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MANAGEMENT OF CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AS PREDICTOR OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the management of co-curricular activities predictor of students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Cross River State-Nigeria. It was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The study adopted correlational research design with population of 2002 participants. The sample of the study included 375 students that constituted 18% to represent the entire population using simple random sampling technique. Structured questionnaire tagged management of co-curricular activities (MCA) and students' academic achievement (SAA) surveys were used to gather information from respondents. Experts in educational management and measurement and evaluation performed the instrument's validation. The internal consistency of the questionnaire items was determined using the Cronbach Alpha reliability test. The instruments were highly valid and reliable for the study, as indicated by reliability coefficients of .79 and .91 for the management of co-curricular activities and students' academic accomplishments in secondary school in Cross River State, respectively. The descriptive analysis was used to answer the research questions, and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypotheses at the .05 level of significance using the data collected during instrument administration. The results of the findings revealed that there is a weak and non-significant relationship between

management of sport activities and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Bekwarra local government. In order to develop and enforce clear policies for organizing co-curricular activities, the study suggested, among other things, that school administrators should fully participate in sports and club activities.

Keywords: Management, Co-Curricular Activities, Students' Academic Achievement, Sports Activities

Introduction

Students who participate in extracurricular activities experience higher levels of academic achievement. Fredricks (2011) opined that students who participate frequently in extracurricular activities tend to have higher grades, better test scores, and more positive educational experiences in general. The level of participation in the various co-curricular activities is correlated with academic achievement. It is the panacea for the complementary academic of the students in making holistic and balance education for high level productivity Ategwu, Edeh, Kenn-Aklah and Anashie (2023). Education aims at the holistic development of learners intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically. Modern educational systems place an emphasis on both academic and extracurricular activities as essential parts of the school experience in order to achieve these objectives. Co-curricular activities, such as sports, clubs, debates, music, drama, student leadership, and community service, are structured programs that promote students' intellectual, social, and emotional development in addition to classroom instruction (Adeyemo, 2021). Effective planning, supervision, resource mobilization, and synthesis between students and teachers are all part of managing co-curricular activities to ensure that they contribute positively to students' development, particularly in secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. These strategic plans are created to match the institutions demands to strengthen and enhance the institutions performance and quality (Ogbeche et al., 2021). Co-curricular activities are organized school-based activities that go beyond the traditional academic curriculum but help students learn in the classroom. Sports, music, cultural clubs, debates, and leadership programs are among these (Adeyemo, 2021). Co-curricular activities provide students with opportunities to develop life skills like leadership,

teamwork, discipline, and time management, all of which have been linked to improved academic performance when it is effectively managed (Nwankwo & Okoro, 2022). Over the course of observation, it has been demonstrated that the management of these programs is frequently influenced by school leadership, policy frameworks, the availability of resources, and staff commitment. However, despite the well-known advantages of co-curricular activities, the management of these activities in a lot of secondary schools in Cross River State is still sporadic and lacking in resources. Inadequate funding, a lack of qualified staff, limited facilities, and a poor integration of extracurricular activities into the broader educational framework are all problems that schools frequently face. Secondary education at Cross River State is marked by a strong emphasis on academic performance, which is frequently measured by standardized tests. However, inadequate funding, a lack of qualified staff, overcrowding in the curriculum, and a lack of facilities all contribute to the neglect of co-curricular activity management. According to Obasi and Ekanem (2020), this circumstance restricts students' access to programmes that have the potential to improve both their academic performance and their personal growth. In a similar vein, Nwankwo and Okoro (2022) pointed out that the impact of extracurricular activities on student growth is frequently limited by a lack of trained staff and infrastructure support. Co-curricular programs have been underutilized as strategic tools for enhancing academic achievement due to these difficulties. Co-curricular activities have been institutionalized as part of mainstream education policy worldwide in developed nations like the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada. Co-curricular activities are well-integrated and managed in schools thanks to these nations' legal, administrative, and financial frameworks. Empirical studies from these contexts have shown that students engaged in co-curricular activities tend to perform better academically, socially, and emotionally (Eccles et al., 2003; Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). The structured management of such programs, which improve student engagement, reduce dropout rates, and foster a positive school climate, is to blame for these outcomes.

