).

Regionally, the introduction of most modern games into Kenya occurred during the first half of the 20th century by British colonialists, settlers, and missionaries. Some

indigenous African activities were labelled as negative or primitive and discouraged. Consequently, during both pre-independence and post-independence periods in Kenya, the emphasis on co-curricular activities in schools fluctuated depending on the prevailing government policies. However, the government's seriousness regarding sports activities has been evident in various development plans, consistently emphasizing the importance of sports in Kenya's overall development (Korir, 2023). Similarly, Stephens & Schaben (2022) conducted a study in Tanzania examining the effects of the number of sports' activities, each learner played on academic outcome. They observed that learners participating in at-least one activity (sport) annually out-performed those participating in more than one sport, as evidenced by class rank, termly scores and overall GPA. Additionally, learners engaged in multiple sports across several seasons demonstrated higher levels of academic achievement compared to those involved in fewer seasons or for only one year (Stephens & Schaben, 2022).

In Uganda, co-curricular activities offer several significant benefits to learners. Participation in several school-based activities such as drama, games, music, dancing, debates, and many others, contribute to the holistic functioning and management of education. These activities provide students with opportunities for self-expression, especially with debates and dancing (Korir, 2023). Learners getting involved in sports and games also promote physical fitness, active and energy among learners. Co-curricular activities also facilitate socialization, interactions with colleagues, self-assessment and self-identification, as students can easily interact with colleagues

and organizers, teaching staff, fellow participants, and other individuals outside the school environment during social and cultural events.

1.2.2 Theoretical Background

This study was based on the Involvement Theory as advanced in 1984 by Astin. The theory defines the quantity of physical, mental, and emotional energy that learners dedicate to any education programs, especially co-curriculum activities. The basic principle of Astin's Involvement Theory is that educational experience ought being considered in a wide sense that encompasses both classroom learning for academic outcomes and out-of-class experiences (co-curriculum activities) for psychological and physical development, including athletics, games and sports (Shernoff & Vandell, 2017).

The Theory provides a theoretical basis for investigating student involvement in the education-sports experience as part of co-curriculum activities. Active participation in academic and other co-curricular activities and especially competitive games and sports is highly related to student learning and their physical and mental development (Smoll & Smith, 2022). This theory also presents a model for presenting student involvement in games and sports activities, emphasizing the concepts of commitment and time taken in these activities. Commitment refers to the qualitative or content component of involvement, and time refers to the quantitative component (Shernoff & Vandell, 2017). Both quality and quantity involvement are important as involvement is a major factor in ensuring improvement in the academic performance of students in secondary schools.

Astin (1984) demonstrated that Involvement Theory is predicted on five basic assumptions: i) involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects; ii) involvement occurs along a continuum; iii) involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features; iv) the amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program; and v) the success of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement.

Astin's theory of 1984 serves as a connector between pedagogical theory and student outcomes by providing a link between the variables emphasized in these theories and the learning outcomes desired by the student and the teacher. He states that any program, whether academic or co-curricular, should motivate students to commit both time and effort to it (Chida & Hamer, 2018). However, with allegations of inadequate information of the students' academic performance in the secondary schools in this area, this prompted the current researcher to opt for the research.

1.2.3 Conceptual Background

The study was guided by "Students' Academic Performance" as Dependent Variable, while, Co-Curriculum Activities" as Independent Variable as explained hereunder:

Students' Academic Performance, Nwoye (2018) defines academic performance as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as extra-curricular activities. Similarly, Agasisti et al. (2020) consider academic performance is commonly measured

by examinations or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts. In this study, the academic performance of students is evaluated based on the effectiveness of principals in implementing administrative practices measured by students' performance in standardized tests where the learners are expected to perform well. Students' academic performance can be measured by students' academic outcomes (including test scores, UCE results, UACE results), and students' daily school attendance (including students' daily less attendance, and submission of assignments).

Co-Curricular Activities refers to the those activities and programs that take place outside of the traditional classroom but in some manner complement academic learning (Agasisti et al. 2020). Similarly, Chida & Hamer (2018) defined co-curricular activities to refer to those activities that take place outside of the classroom but are still tied to the classroom curriculum in some way. Examples include spelling bees, math clubs, sports, school theater, and many others. In this study, co-curricular activities implies to those activities run parallel to a school's regular academic curriculum as additional activities designed to enhance students' learning experience.

1.2.4 Contextual Background

In 2004, the Government of Uganda approved the National Physical Education and Sports Policy (NPESP). In 2008, the Ministry of Education and Sports directed secondary schools to adopt co-curriculum activities to widen avenues for talent

identification, call for a framework for talent development of students in the long run (Agasisti et al. 2020). The co-curricular activities play a vital role in enriching the educational experience of secondary school learners worldwide. These activities which encompass a wide range of non-academic pursuits complement the formal curriculum by providing learners with chance and ample opportunities for personal growth, development of skill, and holistic learning (Bailey et al. 2023). From sports and clubs, community service and cultural events, co-curricular activities offer avenues for learners towards exploring their interests, cultivate talents, and foster social connections outside the classroom.

Subsequently, engaging in co-curricular activities is not merely an option but an integral component of a well-rounded education. These activities also play a significant contribution to the overall development of learners by nurturing qualities such as leadership, teamwork, time management, and resilience (Cash, 2019). By participating in sports teams, academic clubs, debate societies, or performing arts groups, students acquire practical skills and experiences that cannot be gained solely through traditional classroom instruction. Moreover, co-curricular activities encourage active participation, creativity, and critical thinking thus instilling in students a sense of belonging and pride towards their school community. Despite the increased importance of co-curriculum activities, most schools especially in rural areas like Ntungamo district continue to lag behind in engagement of their students in co-curriculum activities. Yet, empirical studies into the co-curriculum activities in Ntungamo District and Ruhaama County in particular remain scanty. Therefore, this

study fills the gap of knowledge on the influence of co-curriculum activities on students' academic performance in selected secondary schools in Ruhaama County.

1.3 The Statement of Problem

Despite the recognized importance of co-curricular activities in secondary education, particularly in enhancing students' academic performance and overall development, there remains a gap in understanding the precise impact of these activities on students' academic outcomes, critical thinking skills, motivation, time management, social skills, and overall well-being. Within Ruhaama County, Ntungamo District, Uganda, where the focus is on, the effects of learners' involvement in school-based co-curricular activities, adherence to established guidelines, such as those outlined in the Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards for Education institutions and the Physical Education and Sports Policy (2015), is observed. However, despite the provision of timetabled academic related co-curricular activities in secondary schools, participation levels, particularly students from rural villages, remain notably low compared to those from urban villages. This study addressed the disparity in participation rates between rural and urban students within Ruhaama County by exploring the reasons behind the reluctance of students, especially those in rural areas, to engage in co-curricular activities. By investigating factors influencing participation and analyzing the potential effects of such activities, this research aims at uncovering insights on how co-curricular involvement impacts students' academic achievement and overall educational experience.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate how participation in co-curricular activities influences the academic performance of secondary school students in Ruhaama County, Ntungamo District, Uganda

1.5 Objectives of the Study

- i. To evaluate the impact of student's demographic factors on their academic performance in selected secondary schools.
- ii. To assess the influence of learner's home background on students' academic performance in selected secondary schools.
- iii. To establish the impact of participation of learners in the co-curricular activities on their academic performance.

1.6 Research Questions

- i. What is the extent to which the students' demographic factors influence their academic performance in selected secondary schools?
- ii. How does students' home background influence their academic performance in selected secondary schools?
- iii. What is the impact of participation of students in the co-curricular activities on their academic performance?

1.7 Hypotheses

- i Students' demographic factors have a statistically significant impact on the students' academic performance in selected secondary schools.
- ii Learners' home background has a statistically significant impact on the students' academic performance in selected secondary schools.
- iii Participation of learners in the co-curricular activities has a statistically significant impact on their academic outcome.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The scope was divided into content, geographical, and time scopes.

1.8.1 Content Scope

The study aims at providing a comprehensive understanding of the co-curricular activities and students' academic performance of secondary schools. The Independent Variable (co-curricular activities), and the Dependent Variable (students' academic performance) was examined. Specifically, the study was limited to; evaluating the impact of student's demographic factors on their academic performance in selected secondary schools, assessing the influence of learner's home background on the students' academic performance in selected secondary schools, and establishing the impact of participation of learners in the co-curricular activities on their academic performance. The study was based on all co-curricular activities such as sports, clubs, and science fair shows, math competitions, Music, Dance and Drama groups.

1.8.2 Geographical Scope

The study was done in the selected schools in Ruhaama County, Ntungamo District. The study population was suitable because it was large enough and includes both males and females from both urban and rural areas. This particular area was selected because of continued weaknesses and gaps in academic achievement of students in secondary schools (Agasisti et al. 2020; Kawade, 2024); despite government emphasize of co-curricular activities.

1.8.3 Time Scope

The researcher analyzed data on the period of 2017 - 2024, the time when the students' academic achievement is said to have seriously and worryingly gone down in these in secondary schools in Ruhaama County (Kawade, 2024). The declining academic performance of students in secondary schools in Ruhaama County is still experienced and said to remain rife in the County, ostensibly due to wanting co-curricular activities to handle situational issues. Secondly, data collection and report writing last for twelve (12) months (March 2024 to February 2025) to enable the researcher accomplish other education requirement and meet other education deadline (University calendar).

1.9 Justification of the Study

Co-curricular activities are mostly related to the all-around development of students as they make learning meaningful by ensuring the overall development of learners, providing a practical approach towards the topics, making learners apply theoretical

concepts practically, and stimulating interest in activities beyond routine class work. These co-curricular activities in schools include; Athletics, cultural events, library activities, science lab activities, classroom activities, etc. Unlike traditional high school curriculum that put more focus to the entire academics, co-curricular activities today help learners learn and understand the values of teamwork, engaging in the competition, group responsibility, and many others.

1.10 Significance of the Study

The study shall shed light on the existing conflicts or pressures students may face when balancing participation in co-curricular activities with academic responsibilities. Understanding these discrepancies in academic performance can guide interventions aimed at encouraging students to engage actively more in co-curricular activities. Teachers, peers, students, and the community at large can play pivotal roles in fostering a supportive environment that values both academic excellence and participation in co-curricular pursuits.

The result is expected to provide a basis for policy-makers to enhance the standards of co-curricular activities in schools. By identifying areas for improvement and best practices, policy-makers can develop strategies to optimize the educational effects of co-curricular engagement.

The study shall offer assistance to students in recognizing the importance of co-curricular activities in shaping their future careers without compromising their core curriculum studies. By highlighting the positive impacts of participation in co-

curricular activities on personal growth, skill development, and overall well-being, students can make informed choices about their extra-curricular involvement, there by maximizing their potential for success in both academic and non-academic domains.

The study shall also in one way or the other enrich the existing body of knowledge, stimulate more research and may also act as reference material to other researchers. Future investigator will benefit from the field study in making more analysis and find solutions to the study problem at hand. More so, the findings shall help the researcher to attain a master's degree.

