

# Assessment of Status of Co-Curricular Activities on Students' Participation in Public Secondary Schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties, Kenya

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**Abstract:** Concerns have been raised that though the Ministry of Education provides to all schools with the calendar of events to be observed, and therefore dictates a particular activity to be undertaken at a particular time, not all schools follow the calendar. The purpose of the study was to assess the status of co-curricular activities and determine how it influences the students' participation in public secondary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties, Kenya. The objectives of the study were to examine the level of management of co-curricular activities, and determine the extent of students' participation in co-curricular activities. Survey research design was used in the study. The target population comprised of 35,426 form three students. Gay's formula of 10% was used to sample a size of 354 students. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data from students. Descriptive and inferential statistics such as mean, percentages and correlations were used in data analysis and data presentation was done using frequency tables. The result indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between the status of co-curricular activities and students' participation in co-curricular activities in the schools. Data analyzed showed a strong positive correlation between the two variables which gave a high correlation of 0.803. The study concluded that effective management of co-curricular activities as indicators of status were associated with high level participation of students in co-curricular activities. The study therefore recommended that there was need to enforce government and school policies on co-curricular activities in order to ensure that all students participate in co-curricular activities.

**Keywords:** Co-curricular Activities, Status, Participation, School Administration, calendar of events.

## I. INTRODUCTION

All over the world co-curricular activities are increasingly gaining prominence in an integral dimension of the education system. The goal of co-curricular activities is to provide the students with the opportunities to develop mental and physical abilities while cultivating good habits and lifelong skills (Singer, Hausenblas & Janelle, 2001). World Health Organization (WHO) (1998) points out that the benefits of participation in co-curricular activities includes among others; improvement of motor skills and physical fitness, enhancement of normal physical and social growth, improvement of socialization, self-esteem, self-perception and psychological well-being, and establishment of a basis of a healthy lifestyle and lifelong commitment to physical activity. Dream Career (2022) support that the goal of co-curricular activities is to give students better fitness and inculcate a sense of sportsmanship, meticulousness, cooperation and team spirit.

Schools offer a wide range of age-appropriate co-curricular activities for students through well-structured programs. Through various activities, students not only develop new skills and interest, but also practice social

interaction and teamwork in an enjoyable approach. Alexander and Gerry (2021) argued that one-third of Australian children in low-income suburbs do not take part in any extracurricular activities. That is 2.5 times as many as those from higher-income suburbs – only 13% of them do not take part. This research also shows that it is children from disadvantaged backgrounds who are likely to benefit most from taking part in extracurricular activities. Most children in Australia play a sport or take part in extracurricular activity like dance, drama or scouts. All of these activities can benefit their health and academics. For these children, such activities are typically available, accessible affordable and safe.

From European countries and specifically Ireland, the following co-curricular activities are available; Hurling, Camogie, Basketball, Gaelic Football, Soccer, Table Tennis, Swimming, Athletics, Outdoor Pursuits, Tag Rugby, Horse Riding, Art Club and Homework club. Colaiste (2019) encourages extra-curricular activities and provides a comprehensive program for students. The schools have great atmosphere and supportive community of teachers and students. The activities are out of class and are well organized with a lot of support from the administration.

In India, co-curricular activities are an essential part of student's overall development. In Indian schools, they include sports, music, drama, debate and community services, (Eduglade, 2023). The purpose of extra-curricular activities is to foster children's character development and teach them practical skills that are as essential as academic education and form the bedrock of their educational journey. In India's boarding schools, extracurricular activities are now a vital component of the curriculum. They are viewed as being just as important as academic progress. Fortunately, having children involved in extra-curricular activities has increasingly become the norm. Most parents want their children to be educated, engaged, and well-rounded individuals. However, some of these practices might be too expensive without proper planning and budgeting because different extra-curricular activities are priced differently, (Edufund, 2022).