In Africa, the integration and management of co-curricular activities have gained attention in recent years as part of reforms to the education sector with the goals of boosting quality and broadening

access. To increase co-curricular participation, for instance, Kenya and Ghana have developed national guidelines. Mwangi and Wambugu (2020); Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2015) have found that students exhibit improved academic discipline, attendance, and overall performance when co-curricular activities are well managed. Despite this, many schools in Africa face obstacles that prevent them from providing effective co-curricular activities, such as a lack of teacher training, inadequate resources, and gaps in policy implementation. Co-curricular activities are emphasized in Nigeria's National Policy on Education (2013) as a means of fostering students' holistic growth. According to the findings of the research, the actual implementation remains inconsistent across states. Particularly in Cross River State, public secondary schools frequently operate with restricted budgets, lack formal management structures for co-curricular activities, and low stakeholder engagement. Obasi and Ekanem (2020) say that many schools in the area treat extracurricular activities as optional or extra, which hurts their chances of improving academic performance. Nwankwo and Okoro (2022) further noted that schools with well-organized co-curricular programmes experienced better student outcomes in both academic and behavioral areas. This local issue calls for a more in-depth examination of the extent to which management of extracurricular activities predicts academic success, which will provide insights into how school administration can be improved for improved educational outcomes. Despite the widespread recognition of the significance of extracurricular activities for student growth and academic success, their management remains a crucial factor, particularly in developing settings like Cross River State, Nigeria. The purpose of this study is to contribute to the discussion of holistic education and strategic school administration by examining how students' academic performance is predicted by how co-curricular activities are managed.

Statement of the Problem

Academic achievement plays a pivotal role as a critical indicator of educational success. It has proven beyond reasonable doubt especially in secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. observation over the year has shown that improving students' academic performance continues to face several challenges despite government interventions

and educational reforms yet the problems still persist. The management of extracurricular activities like sports and student clubs is an important topic that has not received sufficient research, despite the various factors that influence academic success. Despite the importance of co-curricular activities in promoting holistic development and enhancing learning outcomes, they are often sidelined in favor of a narrow focus on academic instruction. Although Nigeria's National Policy on Education advocates for the integration of co-curricular activities into the educational framework, actual implementation has been inconsistent and often deprioritized, with many schools either neglecting these programmes or scheduling them poorly in favor of a narrow focus on examination results. This misalignment results in poorly scheduled and uncoordinated activities, depriving students of valuable experiences that support their growth. Reports indicate that challenges such as inadequate funding, lack of trained staff, and insufficient administrative support hinder the effective management of co-curricular activities. Consequently, students miss out on the social, emotional, and academic benefits these activities offer. Even though there is a lot of research on the benefits of participating in extracurricular activities, very few studies specifically look at how the management of these activities affects academic performance in the local context. Understanding how to use co-curricular activities as tools for improving student achievement and forming better educational practices requires addressing this gap.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to examine management of co-curricular activities predictor of students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria

Specifically, this study aims to examined: -

1. The relationship between management of sporting activities and students' academic achievement.
2. The relationship between management of clubs activities and students' academic achievement.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study: -

1. How does management of sports activities relate to students' academic achievement?
2. To what extent does the management of clubs activities relate to students' academic achievements?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between management of sports activities and students' academic achievement
2. Management of clubs activities does not significantly relate to students' academic achievement.

Literature Review

Management of sporting activities and students' academic achievement

Fortuna, et al. (2024) examined student-athletes involvement in sports and their academic performance in Philippines. The result showed that student-athletes had good time management skills and set priorities for their work in order to finish schoolwork and assignments on time. The student-athletes performed better in the classroom developed impressive time management skills, felt motivated to complete their school, were motivated to attend classes, and experienced a smoother transition into the student lifestyle. A novel perspective on student-athletes was provided by the study. It demonstrates that students can improve their academic performance despite their packed sports schedules. As a result, the study comes to the conclusion that student-athletes who prioritize their learning and set goals to manage it are more likely to succeed academically. In public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria, Ogunleye and Adewale (2021) conducted a study to investigate the effect of sports participation on students' academic performance. The findings revealed a positive correlation between the effective management of school sports through structured scheduling, adequate supervision, and qualified coaches and students' academic achievement. The study emphasized that students' cognitive alertness, classroom engagement, and discipline all improved in schools that incorporated well-managed sports programs into their weekly routines.

However, this research was limited to Lagos State and did not specifically examine the ways in which administrative strategies for managing athletic events influence academic outcomes. Hence, there is a need for the current study to investigate this relationship within the unique socio-educational context of Cross River State, where co-curricular program administration may differ in resources, policy implementation, and stakeholder involvement.

A mixed-methods study was carried out in Kwara State, Nigeria, by Adeniran and Yusuf (2020) to investigate how the administration of sports activities affects students' learning outcomes. The findings indicated that proper planning, budgeting, and student involvement in school sports significantly enhanced students' time management skills and academic performance. The study came to the conclusion that, when managed strategically, sports boost students' motivation and focus, which in turn serves as academic support. However, rather than focusing on management dynamics like supervision, monitoring, and integration with academics, this study focused more on general administration. This creates a gap that the present study intends to fill by specifically examining how management practices in sports impact academic performance in secondary schools in Cross River State.