1.11 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a structured, analytical tool that guides research by outlining the key concepts, variables, and their relationships within a study. It provides a visual or narrative representation that helps to explain the theoretical underpinnings and logical flow of the research, highlighting how the concepts are connected and how they interact to address the research problem (Ravitch & Carl, 2020). The conceptual framework offers a coherent structure for interpreting the findings, there by facilitating a deeper understanding of the phenomena under investigation and ensuring that the research remains focused and aligned with its objectives.

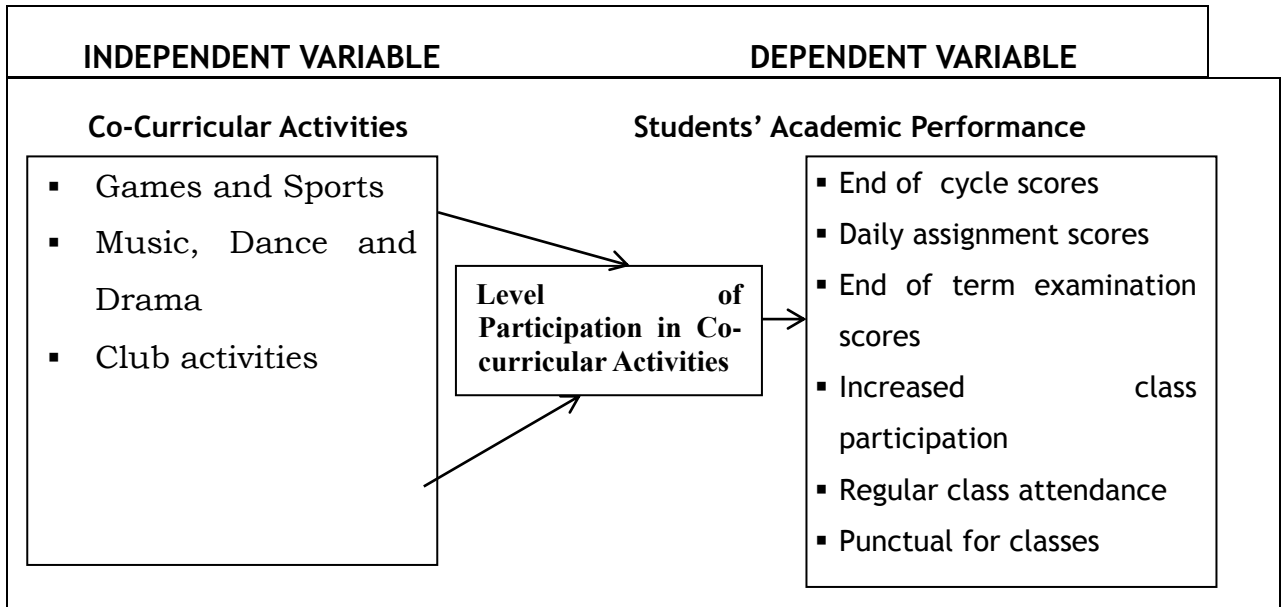


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: *Adopted and modified from the work of Astin (1984); Shernoff & Vandell (2017).*

A conceptual framework is a logical tool which explains the relationship between variables under investigation (Amin, 2005). In the view of Flick (2022), a conceptual framework denotes the investigator understands of a phenomenon. The conceptual framework in figure 1.1 above illustrates an independent variable (IV) being co-curricular activities and students' academic performance as the dependent variable (DV). Students' academic performance from the conceptual framework above is measured in terms of; end of cycle scores, daily assignment scores, end of term examination scores, increased class participation, punctuality and regular class attendance. On the flipside also, co-curricular activities dimensions include; games and sports, music, dance and drama, and club activities; all hypothesized as having a positive significant effect on the students' academic performance in secondary

schools. The next chapter covers the literature review, comprising of theoretical and empirical reviews as well as research gaps or summary of literature review.

1.12 Definitions of Terms

Nwoye (2018) defines academic performance as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as extra-curricular activities. In this study, the academic performance of students is evaluated based on the effectiveness of principals in implementing administrative practices measured by students' performance in standardized tests where the learners are expected to perform well.

Co-Curricular Activities refers to the those activities and programs that take place outside of the traditional classroom but in some manner complement academic learning (Agasisti et al. 2020). It also refer to those activities that run parallel to a school's regular academic curriculum as additional activities designed to enhance students' learning experience.

A game is defined as any activity that an individual engages in for amusement or fun. It is an entertaining activity or sport, especially those one played by students or the equipped needed for such an activity (Chida & Hamer, 2018). A game is also considered to imply any form of play or way of playing, which could either be recreation, amusement and sport.

A sport is a physical activity carried out under an agreed set of rules, with a recreational purpose: for competition or self-enjoyment or a combination of these

(Shernoff & Vandell, 2017). Sports is defined as an activity that involved physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team have to compete against another or others for entertainment purposes.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The study focused on assessing the level of participation of learners in co-curricular activities, the home background factors which influence their participation and the impact of the participation on their academic performance. This chapter covers the empirical research findings from previous relevant studies. It starts with theoretical reviews and themes review in relation to the research objectives. The chapter is arranged in subsections addressing respective research objectives. The literature involves opinions and views of other scholars and researchers that are related to the topic in study. It conjointly presents an outline of the salient gaps identified within the literature review that this study seeks to fill.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 The Involvement Theory

This study was based on the Involvement Theory as advanced in 1984 by Astin. The theory defines the quantity of physical, mental, and emotional energy that learners dedicate to any education programs, especially co-curriculum activities. The basic principle of Astin's Involvement Theory is that educational experience ought being considered in a wide sense that encompasses both classroom learning for academic outcomes and out-of-class experiences (co-curriculum activities) for psychological and physical development, including athletics, and sports (Shernoff et al. 2017).

The Theory provides a theoretical basis for investigating student involvement in the education-sports experience as part of co-curriculum activities. Active participation in academic and other co-curricular activities and especially competitive games and sports is highly related to student learning and their physical and mental development (Smoll & Smith, 2022). This theory also presents a model for presenting student involvement in games and sports activities, emphasizing the concepts of commitment and time taken in these activities. Commitment refers to the qualitative or content component of involvement, and time refers to the quantitative component (Shernoff & Vandell, 2017). Both quality and quantity involvement are important as involvement is a major factor in ensuring improvement in the academic performance of students in secondary schools.

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Astin's theory of 1984 serves as a connector between pedagogical theory and student outcomes by providing a link between the variables emphasized in these theories and the learning outcomes desired by the student and the teacher. He

states that any program, whether academic or co-curricular, should motivate students to commit both time and effort to it (Chida & Hamer, 2018). However, with allegations of inadequate information of the students' academic performance in the secondary schools in this area, this prompted the current researcher to opt for the research.

2.3 Impact of Demographic Factors on Students' Participation in Co-Curricular Activities

Daley & O'Gara (2018), investigated that age and gender differences in children affect their participating in school-based extra-curricular sports and physical activities. Their study involved 149 learners from a mixed school, and they used the Participation Motivation Inventory to assess participation motives. Results showed significant age and gender main effects, indicating that children in different age groups and genders were motivated by varying reasons for participation. For example, Year 7 and Year 10 children exhibited different motives for participating in activities (Daley & O'Gara, 2018). Boys and girls identified difference factors influencing their involvement in extra-curricular participation and engagement in physical activities (Agasisti et al. 2020). These findings show that there is a need of considering developmental stages and gender differences when designing programs to encourage participation in co-curricular activities. Given this situation, concerns about academic achievement across African states have highly emerged, prompting the current investigator to ascertain the situation at the ground.

More so, Case (2021) looked at how male and female students get involved in clubs and groups at college. They used a theory that says when students spend time on activities related to learning, they do better in college. The study looked at different things like what students did in high school, what they wanted to do in college, and how they spent their time. They studied first-year students from religious colleges. They found that some things, like being involved in high school and planning to be involved in college, were important for both men and women (Angevaren, 2018). But some things were different. Women were more likely to be involved if they lived on campus. For men, being part of college sports was a big factor. The study (Chida & Hamer, 2018) suggests that colleges should plan activities and programs that fit the needs and interests of all students, especially those who might not be as involved. This can help create a sense of community and make college a better experience for everyone, creating a gap that need to be fulfilled in this research.

Additionally, Naik & Wawrzynski (2018), conducted a study to explore student engagement at a South African university about gender, race, and financial status, utilizing a culturally relevant conceptual framework. Data was collected from 2,569 students through a survey covering demographics, co-curricular involvement, and learning outcomes. The findings (Shernoff & Vandell, 2017) further revealed differences in the sense of connection, pride, and community among students of different races and genders. Additionally, leadership positions and a sense of belonging were found to influence student learning outcomes. Barriers to

participation, such as financial constraints, were found to have nuanced effects on learning outcomes (Higenyi, 2023). The study took qualitative survey design, unlike this study that considered a triangulation.

Further, Anwar & Khan (2023) conducted a survey investigating the impact of co-curricular activities on the educational success of learners at Rashid Latif Medical College, Lahore. Using a pre-test and post-test comparable group design, the researchers divided 100 second-year MBBS students into two equal groups based on pre-test scores: an experimental group participating in co-curricular activities and a control group not involved in any activity. Similarly, Chida & Hamer (2018) argues that the co-curricular activities included science diagram drawing, sketching, practical experiences, and scientific posters. The experimental group engaged in these activities daily for thirty minutes over three months, after which a post-test was administered. Besides, the study (Gilligan, 2020) found that the experimental group demonstrated better academic results compared to the control group, indicating that co-curricular activities positively impacted academic success. However, the study revealed no significant gender differences among students. However, this study was conducted outside Uganda and based on primary schools and carried out almost two years ago. These constitute gaps in conducting a similar study in Uganda, thus a justification for this research.

Furthermore, Mello & Worrell (2018) conducted a study examining gender disparities in extra-curricular activities' involvement and similar perceived life chances among learners in Trinidad and Tobago. The study included 1,385 adolescents, of whom 59%

were male. Results revealed that Trinidadian learners were all highly active, with an average participation in two activities. Gender differences were observed in activity involvement, with more number of males engaged in athletics and organized groups, while high number of females engaged in artistic, drama and similar religious activities. Interestingly, Kawade (2024) opines that participation in both athletic and artistic activities predicted positive perceived life chances, even after competing for academic outcome. Specifically, artistic activities were found to be particularly beneficial for predicting future attitudes, especially among males. These findings underscore the importance of extra-curricular activities in shaping adolescents' perceptions of their future prospects and highlight the differential impact of various activities on gender. This study involved assessment, summary and the development of the work of teaching staff qualitatively as well as quantitatively. The study utilized correlational method utilizing a sample of 123 respondents hence different to the current study that utilized descriptive method which gave the cause and effect of current status in a more exhaustive and comprehensive manners.