From North America, it was observed that in keeping with International Schools of North America (SNA)'s philosophy of providing a well- rounded education, the extensive co-curricular activities enable students to participate in activities outside the academic arena. This gives students a terrific opportunity to try something new. Students are encouraged to push beyond their limits through the Co-Curricular Activities (CCAs) programme, which offers many activities such as sports, music, art, technology, language, and social. The diversity of activities helps students to excel by challenging themselves and growing both as individuals and as part of a whole. This affirmative approach motivates them to see failure as something not to be avoided, but rather to be used as a learning experience (International Schools of North America). SNA has built a complete international education ecosystem from primary to high school, aiming to train young leaders and global citizens, (SNA 2024)

Shiundu and Omulando (1992) observe that in traditional Africa context, the early modes of education were meant to support man control his environment and master the forces of nature. Education and teaching prior to the coming of Europeans, was characterized by four main features, it was; vocational-specific in that it prepared the youth for specific roles in the society, closely linked to the community's everyday social life and was used for molding character and providing high moral qualities of the youth. In addition, in most African communities, the cultural patterns prepared children for adult life through play, work and oral literature among others (Occiti, 1973).

Co-Curricular Activities in Egypt range from learning new language, playing an instrument, taking an art class and others choosing to participate in physical activities such as football, Judo, body balance or swimming. The importance of educating and supporting the whole child and recognition of the needs for physical health, extra academic challenge and engagement is emphasized. The benefits of CCAs in schools have been extensively researched and it has been found that students who participate in these activities develop higher academic results, better relationships at school, and are more likely to lead healthy, active lifestyles when they leave

school. Students also feel a greater sense of belonging and have a higher self-esteem at school when they participate in structured sporting, performing arts and other activities.(CCA-Malvern 2024)

In Nigeria, the school-sponsored extracurricular activities that students should join include music, class/bands, sports, (basketball and baseball) school clubs, winter's clubs and drama clubs. Enrolling in them and playing these games can highly affect studies. It can make learning easier and comfortable. Moreover, students can also make them as their career. According to LawalGarba (2018), co-curricular have several benefits to students. In all levels of education, that is, primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions, students are found participating in co-curricular activities with a passion and full attentiveness. She noted that students who have benefited positively during their school days hold high positions. They also earn a living one way or another with the skills they gained and move forward in life, all due to the impact of co-curricular activities. It is to be understood that students participating in co-curricular activities works are held to a higher strata. They know the method of living in groups by developing leadership skills and managing tensions in easier way.

From Cape Town in South Africa, the co-curricular activities are referred to as After- School activities. According to Stemmleret.al (2013), extra-curricular activities are often abundantly provided by schools, most of which have teams for all popular sports (soccer, rugby, cricket, surfing, golf) as well as societies for after school debating, science, mathematics, art and other pursuits. He argued that if your child's school does not run the gamut in terms of extra-moral societies, or you are looking to give your kids a head start at a younger age, there are numerous independent clubs they can join (these can also be a great way to get them off your hands for a guilt-free afternoon).

Co-curricular activities in Uganda involves a range of activities including outdoor games like football, basketball, swimming, rugby, netball, volleyball, aerobics, and table tennis among others and indoor activities like chess, draft, snakes and ladders among others. Students take part in performances; festivals and events across Uganda, giving them an opportunity to showcase their skills. They often compete in music competitions and do well at local, district and national levels. Believe it or not, extra-curricular activities form an important part of a student's life. However, with the growing competition many parents stop their children from indulging in them. In fact, extra-curricular activities are seen as 'time wasters' as parents and students think that they are useless and one cannot achieve anything from them. This hypothesis is actually myth and students can make a very successful career out of extra-curricular activities. (Pragati2024). Among the Acholi tribe in Uganda, a child who was not fond of playing after 'work' was normally suspected of being ill or even abnormal.