In the Morogoro urban district of Tanzania, a study on the effects of sports and games on students' academic performance was carried out by Ibrahim and Kazuzuru (2020). The results reveal that there is no statistically significant difference between non players, minimum players, regular and frequent players ($F = 0.60$, $p = 0.66$). The study also found that students' main obstacle when participating in sports and games is a lack of facilities, such as playing fields. The majority of students' opinions regarding the roles that games and sports play in academic performance were found to be inconclusive, despite the majority's positive perceptions of the existence of games and sports in schools.

Management of clubs and students' academic achievement

Çınar (2019) explored An Examination of Student Club Activities from the Perspective of School Principals and Teachers in Turkey. According to the results, the educators in the sample concluded that the student clubs achieved their objectives in the theme of democracy and skills in governance, but they were ineffective in the other themes. The physical

conditions of the schools, insufficient time allotted for activities, an excessive number of students participating in clubs, and teachers' reluctance to participate in club activities were identified as the causes of this inefficiency. It was suggested that if the choice of whether or not to engage in club activities is left to students, the activities in clubs will become more attractive and thus their effectiveness will increase. The purpose of this study was to fill in the information gap regarding the management of club activities that influence students' academic achievement at Cross River State. Environmental school clubs in Tanzania: Learning to blame the "poor" and "uneducated" Njau conducted a study in 2024. This article reveals, based on fieldwork at two clubs in northern Tanzania, how students emphasize stories about poverty and a lack of education as the main causes of environmental degradation. I discuss what these narratives reveal about the environmental subjects formed through environmental school clubs, drawing on political ecology and the emerging subfield of political ecology of education. I show how these clubs are colonial and how students learn to blame the "poor" and "uneducated" through education. Students are restricted from critical engagement with broader environmental issues because it reproduces an apolitical development narrative. In a few secondary schools in northern Nigeria, Ibrahim and Musa (2021) looked into student club participation and how it affected academic outcomes. To evaluate the effect, they looked at participation records and data on academic performance. The results showed that students' academic engagement, self-confidence, and study habits were all improved by consistent participation in well-managed clubs. Compared to schools with poorly managed clubs, those that implemented structured club activities with teacher supervision and clear objectives reported higher academic performance. The study addresses this limitation by narrowing the focus to specific management strategies and their academic impact in Cross River State. The majority of the existing literature focuses primarily on participation outcomes rather than the management processes that underpin their success, despite the fact that a number of studies, both local and international, have demonstrated that co-curricular activities can positively impact academic achievement. In addition, few studies have placed these findings in the context of Cross River State's educational environment, where administration, infrastructure, and teacher

support may all present unique challenges. As a result, the goal of this study is to fill in the gaps by looking at how students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria, is impacted by the management of sporting and club activities as opposed to just their participation.

Methodology

Correlational research design was adopted for this study. It was used appropriately because the study sought to establish the relationship that exists between two variables, that is the independent variable (Management of co-curricular activities) and the dependent variable (The academic success of students). The study was conducted in the Cross River State, Nigeria, Bekwarra local government area. The Bekwarra local government area served as the study's scope. The population of the study comprised 2,002 students from 7 government schools in Bekwarra Cross River State, Nigeria. From the entire population, 375 students were chosen for the sample. 18% of the total population was used to create this sample size. A straightforward method of random sampling was used. The researcher created two sets of questionnaires for the study's data collection. The first and second questionnaires were titled "Management of Co-curricular Activities" and "Students' Academic Achievement." Experts in educational management and measurement and evaluation from the University of Calabar validated the instrument. The Cronbach Alpha reliability test was used to examine the data generated by the instrument's trial test to ascertain the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. For the management of extracurricular activities and the academic accomplishments of secondary school students in Cross River State, reliability coefficients of 0.79 and 0.91 were obtained, indicating that the instruments were highly valid and reliable for the study. Through the assistance of six briefed research assistants, the researcher distributed 375 questionnaires to respondents; however, 372 questionnaires were retrieved, resulting in a retrieval rate of 97%. The descriptive analysis of the data gathered from the instruments was used to answer the research questions, and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: How does management of sports activities relate with students' academic achievement?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the management of sports activities and students' academic achievement

S/N	STATEMENT	X	SD	Decision
1.	Participation in sports activities allows for effective communication skills between the students	3.78	1.60	A
2.	Sport activities enhance my personality that is why I desired to have high score in my studies	3.70	.56	A
3.	I believe that sports groups at my institution are effective in promoting inclusive social interactions	3.51	.64	A
4.	Participation in sports groups has enhanced my understanding and appreciation of diversity	3.07	.35	A
5.	I am motivated to prepare, train hard and make personal sacrifice to achieve excellent	3.07	.30	A
6.	Involvement in sport activities is impediments to my studies	3.08	.68	A
7.	I have capacity to perform well during sports activities.	3.18	.60	A
	MEAN	3.34	0.68	A

Source: Fieldwork (2025)

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of the responses on the extent to which sports activities relate with students' academic achievement. All items had a mean value above the cut-off value of 2.50, which implies that the extent to which sports activities relate to students' academic achievement is high.