The studies (Agasisti et al. 2020) shed light and reviewed on the impact of demographic factors on students' participation in co-curricular activities. Daley & O'Gara (2018) explored age and gender differences in motives for participation among children, highlighting the need to consider developmental stages and gender disparities when designing participation programs. Similarly, Case (2021) investigated collegiate involvement among male and female students, revealing differences in factors influencing participation, such as living at campus for women

and participation in college sports for men. Naik & Wawrzynski (2018) examined student engagement at a South African university, finding variations in engagement levels based on gender, race, and financial status, emphasizing the nuanced effects or barriers to participation on learning outcomes. Anwar & Khan (2023) focused on the impact of co-curricular activities on such academic outcome among medical students, demonstrating positive outcomes but no significant gender differences. Lastly, Mello & Worrell (2018), explored gender differences in extra-curricular activities' engagements and perceived life chances among learners, highlighting the significance of artistic activities for shaping future attitudes, particularly among males. With regards to the student's demographic factors in question, the researcher developed a sense of concern in achieving knowledge on the impact of student's demographic factors on their participation in co-curricular activities in Ruhaama County.

2.4 Impact of Students' Home Background on their Participation in Co-curricular Activities

Several surveys (Shernoff & Vandell, 2017; Chida & Hamer, 2018) have been occasionally conducted to investigate the impact of students' home backgrounds on their involvement in the school-based co-curricular activities. The studies (Agasisti et al. 2020) explored the impact of several aspects of students' home background including socio-economic status, parent's education level and many others. Similarly, Gangwar (2021) conducted a survey towards exploring the correlation between various personal, academic, and socio-demographic characteristics of

secondary school learners and their level of participation in co-curricular activities. The results clearly indicated that several factors such as grade, age, income, father's occupation, and parents' educational category significantly influenced students' participation in co-curricular activities. However, variables such as sex, type of school, caste, and nature of permanent residence did not have a significant bearing on participation levels (Kawade, 2024). The study suggested directing efforts towards understanding the psycho-social dimensions of the home and school environment to identify facilitative or inhibitive factors influencing participation, creating a gap for the study.

Similarly, Kisango (2016) investigated the factors that influence the participation of learners in co-curricular activities in tertiary schools in Lamu County, Kenya. Similar study found that funding, school-based infrastructural facilities, teaching staff's roles, and involvement of parents significantly influenced students' participation in school-based co-curricular activities. A large percentage of students expressed concerns about inadequate funding, lack of infrastructure, and limited parental involvement hindering their participation (Chida & Hamer, 2018). Recommendations included adequate funding for activities, professional development for teachers in co-curricular activities, and parental sensitization programs. However, the foregoing study was carried from outside Uganda, not fully secondary school based and carried out almost five years ago. These constitute gaps namely of conducting a similar study in Uganda, thus need for this study.

Additionally, Batool & Riaz (2019) examined university students' perspectives on parental participation in their curricular and co-curricular activities, with a focus on gender and socio-economic status differences. Findings (Shernoff & Vandell, 2017) revealed that variations in parental involvement based on students' gender and socio-economic status had significant influence on students' engagement in the school-based co-curricular activities. Similar results from this study highlighted the importance of parental support in academic and extra-curricular pursuits and emphasized the need for further research towards understanding and addressing disparities in parental participation among university students (Gilman, 2020). However, this study took one method research design (quantitative); the use of questionnaires collected data. Unlike this study, data was analyzed by percentages, mean scores, standard deviation, and tables that used a mixed research approach.

Generally, the literature shows that various factors related to students' home backgrounds, such as parent's occupation, income, educational level, and involvement, can significantly influence their participation in co-curricular activities (Shernoff & Vandell, 2017). Adequate funding, infrastructure, teacher support, and parental involvement are essential for promoting and enhancing students' engagement in co-curricular pursuits. Based on the available literature and recommendations made by previous researchers, further research is needed to explore the complexities of these relationships and develop interventions to address barriers to participation (Batool & Riaz, 2019). With regards to the learner's home background in question, the researcher developed a sense of concern in achieving

knowledge on the influence of learner's home background on their participation in co-curricular activities in Ruhaama County.

2.5 Effect of Participation of Students in Co-Curricular Activities on Their Academic Outcome

This section reviews the empirical literature on the effects of participation of learners in the co-curricular activities on their academic outcome. The studies reviewed mixed findings with some indicators that participation and engagement of learners in co-curricular activities has a significant positive impact on their academic outcome while others show that there is no correlation between the two variables.

The study conducted by Millunchick & Zhou (2020) examined the influence of participation and involvement in engineering-related planned co-curricular activities on social, professional and academic outcomes among students in public college. The findings showed that learners who got engaged in co-curricular activities scored higher academic outcome compared to non-participants. Furthermore, Hayhoe (2019) argues that linear regression model revealed that specific types of institutions and GPA significantly influenced individual learner outcomes, such as bonding social capital, bridging social capital, major satisfaction, and engineering identity. This study was conducted in vocational institutions but not in schools such as public secondary schools. This gives a gap to be filled by this study.

Similarly, Kariyana et al. (2022) investigated educators' perspectives on the impact of learners' engagement in the co-curricular activities on academic outcome in schools in South Africa, particularly, in the Province of Eastern Cape. However, Kazungu (2020) argues that the findings revealed that educators generally held positive attitude and views about the benefits of co-curricular participation, including the imparting of important values that could enhance academic performance. However, the study also noted that involvement of learners in several co-curricular activities don't guarantee academic success (Kariyana et al. 2022). The study is similar in methodological approach used in the two studies since it also utilized descriptive survey but a different method of analysis. This study utilized the SPSS version 26.0 program which has more features and is accurate.

Further, Zacherman & Foubert (2024) explored the effects of time spent in the co-curricular activities and on the learners' academic outcome. The research found that there is a curvilinear correlation between hours per week spent in co-curricular involvement and GPA suggesting that moderate levels of participation were beneficial, whereas very high involvement could potentially harm academic performance, particularly among men. Similarly, Lamborn., Brown., Mounts & Steinberg (2022), investigation into the impact of time spent in co-curricular activities on college students' academic outcome unveils an intriguing finding that challenges conventional wisdom. The identification of a curvilinear relationship between hours of co-curricular involvement per week and GPA suggests an interplay between extra-curricular engagement and academic outcome. The study used a

descriptive approach basing on thematic analysis were applied, unlike this research that focused on a cross-sectional survey design, where correlations were used.

While moderate levels of participation are associated with beneficial outcomes, the study highlights a potential tipping point where excessive involvement may actually impede academic performance, particularly among male students (Zacherman & Foubert, 2024). This finding prompts a critical reflection on the prevailing assumptions regarding the benefits of co-curricular activities and shows the need for a balanced approach to student engagement. Similarly, Larson & Kleiber (2023) argues that it raises questions about the mechanisms underlying this phenomenon and calls for further investigation into the factors contributing to the observed curvilinear relationship. The gender-specific nature of the effect on how important is considered on individual differences and intersectional dynamics in understanding the impact of co-curricular involvement on academic outcomes. The study used a descriptive survey design, where thematic content analysis was used, unlike this research that focused on a cross-sectional research design basing on correlational analysis.

Additionally, Wilson et al. (2024) investigated the connection that exists between co-curricular activities and academic participation and engagements among undergraduate learners. The results show that while direct correlations between co-curricular activities and academic involvement were not significant, interactions with academic self-efficacy plays a significant role. Similarly, Mafumiko & Pangani (2018) argues that academic co-curricular activities positively interacted with

correlation between self-efficacy and academic involvement, whereas non-academic co-curricular activities on the other hand have a negative interaction effect. Besides, Tyson et al. (2020) opines that the finding that direct correlations between co-curricular activities and academic engagement were not statistically significant showing the complexity of this relationship and challenges simplistic assumptions about the direct impact of extra-curricular involvement on academic outcomes, creating a gap for the study in secondary schools in Ruhaama County.

However, the identification of interactions with academic self-efficacy as a critical factor sheds light on the underlying mechanisms driving students' engagement in their academic pursuits (Wilson et al. 2024). The positive interaction observed between academic co-curricular activities and self-efficacy suggested that these activities may serve as platforms for enhancing students' confidence and belief in their academic abilities, thereby fostering greater engagement with their studies (Mbabaali, 2022). Conversely, Shernoff & Vandell (2017) opines that the negative interaction effect observed for non-academic co-curricular activities underscores the importance of considering the nature and context of students' extracurricular involvement. These findings provide empirical support for the role of self-efficacy beliefs in shaping students' academic engagement and highlight the differential impact of various types of co-curricular activities on this relationship (Larson & Kleiber, 2023). However, the fore going study was carried from outside Uganda, not fully secondary school based and carried out almost five years ago. These constitute gaps namely of conducting a similar study in Uganda, thus need for this study.

Further, Bataw & Gupta (2022) also examined the association between the co-curricular activities and academic involvement among engineering students. They found that while direct correlation between co-curricular activities and engagement of academic outcome still exists, however, not significant, interaction consequences with academic self-efficacy were seriously significant suggesting that the nature of the co-curricular activity influenced its impact on academic engagement. Regrettably, all these have hitherto remained mere allegation without systematic answers to the predicament. This prompted the current researcher to consider the path of the research study.

Furthermore, Anwar & Khan (2023) conducted a survey to evaluate the outcomes of the co-curricular activities on the academic success of medical students. Employing a pre-test and posttest comparable group design, they compared the academic outcome of learners engaged in co-curricular activities with those who were not. More still, Mafumiko & Pangani (2018) argues that the study involved 100 second-year MBBS students, with half participating in co-curricular activities and the other half serving as the control group. Results indicated that students involved in co-curricular activities exhibited better academic performance compared to the control group, emphasizing the potential of such activities to enhance educational outcomes (Smoll & Smith, 2022). With regards to the participation of learners in the co-curricular activities in question, the researcher developed a sense of concern in achieving knowledge on the impact of participation of learners in the co-curricular activities on their academic performance in secondary schools in Ruhaama County.

2.6 Summary of Literature Review

Basing on the literature review, it is concluded that participation in co-curricular activities influences the academic performance of secondary school students in Ruhaama County, Ntungamo District, Uganda. Besides, the literature suggests that engagement in co-curricular activities may have both negative and positive consequences on academic outcome, depending on factors such as the type and intensity of involvement, as well as individual characteristics and contextual factors. The review process involves identifying the gaps in the literature and making analysis of the studies that have been conducted regarding the co-curricular activities. A critical analysis of the above studies did not provide a clear answer. Much as the writers and researchers had studied the co-curricular activities and academic performance in Ruhaama County, a gap remained undiscovered.

However, there are still several gaps which the review has identified and which require further research. Most studies were qualitative and do not guide us on the relationship between the study variables. The scholars did not specifically focus on the variables as laid down in this study. This therefore, created a knowledge gap. This leaves a gap that necessitates the need to undertake a study that is applicable to selected secondary schools in Uganda. Considering the above, the current study focused more study variables. This is a critical gap in the world of knowledge that this research attempts to bridge. It was upon this background that the investigator decided to evaluate how participation in co-curricular activities influences the academic performance of students in Ruhaama County.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter three covered the empirical literature review on the participation of learners in co-curricular activities and their academic outcome. This chapter covers the research design, methods and approaches used in sampling, data collection, and analysis. The detailed description of the research design and methods guided the whole process of conducting the study. The target population, data collection instruments, and strategies for validation of the study results are also discussed in this chapter.