In Kenya, student participation in co-curricular activities like education is not a privilege but a right. Co-curricular activities programs are recognized as an important part of the education process and are subjected to equal status as other parts of the curriculum (UNESCO, 2000). Schools are obliged to provide programs to students. However, although the ministry of education has unequivocally stated that schools must offer co-curricular activities in their curricula, and has even offered the annual calendar of events, incidents of infractions against this rule abound discriminating this educational dimension on the basis of the non-examinable nature of the content. According to Aduda (2003) the Kenyan 8-4-4 system of education has been criticized for its failure to accommodate co-curricular programs in schools. This system is said to be overloaded in both taught and examination oriented to an extent of offering extra-tuition that consumes time allocated for games, clubs and societies among other co-curricular activities.

Stephen and Schaben (2002) observe that educationists are increasingly being interested in the role and benefits of student participation in co-curricular activities. Co-curricular activities take place as per the school calendar. It is good to note that not all schools participate in co-curricular activities because of lack of qualified teachers to train in various activities like mathematics clubs, chess clubs, talents show, spelling bees, writing competition, debates, mock trials, school newspapers, drama production, music, ballgames, athletics, Kenya Science and Engineering Fair (KSEF) and activities of special needs to mention but just a few.

Co-curricular activities in secondary schools are expected to make learning easier and comfortable. Moreover, students can make them as their career. Besides being a stress releaser, these activities also boast socializing with peer and enhances students' time management and stress management skills. By engaging in co-curricular activities, students can acquire leadership, communication and management skills, improve their problem-solving ability, gain knowledge in various fields, stay physically fit, develop vocational skills and learn to work as parts of a team. Co-curricular activities can positively impact students by improving academic performance (Othoo&Omondi, 2022), enhancing social skills, providing opportunities for personal growth, developing leadership skills, fostering creativity and building a sense of community and belonging. These benefits can have long-term effects on students' personal and professional lives. Unfortunately, there are limited studies in the literature that outline the role played by status of co-curricular activities in schools that influence student participation in various co-curricular activities in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties in particular. This represents a gap in knowledge that this study intends to fill.

### **1.1 Statement of the problem**

The Ministry of Education Science and Technology has persistently underscored the importance of co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Kenya. As a result, schools have been provided with funding through the Subsidized Secondary Education to put in place programs for students' participation in co-curricular activities. Parents are also expected to provide to the same kitty through payment of activity fees as the amount from the government is usually inadequate. However, despite the benefits of participation in co-curricular activities and heavy monetary investment, co-curricular activity programs in secondary schools have remained apathetic. Report from the Ministry of Education 2021 on the causes of numerous strikes in secondary schools in Kenya, indicated that there was poor management of co-curricular activities causing indiscipline in the schools. In Nyeri, recreation programs were not properly delineated and students were not regularly kept busy through co-curricular activities. Most of schools organized trips in areas of educational interests or exchange of ideas with other students but there were minimal or sometimes non-existent trips on co-curricular activities. In Murang'a, lack of strong and committed guidance and counseling committee with auxiliaries like peer counseling club, Catholic Action and Christian Union were associated with students' indiscipline. Moreover, there was limited exposure to learning situations outside the school, limited educational trips, or tours, games and sports. This was an indication of ineffective management of co-curricular activities.

Assignments to Locus Assignments (2024), every student has to find a healthy balance between his/her academic workload, participating in co-curricular activities, and giving himself or herself time to relax. One has to make a schedule, but do not make it too strict that you have time to unwind. First of all, you need to make sure that you do not focus too much on a single task. The second thing is you may also set alarms to finish work on time, so you also have some amount of time to invest it in co-curricular activity. Proper time management will therefore enhance student participation and thereof reduce students' indiscipline and improve on academic performance. Therefore, this study purposed to assess the status of curricular activities on students' participation in public secondary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties, Kenya.

### **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The following objectives guided the study

- i. To examine the level of management of co-curricular activities in public secondary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties.
- ii. To determine the extent of students' participation in co-curricular activities in public secondary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties.

### **Hypothesis**

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no statistically significant relationship between status of co-curricular activities in the school and students' participation in co-curricular activities.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Management of Co-Curricular Activities in Secondary Schools.