Research Question 2: To What extent does the management of club activities relate with students' academic achievements.

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on management of club activities and students' academic achievement

S/ N	STATEMENT	X	SD	Decision
1.	I feel valued as a club member	3.1 2	.38	A
2.	The administrator of club activities is always bias	3.2 1	.89	A
3.	There is poor communication channels between the club administrators and the students.	3.0 8	1.5 2	A
4.	There is inclusivity in management of clubs' decision making	3.0 3	.35 8	A
5.	Active participation of clubs' activities guarantees students' academic achievement	3.0 3	.30	A
6.	School clubs has a positive impact on the student overall school experience	3.1 4	.35	A
7.	There is no suitable timing for club activities	3.1 2	.38	A
	MEAN	3.1		A
		0		

Source: Fieldwork (2025)

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of the responses on the management of club activities relate with students' academic achievement. All items had a mean value above the cut-off value of 2.50, which implies the respondents agree that management of club activities improve students' academic achievement.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between management of sports activities and students' academic achievement in public secondary school in Cross River State

Table 3: Relationship between management of sports activities and students' academic achievement in public secondary school in Cross River State

		Management of Sport Activities	Students' Academic Achievement
Management of Sport Activities	Pearson Correlation	1	.097
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.067
	N	361	361
Students' Academic Achievement	Pearson Correlation	.097	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.067	
	N	361	361

Table 3 presents the relationship between management of sport activities and students' academic achievement in Nigeria's Cross River state's Bekwarra local government. The result also showed that there is a weak positive, and non-significant relationship between management of sport activities and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Bekwarra local government, Cross river state Nigeria ($r = .097$, $N = 361$, $p > 0.05$). The implication is that there is not a significant connection between sports management and academic achievement among students in the Bekwarra local government of Cross River state, Nigeria. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between student academic achievement and sports management in the Bekwarra local government of Cross River state, Nigeria, is not rejected.

Hypothesis two: Management of clubs activities does not significantly relate to students' academic achievement in public secondary school in Cross River State

Table 4: Relationship between management of club activities and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools

		Management of club activities	Students' academic achievement
Management of club activities	Pearson Correlation	1	.195**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	361	361
Students' academic achievement	Pearson Correlation	.195**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	361	361

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 presents the relationship between management of club activities on students' academic performance in a public secondary school in Nigeria's Bekwarra, Cross River State. Students' academic achievement in a public secondary school in Bekwarra River State, Nigeria, was also found to be significantly correlated with club activity management ($r=.195$, $N=361$, $p<0.05$). The implication is that club activity management has a significant impact on students' academic performance at a public secondary school in Bekwarra, Cross River State, Nigeria. As a result, the hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between club activity management and academic achievement among secondary school students in Bekwarra, Cross River State, Nigeria, is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

From the results of the findings on the research questions one, it implies that the extent to which sports activities relate to students' academic achievement is high. The results from research question two

reveals that, the respondents agree that management of club activities improve students' academic achievement.

The first hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between management of sports activities and academic achievement. The findings of the study showed that there is a positive, and non-significant relationship between management of sport activities and the academic progress of secondary school students in the Bekwarra local government's public secondary schools. Ogunleye and Adewale (2021), who examined the effect of sports participation on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria, concur with the findings. Students' academic achievement was found to be positively correlated with the effective management of school sports through structured scheduling, adequate supervision, and qualified coaches. According to the second hypothesis, there is no significant correlation between student academic achievement and club activity management. An examination of student club activities from the perspective of school principals and teachers in Turkey was the subject of a study by Nar (2019), and the findings showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between management of club activities and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Bekwarra River State, Nigeria. The educators in the sample came to the conclusion, based on the findings, that the student clubs met their goals in the area of democracy and governance skills but were ineffective in the other areas.

Conclusion

The study first hypothesis concluded that there is a positive, and non-significant relationship between management of sport activities and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Bekwarra local government while the results of the second hypothesis also showed that there is a positive, and significant relationship between management of club activities and students' academic achievement in public secondary school in Bekwarra River State-Nigeria.

Recommendations

This study recommended that management or school administrators' should be fully involved in sports and clubs activities in order to

develop and enforce clear policies and structured management systems for organizing co-curricular activities. This includes proper scheduling, supervision, goal-setting, and integration with academic objectives. Capacity-building programmes should be introduced to train teachers, club patrons, and sports coordinators on effective management practices to ensure these activities contribute meaningfully to students' academic achievement.

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