3.2 Research Design

Research design refers to the overall plan or strategy used to conduct a research study, outlining the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing data to address the research objectives or questions effectively (Bostley, 2019). It encompasses various elements such as the research approach, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and data analysis procedures (Ingleby, 2012). This study adopted cross-sectional research design. This is a type of research design that involves collecting data from a sample of individuals at a single point in time (Hunziker & Blankenagel, 2021). In this design, researchers measure the variables of interest at a specific moment, providing a snapshot of the population at that particular time (Hunziker & Blankenagel, 2021).

Cross-sectional studies are often used to examine the prevalence of certain phenomena, investigate associations between variables, or compare groups at a specific time / point (Puspa Zuleika & Legiran, 2022). In a cross-sectional design, data is collected from different individuals or groups within the population of interest simultaneously, without following them over time. This allows researchers to gather information about the current status or characteristics of the population and explore relationships between variables at a particular point in time. The collected data can be analysed using various statistical techniques towards identifying patterns, trends, or associations among the variables under investigation (Saunders et al. 2009).

A cross-sectional design is suitable for studies aiming at examining the current status or characteristics of a population within a specific time frame. Since the focus of the study is to assess the level of learners' participation in co-curricular activities and its impact on academic outcome at a single point in time, a cross-sectional design offers an efficient approach to gather relevant data (Hunziker & Blankenagel, 2021). Conducting a cross-sectional study also requires less time and resources compared to longitudinal designs that follow participants over an extended period. Given the constraints of time and resources often associated with research projects, a cross-sectional design allows efficient data collection and analysis without the need for long-term follow-up.

This study utilized a quantitative approach to gather numerical data, allowing for precise measurement of variables related to participation of learners in co-

curricular activities and their academic outcome. The choice of a quantitative approach has the ability to facilitate objective measurement, statistical analysis, generalizability, efficiency, and precision in data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Administering standardized surveys enabled the researcher to efficiently collect comprehensive data from a representative sample of learners and this allowed making inferences about the broader population of secondary school students in the study (Weyant, 2022). The quantitative approach emphasizes objectivity, reproducibility, and reliability in data collection and analysis, ensuring the credibility of the study's findings regarding the relationship between co-curricular participation and academic performance (Weyant, 2022).

3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Both male and female participants were equally selected. The entire students' body in all public secondary schools in Ruhaama County will be considered. This included all students, both females and males, enrolled in both O-Level and A-Level programs. On the flipside, students who were visitors were excluded from the study. Students who were mentally ill or had a chronic illness were not considered part of this study.

3.4 Population and Sampling Techniques

3.4.1 Population

The target population refers to the entire group of individuals or elements to which the findings of a study are intended to apply. It represents the broader group that researchers aim at generalizing their findings to (Bhardwaj, 2019). For this study, the target population is the entire students' body in all public schools in Ruhama County (Table 3.1). This includes all students, both males and females, enrolled in both O-level and A-level programs, totaling to 2337 students from the five public secondary schools in Ruhaama County. These students represent the group from which data was collected and analyzed to investigate the correlation between participation of learners in co-curricular activities and academic outcome. The findings of the study therefore generalized to the entire students' population in public schools in Ruhaama County.

3.4.2 Sample Size Determination

Focusing on this specific population allows a comprehensive examination of the correlation between co-curricular involvement and academic outcome within the context of a single school. Including all students enrolled in both O level and A level programs to ensure representation across different academic levels and grades, thereby capturing a diverse range of experiences and perspectives. Targeting students within a single school, potential confounding variables associated with differences in school environments or educational systems are minimized, enhancing the internal validity of the results. The choice of the study area, Ruhaama County,

was based on the fact that it is near the workplace of the researcher and this minimized the cost entailed in data collection. The area also has a variety of public schools with student populations from both rural and urban areas.

Table 3.1: Target population

School	Students' population
Rwera secondary school	620
Ruhaama secondary school	509
Rweikiniro secondary school	315
Ruhanga secondary school	350
Muriisa secondary school	543
Total population	2337

3.4.3 Sampling Selection

A sample refers to a sub-set of individuals or elements selected from a larger population towards conducting a study (Bhardwaj, 2019). Sampling, on the other hand, is the process of selecting this sub-set or sample from the population of interest (Etikan, 2017). Sampling involves systematically choosing participants or units from the population to ensure that they adequately represent the characteristics of the broader population (Walters, 2021).

Random sampling is a sampling technique where each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for inclusion in the sample (Qualtrics.com, 2022). In random sampling, every individual or element in the population has a known and

nonzero probability of being selected, ensuring that the sample is unbiased and representative of the population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). With simple random sampling, each learner in the target population had an equal chance of being selected for inclusion in the sample, ensuring that the sample is representative of the entire students' body.

The sample size for the study was 342. This sample size was calculated basing on the target population using Slovin's formula for determining sample size from a definite population. Slovin's formula was considered and stated as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N e^2}$$

Where;

N= size of the population, and **e**= margin of error (alpha level); while, **n**= Size of the Sample required. In this research, the selected target population, **N** = 2337. The margin of error is 5% and entering these dimensions and variables in this formula to give the actual sample size, **n** = 342.

The researcher obtained the lists of all students enrolled in the selected schools and each student was assigned a serial number being used in selecting a random sample. The random sample was selected using Excel program in Microsoft Office. To execute this process, a new column was created in the Excel spreadsheet to generate random numbers for each student using the RAND function. These random

numbers were then used to sort the data, effectively shuffling the student IDs. Subsequently, the top 342 rows were selected as the sample, representing the randomly chosen participants for the study.

3.5 Variables and Indicators

Creswell (2018) states that, “a variable is a measurable characteristic that assumes different values among the subjects”. The study used co-curricular activities as an independent and students’ academic performance as a dependent variable. The co-curricular activities included dimension of: games and sports, music, dance and drama, and club activities. On the flipside, students’ academic performance was indicated by end of cycle scores, daily class assignment scores, end of term examination scores, increased class participation, regular class attendance, and punctual for classes.

3.6 Measurement Levels

This measurement of variables was measured basing on two variables, namely; nominal and interval scales. The background characteristics were majorly measured using mostly nominal scale. The questionnaire responses on items of: co-curricular activities and students’ academic performance was also measured at an ordinal scale (Kothari, 2013).

More so, a five Likert scale questionnaires with the following description of opinions: (3-accepted; 2- Undecided; and 1-strongly disagree) was also applied in the dependent variables as well as predictor variable. A Likert scale was applied while responding to a questionnaire whereby participants specify (dis)agreement level to stated questions. Multivariable analysis (MVA) was also based on the certain statistical principle related to multivariable statistics. The scale measured the opinion of respondents which was quantified and standardized to ensure regression analysis was conducted.

3.7 Data collection instrument

The data collection instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire designed to gather information on participation of learners in co-curricular activities and their academic outcome. The questionnaire consisted of both closed-ended and Likert-scale items, allowing quantitative data collection. The questionnaire was divided into sections to address different aspects of the objectives (Regmi et al. 2017). The first part gathered demographic information such as age, gender, grade level, and academic program (O level or A level).

The subsequent sections focused on students' participation in various co-curricular activities, including sports, clubs, arts, and community service. Likert-scale items was used to assess the frequency and level of involvement in co-curricular activities, with response options ranging from "never" to "very frequently" or "not involved" to "highly involved". Closed-ended questions asked about the types of co-curricular

activities students participate in, the reasons for their involvement, and any perceived barriers to participation. Academic performance was measured using recent exam scores self-reported by the students themselves.

The structured questionnaire was chosen for its efficiency in collecting standardized data from a large sample of students. Closed-ended and Likert-scale questions provide quantifiable responses, facilitating statistical analysis to identify patterns and relationships between co-curricular participation and academic performance. The questionnaire also allows comparability across responses and ease of data processing, ensuring the reliability and validity of the study findings (Regmi et al. 2017).

3.8 Procedure for Data Collection

The procedure for data collection in this study involves a series of systematic steps to ensure the accurate and reliable gathering of information from the selected sample of students. Initially, the questionnaire was meticulously prepared, aligning with the research objectives and thoroughly reviewed for clarity, relevance, and appropriateness. Following this, a pre-test of the tools was conducted with a small group of 10 students towards identifying any ambiguities or challenges in understanding the stated questions. Basing on the field feedback received during the pre-test, necessary revisions were made to refine the questionnaire and enhance its effectiveness.

Once the questionnaire was finalized, the research team sought permission from the school administration to conduct the study. Detailed information about the research purpose, procedures, and voluntary participation were communicated to the students and their parents through information sessions or written communication. Prior to participation, consent was equally obtained from each student to ensure their willingness to participate in the study.

Data collection was conducted in a structured manner to maintain consistency and minimize bias. The researcher administered the questionnaires to the selected sample of students during designated time slots, such as during school hours or after-school activities. Clear instructions were provided to the participants on how to complete the questionnaire, and assistance was offered to ensure accurate responses. The researcher monitored the data collection process closely to ensure adherence to the study protocol and address any issues or concerns that may arise.

Upon completion of data collection, the data collected using the questionnaires were entered into a computer data-base for proper analysis. Data cleaning procedures were implemented to identify and rectify any errors, inconsistencies, or missing values in the dataset in preparation for analysis.

3.9 Quality Control

To ensure the quality of data collected in this study, a pilot study was equally conducted with a small group of 10 students at Kyamate Secondary School. The pilot study served as a preliminary test of the research tool and procedures towards

identifying any potential concerns and making necessary adjustments before the investigator got involved in the main phase of collecting data. During the pilot study, the questionnaire was administered to the selected group of students, allowing the research team to assess the clarity, comprehensibility, and relevance of the questionnaire items. The pilot study provided insights into the practical aspects of data collection, such as the time required for completion and any logistical challenges encountered. Feedback from the pilot study participants was solicited to evaluate their understanding of the questionnaire items and to identify any ambiguities or areas of confusion. This feedback was used to refine the questionnaire to ensure that it effectively captured the intended information and aligned with the research objectives.

Validity and reliability of the questionnaire were ensured through several strategies. Content validity was established by ensuring that the designed questionnaire items accurately measured the constructs of interest, as informed by relevant literature and expert input. The pilot study helped confirm the content validity by assessing the appropriateness and relevance of the questionnaire items. Internal consistency reliability of the research tool was assessed using measures such as Cronbach's alpha coefficient for Likert-scale items.

Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each construct using statistical software like SPSS, with values above 0.70 considered acceptable for indicating good internal consistency among the items. Should values have fallen below this threshold, revisions to the questionnaire were implemented to improve reliability, ensuring

that the research instruments yielded consistent and dependable results, thereby able to enhance the overall validity of the results (Aung et al. 2021). The instrument was valid when the CVI is above 0.7 being recommended value for validity.