Management of co-curricular activities in any school depends on several factors such as availability on funds, trainers, facilities and school policies just to mention but a few. Activities like music and drama requires a lot of funds to acquire costumes for performances. Therefore, a school which is financially constrained may fail to participate in them. There are set structures in co-curricular activities which require experts and schools without qualified trainers may fail to participate in some co-curricular activities. Different schools may have different policies to run the schools. This may therefore determine the co-curricular activities to offer in the schools (Muchemi&Kiumi, 2022). However, inadequate funds, inadequate facilities, and limited time to complete syllabus has shifted the focus of school administrators to academics. Time allocated for co-curricular activities has been used for remedial lessons and syllabus coverage. Moreover, co-curricular activities are optional and most of time students only participate in those that will take them out for competition with other schools. These have derailed the management of co-curricular activities in schools.

Many stakeholders in the school system seem to be of the opinion that co-curricular activities consume academic time unnecessarily. Participation in co-curricular activities has been viewed in two different perspectives in Kenyan secondary schools as far as their contribution to academic performance is concerned. Some perceive co-curricular activities to have positive effect on students' academic performance while others view it as a hindrance to academic success and a waste of students' precious time (Kasango, 2016). Therefore, this duality in the perception of the contribution of co-curricular activities should be corrected through research findings. Many researchers like Ongonga et al. (2010), McNally (2003) and Newman (2005) have observed that participation in co-curricular activities is not fully supported by most schools and the contribution of it to the students' academic performance have not been clearly articulated to the educators, teachers, students and even parents. Yet, the experiences and opportunities provided by secondary schools through curricular and co-curricular participation also influence students' development.

Fostering a sense of school co-curricular engagement in a personalized environment requires an expanded role for teachers. In this expanded role, teachers seek to influence students' social and personal development, as well as their intellectual growth (Schneider 2003). To sustain a pervasive 'ethic of caring,' adults maintain continuous and sustained contact with students, responding to the students as whole persons rather than just as clients in need of a particular service (Kisango, 2016). Expanding their traditional role as transmitters of knowledge, teachers help create networks of support that foster students; sense of belonging and support students to succeed in schools.

Participation in co-curricular activities has been recognized as a vital avenue for students' holistic development and acquisition of the twenty-first century competencies. It was noted that the school administration had set interactions sections of students with their parents, co-curricular instructors and co-curricular peers. This brought about students' development within co-curricular settings. In addition, the school set-up examined the role of students' motivational orientations in mediating the relationship between students' co-curricular activities participation predictors and developmental outcomes (Gideon & Gregory, 2023). The administration also highlighted the key role of students' motivation and supportive interpersonal relationships in fostering students' academic and non-academic development. Students were allowed to interact with the community by playing with them which strengthened interpersonal relationship.

Generally, the way the school implements co-curricular activities can be based on planning, resource allocation, actual/physical implementation and monitoring of activities within the school. Charlse and Krotee (2000) suggested that how well an organization like a school charted its course and achieved its objectives depend on how well managers outlined and performed their jobs. Bucher and Krotee (2002) suggested that those responsible for training co-curricular activities teachers must be well trained and adopt professionalism in their coaching. With this knowledge, school managers should ensure that co-curricular activities teachers are qualified and updated in there are of specialization.

Nevertheless, some of factors affecting the operation of a successful development of co-curricular activities in schools is the provision of adequate facilities, equipment and supplies. Facilities may be defined as an area, space or teaching station. It may be located either out-of-doors or inside a building, such as classroom, play field, laboratory, gymnasium, or auditorium (Winston et al 2008). Most of schools lack adequate needed facilities for co-curricular activities. Majority of schools do not have sufficient items of musical instrument but they hire the needed instruments. However, co-curricular programs in most schools have remained unattractive chiefly because of inadequacy of facilities.

This seems to suggest that the status of co-curricular activities is rather ambivalent. Additionally, there is a dearth of literature as to the actual status of school level of planning and policy formation in reference to co-curricular activities. This study intended to provide empirical evidence on school status and students' participation in co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties in Kenya.