Table 3.2: Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variables	CVIs	Cronbach's alpha values	No. of items
Student's demographic factors	0.80	.816	9
Learner's home background	0.79	.804	9
Students' academic performance	0.79	.807	9

Source: *Primary data (2024)*

From the above validity statistics tables above, it can see that the total CVI is **0.78**, which indicated a high level of validity for our scale.

In this study a Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed to show how reliable the data is using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and taking only variables scoring above 0.70.

Table 3.3: Reliability of instruments

Variables.	No. of items.	Cronbach Alpha Co-efficient
Student's demographic factors	10.	0.79
Learner's home background	10	0.83
Students' academic performance	08	0.87

The Cronbach's alpha coefficients as indicated in Table 3.3 are above 0.70, the recommended reliability value (Amin, 2005). The results implied that the questionnaire is suitable for collecting the necessary data.

3.10 Data Presentation and Analysis

The process of data processing and analysis for this study involved several steps to derive meaningful insights from the collected data. The SPSS software was utilized for data processing and analysis due to its versatility and ability to handle large datasets efficiently (Čaplová & Švábová, 2020). The first step in data processing involves cleaning the dataset to identify and rectify any errors, inconsistencies, or missing values. This includes checking for outliers, ensuring that responses are coded accurately, and addressing any data entry errors. SPSS provides tools for data cleaning, such as data validation checks and missing value analysis, to streamline this process (Yeager, 2023). Descriptive statistics been used to summarize the sample and key variables characteristics. This includes calculating measures such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages to provide a comprehensive overview of the data.

To assess the level of participation of learners in co-curricular activities in Ruhaama County, Ntungamo District, and descriptive statistics were used to determine the frequency and extent of participation in various activities. This involved calculating participation rates, identifying the most popular activities, and examining patterns of involvement across different demographic groups.

To examine the influence of students' home background on their participation in several co-curricular activities, inferential statistics such as t-tests or analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to compare participation levels across different demographic variables (e.g., gender, socio-economic status). Regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between home background factors and participation levels, controlling for other variables.

In determining the impact of learners' participation in co-curricular activities on their academic outcome, correlation analysis was conducted towards examining the relationship between the learners' participation levels and academic outcomes. The analysis by regression statistics was also used towards exploring the predictive power of participation in explaining variations in academic performance, while controlling for potential confounding variables.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Several ethical principles guided the conduct of this research to ensure the protection of participants' rights, welfare, and confidentiality. Informed consent was equally obtained from all selected participants, including students and, if required by the school or local regulations, possibly their parents or guardians. Participants were also provided with enough information about the study's goals, purpose, benefits, procedures, and any other potential study risks, as well as participants' rights of withdrawing of the research at any-time of their choice. The consent

process was conducted in a language and format that was understandable to the participants.

Confidentiality of participant information was strictly maintained throughout the research process. All data collected was kept anonymous and stored securely, accessible only to authorized members of the research team. Participants' identities were not disclosed in any research outputs or publications, and any identifying information was removed from transcripts or datasets.

Measures were taken towards ensuring the safety and well-being of participants throughout the study. This included minimizing any potential physical or psychological harm associated with their participation, especially getting discomfort to answer sensitive questions. Selected participants were assured that their participation was fair and voluntary.

Ethical approval was sought from the relevant institutional review board or ethics committee before commencing the research. This ensured that the study met ethical standards and complied with regulatory requirements for research involving human participants.

Transparency and honesty were maintained in all aspects of the research process, including data collection, analysis, and reporting of findings. Any conflicts of interest or potential biases were disclosed, and efforts were made to present the research findings accurately and objectively.

3.12 Methodological Constraints

The use of questionnaires in this study posed certain challenges, particularly when including items related to family background, such as family income. Obtaining accurate information on such topics from students, who are youths or adolescents, was difficult due to the sensitive nature of the questions and their limited knowledge or willingness to disclose personal family details. The lack of motivation among participants could have affected their engagement with the study. The absence of motivating factors may have led to incomplete or less thoughtful responses, impacting the quality of the data collected. The researcher also faced psychological and environmental barriers during the study. Workplace distractions, such as the timing of the study coinciding with the athletics season on the general calendar of secondary schools, resulted in participants being preoccupied with other activities. This could have further hindered their focus and availability to fully participate in the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter four presents the results of the research conducted to explore the relationship between students' demographic factors, home background, and participation of learners in co-curricular activities, and how these elements impact their academic performance. The analysis is organized into several sections, beginning with the demographic profile of the sample, followed by an exploration of how different demographic factors influence participation in co-curricular activities. The chapter also examines the influence of the students' home background on their participation, and concludes with an analysis of the impact of participation of learners in co-curricular activities on academic outcome.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic characteristics of the sample were analysed to give an overview of the composition of the sample. The proposed sample size was 342 but only 321 respondents completed the questionnaire. This gives a response rate as illustrated in the table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics

Variable	Categories	Frequencies	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	138	43.9
	Female	176	56.1
Age	Under 15	39	12.5
	15-16	107	34.2
	17-18	125	39.9
	19 and above	42	13.4
Class	Form 1	137	43.1
	Form 3	122	38.4
	Form 5	59	18.6
Tribe	Munyankole	315	98.7
	Others	4	1.3
Region	Western	286	90.8
	Central	11	3.5
	Eastern	18	5.7

Source: Primary data

The demographic features of the participants are summarised in Table 4.1. The total of 314 students indicated their gender with 138 males (43.9%) and 176 females (56.1%). The age distribution showed that the majority of students were between 17 and 18 years old, accounting for 39.9% of the sample, followed by those aged 15-16 years (34.2%), under 15 years (12.5%), and 19 years and above (13.4%). Regarding class, the largest group of respondents was from Form 1, representing 43.1% of the sample, followed by Form 3 with 38.4%, and Form 5 with 18.6%. The overwhelming majority of the students identified as Munyankole (98.7%), with only a small proportion (1.3%) belonging to other tribes. In terms of regional distribution, 90.8%

of the students were from the Western region, with smaller representations from the Central (3.5%) and Eastern (5.7%) regions.

4.3 Students' Academic Performance

The first aspect of the study aimed at ascertaining the students' academic performance in selected secondary schools in Ruhaama County. Different study variables were therefore applied and used. This was guided by the 3-point Likert scale whose findings are clearly indicated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: The students' academic performance

Statement	Extent of dis(agree)ment			Mean	Std. Devt
	Responses	(f)	(%)		
There is steady improvement of students' academic grades in my school.	Accepted.	10	2.9	3.97	0.871
	Neutral.	30	8.7		
	Disagreed.	302	88.4		
	Total:	342	100%		
Most students sit their exams diligently without engaging in exam malpractice.	Accepted.	12	3.5	3.93	0.831
	Neutral.	42	12.3		
	Disagreed.	288	84.2		
	Total:	342	100%		

Students' attendance in school is generally good.	Accepted.	40	11.7	3.75	0.854
	Neutral.	28	8.2		
	Disagreed.	274	80.1		
	Total:	342	100%		
Academic competition is evident in the students' academic results	Accepted.	34	9.9	3.64	0.842
	Neutral.	38	11.2		
	Disagreed	270	78.9		
	Total:	342	100%		
The school enrollment of my school has kept improving over time.	Accepted.	35	10.3	3.93	0.732
	Neutral.	41	11.9		
	Disagreed	266	77.8		
	Total:	342	100%		
Students in my school are known for good academic work by the community.	Accepted	38	14.1	3.84	0.751
	Neutral.	33	9.6		
	Disagreed.	261	76.3		
	Total:	342	100%		
Most students in my school exit with better grades at UCE compared to their grades from PLE	Accepted	144	42.2	3.32	0.574
	Neutral.	51	14.9		
	Disagreed.	147	42.9		
	Total	342	100%		

Most students in my school exit with better grades at UACE compared to their grades from UCE	Accepted.	134	39.2	3.42	0.442
	Neutral.	63	18.4		
	Disagreed.	145	42.4		
	Total	342	100%		
Most of the students from my school easily get placement for further studies in higher institutions.	Accepted.	133	38.8	3.73	0.374
	Neutral.	68	19.8		
	Disagreed.	141	41.4		
	Total	342	100%		
Most students keep time for lessons and other school programs.	Accepted.	132	38.6	3.35	0.332
	Neutral.	72	21.1		
	Disagreed.	138	40.3		
	Total	342	100%		
My school attracts first Grades for both S1 and S5 admissions.	Accepted.	116	33.9	3.31	0.321
	Neutral.	90	26.4		
	Disagreed.	136	39.7		
	Total	342	100%		

Source: Primary data (2024)

Table 4.2 represents the descriptive results on the students' academic performance in selected secondary schools in Ruhaama County. The findings indicated that 302(88.4%) of the participants disagreed to the study statements that there is steady improvement of students' academic grades in secondary schools (Mean= 3.97); most

students sit their exams diligently without engaging in exam malpractice, and this was disagreed by 288(84.2%) of the respondents (Mean=3.93); students' attendance in school is generally good, and this was disagreed by 274(80.1%) of the respondents (Mean=3.75); and lastly, academic competition is evident in the students' academic results, and this was finally accepted by 270(78.9%) of the participants (Mean=3.64). This implies that schools have continued to experience a good number of students performing below the school management expectations. The academic performance of learners in secondary schools has remained very low for several years. Secondary schools always register some learners who do not qualify to be admitted to join secondary education because of low academic results obtained at UNEB exams.

Lastly study findings in Table 4.2 also show that that majority of the respondents (77.8%) did not accepted that those “the school enrollment of my school has kept improving over time” with Mean=3.93, this means that the students who sat for UNEB exams does not excel in their academic performance outcomes. The declining students' academic performance in secondary schools is still experienced and said to remain rife in the district.

It was also disagreed (76.3%) that students in secondary schools are known for good academic work by the community (represented by Mean 3.84). Also, 147 (42.9%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that most students in schools exit with better grades at UCE compared to their grades from PLE. This implies that a majority of students does not excellently pass their UNEB with grades. They does not performance in accordance to the expectations of the school management. Some of

the students fail progressing to the next level of education that is to say secondary level or tertiary institutions for practical/ hands on courses like plumbing, hair dressing, building and others.

4.4 Impact of student's demographic factors on their participation in co-curricular activities

Objective one sought towards evaluating the impact of students' demographic factors on their participation in co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Ruhaama County. The structure was illustrated and measured by use different study variables and 3-point Likert scale whose findings are clearly elaborated in the below Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Impact of student's demographic factors on their participation in co-curricular activities

Statement	Response	Extent of (dis)agreement		Mean	Std. Devt
		(f)	(%)		
My family owns the house/apartment we live in.	Accepted	102	29.8	3.97	0.987
	Neutral.	50	14.6		
	Disagree	190	55.6		
	Total	342	100%		
My family rents the house/apartment we live in.	Accepted	105	30.7	3.93	0.905
	Neutral.	57	16.6		
	Disagreed.	180	52.7		
	Total:	342	100%		
My family lives in government provided housing.	Accepted	75	21.9	3.87	0.854
	Neutral.	49	14.4		
	Disagreed.	218	63.7		
	Total:	342	100%		
My family lives with relatives.	Accepted	44	12.8	3.83	0.985
	Neutral	59	17.4		
	Disagreed	239	69.8		
	Total:	342	100%		

The primary source of income for my family is employment (fulltime/part-time).	Accepted	251	73.4	3.78	0.857
	Neutral.	33	9.7		
	Disagreed.	58	16.9		
	Total	342	100%		
The primary source of my family's income is self-employment or business ownership.	Accepted	67	19.6	3.77	0.853
	Neutral.	49	14.3		
	Disagreed.	226	66.1		
	Total:	342	100%		
The primary source of my family's income is government assistance or welfare.	Accepted	44	12.8	3.70	0.774
	Neutral.	59	17.4		
	Disagreed.	239	69.8		
	Total:	342	100.0		
The primary source of my family's income is retirement or pension.	Accepted	21	6.2	3.49	0.643
	Neutral.	11	3.2		
	Disagreed.	310	90.6		
	Total:	342	100.0		
The primary source of my family's income subsistence farming.	Accepted	301	88	3.32	0.542
	Neutral.	12	3.5		
	Disagreed.	29	8.5		
	Total:	342	100.0		

The primary source of my family's income is commercial farming.	Accepted	37	10.8	3.31	0.473
	Neutral.	45	13.2		
	Disagreed.	260	76		
	Total:	342	100.0		
My family's financial situation is below average compared to others in our community.	Accepted	45	13.2	3.30	0.643
	Neutral.	80	23.4		
	Disagreed.	217	63.4		
	Total:	342	100.0		
My family's financial situation is average compared to others in our community.	Accepted	213	62.3	3.23	0.643
	Neutral.	41	11.9		
	Disagreed.	88	25.8		
	Total:	342	100.0		
My family's financial situation is above average compared to others in our community.	Accepted	23	6.7	3.01	0.643
	Neutral.	39	11.5		
	Disagreed.	280	81.8		
	Total:	342	100.0		

Source: Primary data (2024)

Table 4.3 above clear gives a clear representation of the descriptive statistics on the impact of students' demographic factors on their participation in co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Ruhaama County. The results from the field showed that 102(29.8%) of the participants accepted to this statements that my family owns

the house/apartment we live in (represented by Mean=3.97); followed by 105(30.7%) of the respondents who accepted that my family rents the house/apartment we live in (represented by Mean=3.93); the, respondents equivalent to 75(21.9%) accepted that my family lives in government provided housing (represented by Mean=3.87); and, lastly, 251(73.4%) of the respondents accepted that the primary source of income for my family is employment (fulltime/part-time) (represented by Mean=3.78).

4.4.1 Gender

Independent samples of t-test were conducted to determine whether participation in co-curricular activities differed significantly. The analysis of gender differences in participation in co-curricular activities is shown in Table 4.4. The mean scores for male and female students were 42.74 and 42.03, respectively, indicating a slight difference in participation levels. However, the independent samples t-test (Table 4.5) revealed no significant difference between participation of male and female learners in co-curricular activities ($p=0.502$). This suggests that gender does not have a substantial impact on participation rates in the studied sample.

Table 4.4: Group statistics for participation by gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Participation in co-curricular activities	Male	78	42.74	8.756	.991
	Female	98	42.03	10.066	1.017

Source: Primary data

Table 4.5: Independent Samples Test statistics

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances.		t-test for Equality of Means.			
		F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Participation in co-curricular activities	Equal variances assumed	.052	.819	.494	.622	.713	1.443
				.502			1.420
	Equal variances not assumed				.616	.713	

4.4.2 Age

Pearson correlation analysis was done to determine whether there is a linear correlation that exists between age and participation of learners in co-curricular activities. The correlation results (Table 4.6) show that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between age and participation of learners in co-curricular activities ($r=0.300$, $p<0.001$). This implies that the correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates that older students are more likely to participate in co-curricular activities compared to their younger peers.

Table 4.6: Pearson correlation for age and participation in co-curricular activities

		Age.	Participation of learners in co-curricular activities.
Age.	Pearson Correlation.	1.	.300**
	Sig. (2-tailed).		.000.
	N.	313.	176.
Participation in co-curricular activities.	Pearson Correlation.	.300**	1.
	Sig. (2-tailed).	.000.	
	N.	176.	180.
** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

4.4.3 Class

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted towards examining the differences in participation of learners across different classes (Table 4.7). The findings also indicated that there is a significant difference in learners' participation levels between the classes ($p < 0.001$). The Tukey HSD posthoc test (Table 8) further revealed that students in Form 1 and form3 participated significantly less in co-curricular activities compared to those in Form 5. The respective mean differences are -8.075 ($p < 0.001$) and -6.468 ($p = 0.001$). This indicates that, as students' progress through their academic years, their involvement in co-curricular activities significantly decreases.

Table 4.7: ANOVA for participation by class

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1734.685	2	867.343	10.687	.000
Within Groups	14284.521	176	81.162		
Total	16019.207	178			

Table 4.8: Turkey HSD multiple comparisons

Dependent Variable: Participation in co-curricular activities						
(I) Class	(J) Class	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
form 1	form 3	-1.607	1.528	.545	-5.22	2.01
	form 5	-8.075*	1.786	.000	-12.30	-3.85
form 3	form 1	1.607	1.528	.545	-2.01	5.22
	form 5	-6.468*	1.790	.001	-10.70	-2.24
form 5	form 1	8.075*	1.786	.000	3.85	12.30
	form 3	6.468*	1.790	.001	2.24	10.70

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

4.5 The Influence of Student’s Home Background on Participation of Learners in Co-Curricular Activities

Objective two sought towards assessing the influence of learner’s home background on the participation of learners in the co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Ruhaama County, results was illustrated in the below Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: The Influence of Student’s Home Background on Participation of Learners in Co-Curricular Activities

Statement	Response	Extent of (dis)agreement		Mean	Std. Devt
		(f)	(%)		
I live with both of my biological parents.	Accepted	251	73.4	3.98	0.872
	Neutral.	33	9.7		
	Disagreed.	58	16.9		
	Total	342	100%		
I live in a single-parent household.	Accepted	105	30.7	3.97	0.953
	Neutral.	57	16.6		
	Disagreed.	180	52.7		
	Total:	342	100%		
I live with a step-parent or in a blended family.	Accepted	44	12.8	3.71	0.764
	Neutral.	59	17.4		
	Disagreed.	239	69.8		
	Total:	342	100.0		

I live with my grandparents or other extended family members.	Accepted	67	19.6	3.73	0.843
	Neutral.	49	14.3		
	Disagreed.	226	66.1		
	Total:	342	100%		
I live in a household with siblings.	Accepted	301	88	3.32	0.531
	Neutral.	12	3.5		
	Disagreed.	29	8.5		
	Total:	342	100.0		

Source: Primary data (2024)

Table 4.9 above clear gives a clear representation of the descriptive statistics on the influence of student's home background on participation of learners in co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Ruhaama County. The results from the field showed that 251(73.4%) of the participants accepted to this statements that they live with both of my biological parents (represented by Mean=3.98); followed by 105(30.7%) of the respondents who accepted that they live in a single-parent household (represented by Mean=3.97); the, respondents equivalent to 44(12.8%) accepted that they live with a step-parent or in a blended family (represented by Mean=3.71); and, lastly, 67(19.6%) of the respondents accepted that they live with my grandparents or other extended family members (represented by Mean=3.73).

4.5.1 Marital Status

The ANOVA results in Table 4.10 indicate that marital status of students' parents does not have a significant impact on their participation in co-curricular activities ($p = 0.530$). This implies that whether a student comes from a single-parent or two-parent household does not influence their involvement in these activities.

Table 4.10: ANOVA for Marital status

Participation in co-curricular activities					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	35.390	1	35.390	.397	.530
Within Groups	15351.851	172	89.255		
Total	15387.241	173			

4.5.2 Parents' Education

The correlation analysis (Table 4.11) shows that there is no significant correlation between parents' education level and students' participation in co-curricular activities ($r=0.082$, $p = 0.276$). This implies that there is no strong relationship between the educational attainment of parents and the likelihood of students participating in co-curricular activities.

Table 4.11: Correlation between parent's education and participation of learners in co-curricular activities

		Participation of learners' in co-curricular activities	Parent's education Level.
Participation of learners' in co-curricular activities	Pearson Correlation.	1	.082
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.276
	N.	180	177
Parent's education level	Pearson Correlation.	.082.	1
	Sig. (2-tailed).	.276	
	N.	177	315

4.5.3 Socio-Economic Status

Table 4.12 presents the correlation between students' socio-economic status and their participation in co-curricular activities. The results show there is no statistically significant correlation between socio-economic status of students and their participation in such co-curricular activities ($r=0.068$, $p=0.450$). This implies that students' socio-economic background does not influence their engagement in co-curricular activities.

Table 4.12: Correlation between socioeconomic status and participation of learners in co-curricular activities

		Socio-economic status	Participation in co-curricular activities
Socio-economic status	Pearson Correlation.	1.	.068
	Sig. (2-tailed).		.450
	N.	174	126
Participation in co-curricular activities	Pearson Correlation.	.068	1
	Sig. (2-tailed).	.450	
	N.	126	180

4.6 Impact of Participation of Learners in Co-Curricular Activities on Their Academic Outcome

The third objectives of the study aimed at establishing the impact of participation of learners in the co-curricular activities on their academic performance in selected secondary schools in Ruhaama County. Different study variables were therefore applied and used. This was guided by the 3-point Likert scale whose findings are clearly indicated in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Impact of Participation of Learners in Co-Curricular Activities on Their Academic Outcome

Statement	Extent of dis(agree)ment			Mean	Std. Devt
	Responses	(f)	(%)		
I regularly participate in sports teams, clubs, or intramural activities.	Accepted.	302	88.4	3.99	0.883
	Neutral.	30	8.7		
	Disagreed.	10	2.9		
	Total:	342	100%		
I actively engage in performing arts activities such as theatre productions, choir, or band.	Accepted.	288	84.2	3.93	0.874
	Neutral.	42	12.3		
	Disagreed.	12	3.5		
	Total:	342	100%		
I contribute to academic clubs or competitions related to my field of study.	Accepted.	274	80.1	3.73	0.864
	Neutral.	28	8.2		
	Disagreed.	40	11.7		
	Total:	342	100%		
I volunteer my time for community service projects or initiatives.	Accepted.	270	78.9	3.71	0.832
	Neutral.	38	11.2		
	Disagreed	34	9.9		
	Total:	342	100%		

I participate in cultural or diversity-focused clubs or events.	Accepted.	266	77.8		
	Neutral.	41	11.9		0.742
	Disagreed	35	10.3	3.83	
	Total:	342	100%		
I involve myself in student government or leadership positions within the school or university.	Accepted	261	76.3		
	Neutral.	33	9.6		0.741
	Disagreed.	38	14.1	3.80	
	Total:	342	100%		
I attend workshops, seminars, or conferences related to my interests or career goals.	Accepted	147	42.9		
	Neutral.	51	14.9	3.42	0.572
	Disagreed.	144	42.2		
	Total	342	100%		
I participate in research projects or academic conferences outside of regular coursework.	Accepted.	145	42.4		
	Neutral.	63	18.4		0.432
	Disagreed.	134	39.2	3.41	
	Total	342	100%		
I engage in entrepreneurial activities, such as start-up competitions or business clubs.	Accepted.	141	41.4		
	Neutral.	68	19.8		0.341
	Disagreed.	133	38.8	3.30	
	Total	342	100%		

I take part in environmental sustainability initiatives or clubs promoting eco-friendly practices	Accepted.	138	40.3	3.51	0.320
	Neutral.	72	21.1		
	Disagreed.	132	38.6		
	Total	342	100%		

Source: Primary data (2024)

Table 4.13 above clear gives a clear representation of the descriptive statistics on the impact of participation of learners in the co-curricular activities on their academic performance in secondary schools in Ruhaama County. The results from the field showed that 302(88.4%) of the participants accepted to this statements that they regularly participate in sports teams, clubs, or intramural activities (represented by Mean=3.99); followed by 288(84.2%) of the respondents who accepted that they actively engage in performing arts activities such as theatre productions, choir, or band (represented by Mean=3.93); the, respondents equivalent to 274(80.1%) accepted that they contribute to academic clubs or competitions related to my field of study (represented by Mean=3.73); and, lastly, 270(78.9%) of the respondents accepted that they volunteer my time for community service projects or initiatives (represented by Mean=3.71).