## **2.2 Extent of Students' Participation in Co-Curricular Activities**

The goal of co-curricular activities is to give students better fitness and inculcate a sense of sportsmanship, meticulousness, cooperation and team spirit as supported by Dream Career (2022). As students participate in co-curricular activities, they are given more and more opportunities to explore their interests and abilities. The importance of co-curricular activities cannot therefore be denied. In order to instill the 'all-rounder' factor in students, co-curricular activities in schools are being integrated into the academic curriculum in schools across several countries in the world. The importance of co-curricular activities in the integrative school curriculum is appreciated. Moreover, the rewards of co-curricular activities in schools have been researched pretty well, and it is now ascertained that students who participate in these activities show better academic results, have stronger relationships in schools and are more likely to lead a healthy and active lifestyle (Dipankar Sarkap, 2022). Co-curricular activities keep students away from vices like strikes, drug taking, fighting etc. Furthermore, students also feel a sense of belonging to the school and have higher self-esteem by participating in structured activities like music, dance, performing arts, etc. In addition, those students who participate in co-curricular activities become motivated to perform better in their academics. This also makes them feel happier, healthier and involved.

Eccles and Midgley (1999) indicated that children who do not see themselves as competent in academics, social or other activities such as athletics and sports, during their elementary years, sometimes report depression and social isolation, more often than their peers, as well as higher levels of anger and depression. While academic success is a critical factor in securing career in future, there is an increasing focus on achieving good grades, which can lead to neglecting co-curricular activities. The purpose of co-curricular activities is to foster student's character development and teach them practical skills that are as essential as academic education, and form the bedrock of their educational journey. Engaging in co-curricular activities enhances numerous aspects such as leadership, management, recreational and sportsmanship skills among students.

Students' participation in co-curricular activities like games, sports, music and drama are controlled by peer pressure, government and school policies according to John, Winfred & Zakaria (2017). Participation of these activities take place as per the school calendar of events which is given by the ministry of education. The activity that is well performed like music would attract more participants than drama that required a lot of talent in acting. Participation in sports and games involve competition or challenge and a definite outcome primarily determined by physical skills. For students to participate in games and sports, they had to follow set rules, area and time; set positions for team players; complex physical activity which are applied through the set time, serious training and preparations, and competition between individuals or teams. Ongonga, Okwara and Okello (2010) posit that, almost every student in Kenyan education has experienced co-curricular activities either as a spectator or participant. Yet, research on the status and participation of students in co-curricular activities like athletics, drama, music, football and indoor games is scarce.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. It explained the nature and extent of relationship between the various independent variables identified. This design was appropriate for the study because according to Kothari (2004), it was concerned with assessing and collecting data, recording, analyzing and reporting conditions that exist and existed. It enabled description of the conditions as they were without being manipulated by the researcher. The study location selected was public secondary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties, Kenya. The target population is the group from which information can be obtained and to which the results of the study are intended to apply, (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2008).The target population for the study comprised of 34,653 form three students. in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties. Stratified random sampling was used to select students according to the type of school. After which simple random sampling technique was then used to select the required 346 students. A representative sample of the 346 students was obtained using Krejcie and Morgan (1970.)

Structured questionnaires were the main instrument for data collection in the study. They were administered to students face to face. According to Kothari (2004), some of the merits of the questionnaire are; low cost, freedom from the interviewer's bias as answer is in the respondents' own words and that it gives respondents adequate time to give well thought answers.

Data analysis is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions and supporting decision-making. Items in the questionnaires were coded and entered into computer coding sheets using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), coding is the conversion of data into numerical codes. Pre-coded quantitative data was digital using the package and MS excel. Pre-processing was done in order to correct the problems that were identified with raw data. Data was stored in paper and electronic storage (excels, database and word). Descriptive statistics which portrays analyses of data summarizing the essential features and relationships of data in order to generalize from the analyses to determine patterns of behavior and particular outcomes was used to analyze the data. Mean, mode and median was used to analyze the data which was presented and reported using tables.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion are presented in accordance with the objectives and hypothesis.