4.6.1 Correlation Analysis

The correlation between participation of learners in co-curricular activities and their academic outcome was explored using Pearson correlation and regression analysis. Pearson correlation was conducted towards determining whether there is a linear correlation existing relationship between participation of learners in co-curricular

activities on their academic performance. Table 4.14 shows that there is a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.554$, $p < 0.001$) between participation of learners in co-curricular activities and academic outcome. This shows that learners who are more engaged in co-curricular activities tend performing better academically.

Table 4.14: Pearson correlation between participation of learners in co-curricular activities on their academic outcome

		Participation in co-curricular activities	Academic performance
Participation in co-curricular activities	Pearson Correlation.	1	.554**
	Sig. (2-tailed).		.000
	N.	180	140
Academic performance	Pearson Correlation.	.554**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed).	.000	
	N.	140	199
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

4.6.2 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to determine whether participation in the co-curricular activities is a significant predictor of academic performance. The regression analysis results in Table 4.15, 4.16, and 4.17 further supports this finding from correlation analysis. The model summary indicates that participation in co-curricular activities explains 30.7% of the variance in academic performance ($R^2 = 0.307$). The ANOVA results (Table 4.15) show that the regression model is statistically

significant ($F = 61.136$, $p < 0.001$), and the regression coefficients (Table 17) reveals that participation of learners in co-curricular activities is a significant predictor of academic performance ($B = 0.272$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 4.15: Regression model summary

Model.	R.	R Square.	Adjusted R Square.	Std. Error of the Estimate.
1.	.554 ^a	.307	.302	3.667
a. Predictors: (Constant), Participation in co-curricular activities				

Table 4.16: ANOVA for the regression variables

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	822.018	1	822.018	61.136	.000 ^b
	Residual	1855.525	138	13.446		
	Total	2677.543	139			
a. Dependent Variable: Academic performance						
b. Predictors:(Constant), Participation of learners in co-curricular activities						

Table 4.17: Regression coefficients

Model.		Un standardized Coefficients.		Standardized Coefficients.	t.	Sig:
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1		22.2	1.52		14.541	.000
	(Constant)	35	9			
	Participation in co-curricular activities	.27 2	.03 5	.554	7.819	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Academic performance						

4.7 Summary of findings

The results suggest that demographic factors such as age and class have a significant impact on students' participation in co-curricular activities, while gender, parents' marital status, education level, and socio-economic status do not. Additionally, participation of learners in co-curricular activities is positively associated with better academic performance. These insights highlight the significance of encouraging involvement of learners in co-curricular activities as a means to enhance their academic outcomes.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed discussion of results in accordance to the findings in chapter four and objectives in chapter one.

5.2 Discussion of Research Findings

5.2.1 Impact of student's demographic factors on their participation in co-curricular activities

The results align with the existing literature on the impact of demographic factors on students' participation in co-curricular activities. The study observed that age, gender, and other demographic characteristics significantly influenced students' engagement in co-curricular pursuits. Consistent with Daley & O'Gara (2018), our findings suggest that age and gender play critical roles in shaping students' motivations and participation in various activities. However, Mello & Worrell (2018) opines that younger students may be more inclined towards activities that offer socialization opportunities, while older students might prioritize activities aligned with their academic or career aspirations. This clearly indicated that gender differences were also evident, with male students showing a preference for sports related activities and female students gravitating towards artistic or community focused endeavours, mirroring the patterns.

Our findings suggest that institutions should tailor their co-curricular offerings to address the specific needs and interests of different demographic groups, thereby fostering a more inclusive environment that encourages broader participation. This approach not only enhances student engagement but also contributes to their overall development and well-being. Furthermore, the study's results resonate with Case (2021), who highlighted the importance of considering demographic factors when designing co-curricular programs.

5.2.2 The influence of Student's home background on Students Participation in co-curricular activities

The influence of students' home backgrounds on their participation in the co-curricular activities was evident in this study, supporting the conclusions drawn by previous research. Factors such as socio-economic status, parental education, and involvement were found to significantly affect students' engagement in co-curricular activities. This aligns with Gangwar's (2021) findings, which identified similar home background factors as key determinants of participation levels. The study also corroborates Kisango's (2016) observation that inadequate funding, infrastructure, and limited parental involvement can serve as significant barriers to participation.

The study results indicates that students from higher socio-economic backgrounds and those with more educated and involved parents are more likely to participate in co-curricular activities. This highlights the benefits of providing equal opportunities and support for learners from diverse backgrounds to ensure that all students have

access to the benefits of co-curricular engagement. The findings also support Batool & Riaz's (2019) emphasis on the need for parental involvement and support in both academic work and co-curricular activities. Parental support emerged as a critical factor in encouraging students to participate in activities that contribute to their holistic development. Schools and universities should consider implementing programs that foster greater parental involvement and address the financial and infrastructural barriers that hinder participation.

5.2.3 Impact of participation of learners in co-curricular activities on their academic outcome

The study revealed that there is there is a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.554$, $p < 0.001$) between participation of learners in co-curricular activities and their academic. This concurs with Bailey et al. (2023) who argues that existing research mainly focuses on the academic goals and benefits of learners' participation in co-curricular activities. The majority tend to suggest a positive association between athletic involvement and academic success. Similarly, Broh et al. (2024) posts that learner getting involvement in interschool sports also fosters their development and social connections among fellow learners, guardians, parents, and the schools, which clearly explains the presence of positive impact on academic outcome. This shows that learners who are more engaged in co-curricular activities tend performing better academically.

The study findings on the impact of participation of learners in the co-curricular activities on academic outcome provide valuable insights that both confirm and expand upon existing literature. Consistent with Anwar & Khan (2023), the study also indicated that participation of learners in co-curricular activities generally had a positive effect on academic performance. Students who engaged in these activities often demonstrated better academic outcomes than those who did not participate. This supports the notion that co-curricular involvement can enhance students' academic success by fostering skills such as time management, teamwork, and discipline.

However, the study also found nuanced effects, particularly in relation to the type and intensity of co-curricular involvement, as observed by Zacherman & Foubert (2024). While moderate participation was beneficial, excessive involvement appeared to have a diminishing return, potentially leading to decreased academic performance. This finding underscores the benefits of maintaining a balanced approach to co-curricular engagement, ensuring that students can reap the benefits without compromising their academic responsibilities.

Moreover, the study's findings align with those of Wilson et al. (2024), which highlighted the role of academic self-efficacy in mediating the correlation between co-curricular activities and academic outcome. The results also indicated that students with higher self-efficacy tend to benefit more from academic-related co-curricular activities, reinforcing the need for institutions to consider individual differences when promoting these activities. This relationship implies that students

who possess a strong belief in their academic abilities are more likely to engage deeply and effectively in co-curricular activities that complement their academic goals. Such students might approach these activities with greater confidence and a clearer sense of purpose, thereby enhancing the skills and knowledge they gain from these experiences, which in turn positively impacts their academic performance.

This finding reinforces the need for educational institutions to consider individual differences in academic self-efficacy when promoting co-curricular activities. Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach, schools and universities should recognize that students with varying levels of self-efficacy may respond differently to co-curricular opportunities. This concurs with Stephens & Schaben (2022) who argues that for students with lower self-efficacy, institutions might need to provide additional support, such as mentoring, skills workshops, or encouragement to participate in activities that gradually build their confidence and competence. On the other hand, Smoll & Smith (2022) opines that for students with higher self-efficacy, institutions could offer more challenging and leadership-oriented activities that further enhance their academic and personal development. This clearly indicates that by tailoring co-curricular programs to address these individual differences, educational institutions can help all students maximize the benefits of co-curricular participation, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes and overall students' success.

5.3 Theoretical Discussions

The study was based on the Involvement Theory as advanced in 1984 by Astin. The basic principle of Astin's Involvement Theory is that educational experience ought being considered in a wide sense that encompasses both classroom learning for academic outcomes and out-of-class experiences (co-curriculum activities) for psychological and physical development, including athletics, games and sports. This concurs with Shernoff & Vandell (2017) who argues that the Theory provides a theoretical basis for investigating student involvement in the education-sports experience as part of co-curriculum activities. Active participation in academic and other co-curricular activities and especially competitive games and sports is highly related to student learning and their physical and mental development.

Similarly, Smoll & Smith (2022) also presents a model for presenting student involvement in games and sports activities, emphasizing the concepts of commitment and time taken in these activities. Astin's theory of 1984 serves as a connector between pedagogical theory and student outcomes by providing a link between the variables emphasized in these theories and the learning outcomes desired by the student and the teacher. He states that any program, whether academic or co-curricular, should motivate students to commit both time and effort to it (Chida & Hamer, 2018). Both quality and quantity involvement are important as involvement is a major factor in ensuring improvement in the academic performance of students in secondary schools.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction.

This chapter provides a summary of the research findings, drawing conclusions based on the data analysis and discussion presented in the previous chapters. It also outlines the implications of these findings for educational practice, policy, and future research. Finally, the chapter covers recommendations for enhancing participation of learners in co-curricular activities and improving academic outcomes, along with suggestions for areas where further research is needed.

6.2 Conclusions

Basing on the results of this study, several conclusions have been drawn:

The study concludes that demographic factors such as age and academic class significantly impact participation of learners in co-curricular activities. Older students and those in higher academic levels demonstrate greater engagement in these activities, suggesting that as students' progress through their education; they become more involved in co-curricular opportunities.

Conversely from the second objective, the study also concluded that gender, parental marital status, parents' education levels, and socioeconomic status do not appear to influence co-curricular participation significantly. This indicates that these factors

are not major determinants of involvement of learners in co-curricular activities within the sample studied.

The study concluded that there is also clear positive association between participation of learners in co-curricular activities and academic outcome. Learners who mostly engage more in co-curricular activities happen to perform better academically. This suggests that co-curricular involvement plays a beneficial role in enhancing academic outcome of learners, reinforcing the benefits of promoting such activities as a means to support and improve educational achievement.

6.3 Implications

The results hold a significant implication for educators, school administrators, and policy-makers in shaping the future of educational practices and student engagement.

The study highlights the need for schools to create co-curricular programs that are inclusive and responsive to the diverse demographic factors influencing student participation. Schools should aim at offering a wide variety of activities that cater for different age groups, genders, and interests, ensuring that every student has access to programs that engage and motivate them. This approach can foster broader engagement and help in building an inclusive school environment.

The influence of home background on student participation underscores the critical role that parents and guardians play in supporting their children's involvement in co-

curricular activities. Schools should actively seek to involve parents by implementing strategies such as workshops, informational sessions, and regular communication updates about their children's progress in both academic and co-curricular activities. Strengthening the partnership between schools and parents also get involved in creating a more supportive home and school environment for school-going children hence encouraging higher levels of participation and success.

The study's findings suggest that while co-curricular activities can positively impact academic performance, it is crucial for students to maintain a balance between these activities and their academic responsibilities. Schools should offer counselling and mentorship programs that guide students in time management and prioritization, helping them to engage in co-curricular activities in a way that complements their academic goals. By promoting a balanced approach, schools can help students harness the full benefits of co-curricular participation without compromising their academic success.

6.4 Recommendations

Basing on the conclusions drawn from these results, several key recommendations are proposed towards enhancing the effectiveness and participation of learners in the co-curricular activities in improving academic outcome.

Firstly, the study recommends that schools should develop targeted co-curricular programs that are tailored to the interests and needs of diverse demographic groups. This approach should include offering a wide range of activities that cater for both

physical and artistic interests, ensuring that all students can find activities that resonate with them, thereby promoting broader participation.

Secondly, the study recommends that it is essential for schools to provide financial support or subsidies for students from low socio-economic backgrounds. By doing so, schools can help to level the playing field, ensuring that all learners, regardless of their financial situation, have equal opportunities towards participating in and benefiting from co-curricular activities.

Thirdly, the study recommends that schools should prioritize professional development of teachers to help them recognize the importance of the co-curricular activities and effectively integrate these activities into the broader educational experience. This could involve organizing workshops that train teachers on how to support learners in balancing their academic responsibilities with their co-curricular commitments.

Finally, the study recommends that schools should implement programs aimed at promoting academic self-efficacy among students. Given the strong link between self-efficacy and the positive impact of the co-curricular activities on academic outcome, initiatives such as mentorship programs, peer support groups, and workshops focused on building confidence and self-belief should be considered. These efforts can help students maximize the benefits of their participation in the school-based co-curricular activities, ultimately leading to better academic outcomes.

6.5 Suggestions for Future Research

Similar future survey could explore the long-term consequences of co-curricular participation on academic and career outcomes. Such studies would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how these activities influence students' development over time.

With the increasing use of technology in education, it would be valuable to study the impact of digital and online co-curricular activities on students' academic and personal growth. This is particularly relevant in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and the shift towards virtual learning environments.

Comparative studies across different cultural and socio-economic contexts could provide a more global perspective on the factors influencing co-curricular participation and its impact on academic performance. This would help to identify universal principles as well as context-specific strategies to promote students engagement.

Future research could examine the role of teachers in facilitating students' participation in co-curricular activities, including how their support and encouragement can influence students' engagement and academic outcomes.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in this study. Your responses will contribute to our understanding of participation of learners in co-curricular activities and its impact on academic outcome. Please answer the following questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

Student's Demographic Information

No.	Category	Options (tick where applicable)
1	Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
2	Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 15 <input type="checkbox"/> 15-16 <input type="checkbox"/> 17-18 <input type="checkbox"/> 19 and above
3	Class.	<input type="checkbox"/> Form 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Form 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Form 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Form 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Form 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Form 6.
4	Tribe	<hr/>
5	Region of origin	<input type="checkbox"/> Western region <input type="checkbox"/> Central region <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern region

		<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Uganda
6	Average Mark in Percentage for Most Recent Exams	<hr/>

Family background

a. Parents' education background

What is the highest level of education completed by one of your parents or guardians in your family?

- No formal education.
- Primary education.
- Secondary education.
- Vocational/technical training.
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent.
- Master's degree or higher.

b. Parents' marital status

What is the marital status of your biological parents

- Married
- Not married

c. Socio-economic status

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My family owns the house/apartment we live in.					
My family rents the house/apartment we live in.					
My family lives in government provided housing.					
My family lives with relatives.					
The primary source of income for my family is employment (fulltime/part-time).					
The primary source of my family's income is self-employment or business ownership.					
The primary source of my family's income is government assistance or welfare.					
The primary source of my family's income is retirement or pension.					
The primary source of my family's income subsistence farming.					
The primary source of my family's income is commercial farming.					

My family's financial situation is below average compared to others in our community.					
My family's financial situation is average compared to others in our community.					
My family's financial situation is above average compared to others in our community.					

Family structure

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I live with both of my biological parents.					
I live in a single-parent household.					
I live with a step-parent or in a blended family.					
I live with my grandparents or other extended family members.					
I live in a household with siblings.					

Participation in co-curricular activities

Statements	Strongly Disagree.	Disagree.	Slightly Disagree.	Slightly Agree	Agree.	Strongly Agree.
I regularly participate in sports teams, clubs, or intramural activities.						
I actively engage in performing arts activities such as theatre productions, choir, or band.						

I contribute to academic clubs or competitions related to my field of study.						
I volunteer my time for community service projects or initiatives.						
I participate in cultural or diversity-focused clubs or events.						
I involve myself in student government or leadership positions within the school or university.						
I attend workshops, seminars, or conferences related to my interests or career goals.						
I participate in research projects or academic conferences outside of regular coursework.						
I engage in entrepreneurial activities, such as start up competitions or business clubs.						

I take part in environmental sustainability initiatives or clubs promoting eco-friendly practices						
---	--	--	--	--	--	--

Student's Performance

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
There is steady improvement of students' academic grades in my school.					
Most students sit their exams diligently without engaging in exam malpractice.					
Students' attendance in school is generally good.					
Academic competition is evident in the students' academic results					
The school enrollment of my school has kept improving over time.					
Students in my school are known for good academic work by the community.					
Most students in my school exit with better grades at UCE compared to their grades from PLE					

Most students in my school exit with better grades at UACE compared to their grades from UCE					
Most of the students from my school easily get placement for further studies in higher institutions.					
Most students keep time for lessons and other school programs.					
My school attracts first Grades for both S1 and S5 admissions.					

THANK YOU

Appendix B:

Informed Consent Form

Title: The Effects of Participation of Learners in Co-Curricular Activities in Selected Secondary Schools in Ruhaama County, Ntungamo District

Investigator: Abias Kasasira, Tel. contact +256-702984476, School of Education, UCU

1. Introduction and Research Goals.

I am conducting a study whose general objective is to assess the level of students' participation in the co-curricular activities, the demographic and home background factors that influence their participation, and the impact of the participation on their academic outcome with a particular focus on secondary students in Ruhaama County, Ntungamo District, Uganda. The data you give us, will be treated confidentially. It will only be used for purposes., and your responses will remain anonymous.

2. Description of the Research.

This is a Cross-sectional design survey on student participation in the co-curricular activities in selected secondary schools in Ruhaama County

3. Subject Participation

Participants will be students in both O-level and A-level in selected secondary schools in Ruhaama County. The participants will be selected randomly and may be both males and females of various age groups.

4. Potential Risks and Discomforts

This is a survey involves completing a questionnaire with minimum interaction between the researcher and the respondents. Minimal risk is expected.

5. Potential Benefits

There are no rewards for the participants. However, participants may derive satisfaction from participating in the study and contributing to generation of new information on the subject.

6. Confidentiality.

The data you give us, will be fully handled confidentially. You are required to sign the consent sheet. And your participation is purely voluntary.

7. Authorization.

By accepting to sign this form, you officially have authorized us to use your information.

8. Participation and Withdraw.

Your participation in this research is purely voluntary. You still have a right to withdraw from this study at any-time of your choice.

9. Reimbursements

No reimbursements

10. Individual to constant

In case of any ethical concern or any other related challenge you may experience while participating in this study, you are advised to contact UCU-REC chairperson; Prof. Peter Waiswa on +2560772405357, pwaiswa@musph.ac.ug or UCU-REC Secretariat, Mr. Osborn Ahimbisibwe on +2560775737627 or oahimbisibwe@ucu.ac.ug

I have read and understood the consent, and voluntarily accepted to participate;

Yes

No.

I clearly understand a copy of this paper (consent0 will be shared to me.

Sign:

Dated:

Name of Researcher: ABIAS KASASIRA

Sign:



15-01-2025
Dated:

Appendix C: Approval Letter



UG-REC-026 Approval Version 4.0

15th July, 2024

15th July, 2024

Abias Kasasira
Uganda Christian University
0702984476
Email: kasasiraabias23@gmail.com

UG-REC-026 APPROVAL NOTICE

To: Abias Kasasira, Principal Investigator

Re: UCU-REC Application titled: **The Effect Of Participation In Co-Curricular Activities On Students' Academic Performance In Selected Secondary Schools In Ruhaama County, Ntungamo District**

Application Number: UCUREC-2024-940-2

Version: 4.0

Type: Initial Review
 Protocol Amendment
 Letter of Amendment (LOA)
 Continuing Review
 Material Transfer Agreement
 Other, Specify:



I am pleased to inform you that the UG-REC-026; UCUREC approved the above referenced application.

Approval of the research is for the period from 15th July, 2024, to 15th July, 2025

This research is considered minimal risk category.

As Principal Investigator of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.
2. Changes, amendments, and additions to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for re-review and approval prior to the activation of the changes. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence.
3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or other must be submitted to the REC. New information that becomes available which could change the risk: benefit ratio must be submitted promptly for REC review.
4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by subjects and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.

1 of 2

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5. Regulations require review of an approved study not less than once per 12-month period. Therefore, a continuing review application must be submitted to the REC eight weeks prior to the above expiration date of 15th July, 2025 in order to continue the study beyond the approved period. Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study, at which point new participants may not be enrolled and currently enrolled participants must be taken off the study.
6. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence with the REC of record.
7. Your research details have been shared with the Executive secretary of Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) and you are not required to get clearance since you are a Masters Degree research. Refer to UNCST Research registration and clearance Policy and guidelines (July 2016) in Uganda section 6(e).

The following is the list of all documents approved in this application by UG-REC _026:

	Document Title	Language	Version	Version Date
1.	Protocol	English	1.0	2024-07-09
2.	Data collection tools	English	1.0	2024-07-09
3.	Informed Consent Form	English	1.0	2024-07-09

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