#### 4.1 Management of Co-curricular activities

The first objective of the study was to examine the level of management of co-curricular activities. Five items Likert scale on 1-for Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Undecided, 4-Agree and 5-Strongly Agree was used to collect data.

**Table 1: 1 Management of Co-Curricular Activities**

	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Management of co-curricular activities</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Every student must participate in co-curricular activities in our school	2	2.25	1.5	26.25	68
Participation in co-curricular activities is regular and continuous	2.0	9.0	5.75	25.5	57.75
Participation in co-curricular activities is recognized and	7.25	9.5	1.5	35.5	46.25

rewarded					
There exist opportunities to enhance special interest and abilities in co-curricular activities	5.6	12.8	5.3	25.6	50.8
There are adequate facilities to offer opportunities for participation in co-curricular activities	5	6.7	4.7	58.1	25.6
<b>Total Average</b>	<b>4.37</b>	<b>8.05</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>34.19</b>	<b>49.68</b>
	<b>12.42</b>		<b>3.75</b>	<b>83.87</b>	

The results on the management of co-curricular activities which was an indicator of status of co-curricular activities in secondary schools in the Nyeri and Murang'a Counties are shown on table 1:above. On total average 83.87% of the respondents agreed while 12.42% disagreed and 3.75% were not sure. The 83.872% is an indication of well managed co-curricular activities. This implies that policies on co-curricular activities are well enforced. For example, every student must participate in co-curricular activities, etc. Thus, well managed co-curricular activities enhance students' participation and the benefits thereof. This is supported by (Muchemi&Kiumi, 2022) who posit that different schools may have different policies to run the schools. These policies may therefore determine the co-curricular activities to offer in the schools. Moreover, if there more and better managed facilities, there is also a likelihood of many students participating in co-curricular activities.

According to John, Winfred and Zakaria (2017), students' participation in co-curricular activities are controlled by peer pressure, government and school policies. However, from the results, it was noted that 12.42% of the respondent's disagreed and 18.75% of were undecided about the management of co-curricular activities in schools. This is an indication that a significant number of students supported that there is a loophole on schools' policies on management of co-curricular activities. The government of Kenya, through the ministry of education has laid strong emphasis on all students to participate in co-curricular activities (UNESCO, 2000). This therefore calls on all school administration to ensure strict adherence to policies on co-curricular activities and effective management of the available facilities to ensure that all students participate in co-curricular activities.

#### 4.2 The extent of students' participation in major co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties, Kenya.

The second objective of this study was to determine the extent of students' participation in co-curricular activities. Five items Likert scale on 1-for Very Small Extent, 2-Small Extent, 3-Not Sure, 4-High Extent and 5-Very High Extent was used.

**Table 1:2 Extent of Students Participation in Major Co-Curricular Activities**

	Extent of Students Participation in Co-Curricular Activities	Very small extent 1	Small extent 2	Not sure 3	High extent 4	Very high extent 5
		%	%	%	%	%
1	Participation in Athletics	5.6	12.8	5.3	25.5	50.8
2	Participation in Drama	2	9	5.75	25.5	57.75
3	Participation in Music	4.9	6.7	4.7	58.1	25.6
4	Participation in Football	7.25	9.5	1.5	35.5	46.25
5	Participation in Indoor games	11.9	7	8	23.1	50
	<b>Total Average</b>	<b>6.33</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5.05</b>	<b>33.54</b>	<b>46.08</b>
		<b>15.33</b>		<b>5.05</b>	<b>79.62</b>	



The study results revealed that a total average of 79.62% respondents to high extent and very high extent, 15.33 to a very small and small extent, supported that there was good participation in major co-curricular activities and 5.05% were not sure. Thus, 79.62% was an indication of a high-level participation in co-curricular activities in schools. Osanga, Okwara and Okello (2010) posits that almost every student in Kenyan education has experienced co-curricular activities either as a spectator or a participant. However, 15.33% of participation to a very small and small extent need to be addressed so that all students can be encouraged to participate to a higher extent, noting the importance of the co-curricular activities. This may require the intervention of the school administration to ensure adherence to government and school policies concerning students' participation in co-curricular activities.

Considering the response to high extent and very high extent, the result revealed that the most popular co-curricular activity was music at 83.7%, followed by drama at 83.25%, football (81.75%), athletics (76.4%) and finally indoor games at 73.1%. According to the researcher, music was very popular and closely followed drama because these are activities that a student must have interest, commitment and diligence. He/she must be disciplined and ready to learn from the instructor. Also, a lot of practice is required with a clear memory, in order to co-ordinate what is learnt and practiced. To participate in music and drama, group work is also required with a lot of co-operation from the participants. This is also supported by Nord Anglia (2022).

Participation in athletics, football and indoor games is fairly done. This is an indication that given attention, students can equally participate to a high extent in all co-curricular activities. Participation of students in co-curricular activities should not be considered as a privilege and those who avail of this opportunity must be prepared to accept rules and regulations governing participation in some of co-curricular activities. Therefore, trainers and coaches must be available to ensure enhancement in participation.

### 4.3 Hypothesis Testing

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no statistically significant relationship between status of co-curricular activities in the school and students' participation in co-curricular activities.

The results of hypothesis testing are shown on the table IV below

**Table 1:3 Correlation Analysis of Status of Co-curricular activities in schools and students' participation in co-curricular activities.**

		Status of co-curricular activities in secondary schools	Students' participation in co-curricular activities
Status of co-curricular activities in secondary schools	Pearson Correlation	1	0.803(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.016
Students' participation in co-curricular activities	Pearson Correlation	0.803(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.016	0.000

In order to establish whether a statistical relationship existed between the status of co-curricular activities in the schools and students' participation in co-curricular activities, the researcher computed the Pearson product moment correlation between the two variables (Table 1:3). Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. Data analysis revealed that there was a strong correlation between the two variables (0.803). The status of co-curricular activities was associated with high levels of students' participation in co-curricular activities. We thus reject the null hypothesis and conclude that a positive relationship exists between the status of co-curricular activities in the school and students'

participation in co-curricular activities, improvement of the status of the co-curricular activities in the school results in an increase in students' participation in co-curricular activities.

## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### 5.1 Conclusion

In view of the findings summarized above, several conclusions were made regarding the status of co-curricular activities and students' participation in secondary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties, Kenya.

On the management of co-curricular activities in public Secondary Schools, the study established that every student must participate in co-curricular activities. This gave a chance for every student to get an opportunity to enhance his or her special interest and ability in co-curricular activities. According to the schools' calendar of events, co-curricular activities are regular and continuous. Whether there are competitions or not, all students engage in co-curricular activities during physical education lessons. The study also established that those who participate and excel in co-curricular activities are recognized and rewarded. This keeps them motivated and therefore continuously engage in co-curricular activities. Schools programs therefore run smoothly without interruptions like schools' unrests.

The study indicates that the students are encouraged to participate in co-curricular activities which include athletics, drama, music, football and indoor games. The secondary schools take co-curricular activities seriously knowing their utility in learners' holistic development. Participation in drama and music is more popular compared to indoor games and athletics. Most of the students participate in music and drama hoping to emulate former students in public secondary schools in the counties who have gone to excel nationally. These two activities influence student's academic performance in a positive way and has potential to improve students' communication skills.

### 5.2 Recommendations

In view of the conclusion made above, it is recommended that there is need to create more room to allow various co-curricular activities to take place concurrently according to the student's preference on co-curricular activity. This would therefore improve the status of co-curricular activities in secondary schools and equip students with competencies in games, athletics, drama music, various clubs, etc. All secondary schools should embrace co-curricular activities which would help in identifying talents in students which can therefore be fully exploited.

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