

STUDENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AT THE TERTIARY LEVEL

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Abstract

The study examined the influence of extra-curricular activities on the academic performance of students in Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State. The population of the study consisted of the entire two hundred and ninety eight (298) registered year four (400) and year three (300) students in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education in 2011/2012 academic session. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select 50 students each of the strata (400 and 300 level students) making a sample size of 100 students. Four research questions and four hypotheses were posited for the study. Questionnaire was the main data collection instrument and had a reliability coefficient of 0.76 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Data gathered from the study was analyzed descriptively using percentages, while Chi Square (χ^2) was used to test the hypotheses. The results from the study revealed that there is a significance influence of students' involvement in extra-curricular activities on their academic performance, the study also revealed that attitude of students towards extra-curricular activities influence their academic performance, while students' value of extra-curricular activities have no influence on their academic performance, and lastly the study also found out that choice of extra-curricular activities in school influence students' academic performance. Based on the findings therefore, it was concluded that extra-curricular activities in Niger Delta University have a detrimental influence on the academic performance of students. It was then recommended that students should take their studies seriously and not to get involved in too many extra-curricular activities as this have an adverse effect on their academic performance, school administrators also should regulate the kind of extra-curricular activities that takes place on campus.

Introduction

Social activities in school can be referred to as extracurricular activities in school, it has long been wondered whether or not there was a connection between student academic performance and their involvement in out of the classroom activities, knowing the answers is essential in a time of already packed scheduled curriculum. Marsh and Kleitman (2002) submitted that the way student choose to spend their free time on campus can affect their school performance. Numerous studies have examined the factors on campus influencing students' academic performance, and many activities were found to have a significant influence on students academic performance, these activities may include the following; student unionism, sports/recreational activities, television viewing, musical performances (singing and dancing), partying, cultural activities, involvement in social clubs (e.g. red cross society, rotary club, etc) (Millard 2000). Drake (2002) opined that there is a noticeable relationship between the grade point average of student participating in social/extracurricular activities and those who do not participate, that students who are involved in extracurricular activities tend to be higher achievers.

The development of extracurricular activities was slow in the beginning, with many seeing it simply as a fad that would pass and quickly fade out of style (Millard, 2000). One of the early philosophies behind extracurricular activities was that they should, wherever at all possible, "grow out of curricular activities and return to curricular activities to enrich them" (Millard, 2000). Eventually people, including educators, began to see the benefits of extracurricular activities, but it took a while to lure themselves to them. In fact, before 1900, educators were skeptical of participation in extracurricular activities, believing that 'school should focus solely on narrowly defined academic outcomes'. Non-academic activities were viewed as being primarily recreational and therefore were detrimental to academic achievements, and consequently were discouraged (Marsh and Kleitman, 2002). Millard one of the early experts on extracurricular activities, said, "Extra-curricular activities supplement and extend those contacts and experiences found in the more formal part of the program of the school day" (Millard, 2000). It was not until recently that "educational practitioners and researchers have taken a more positive perspective, arguing that extracurricular activities may have

positive effects on life skills and may also benefit academic accomplishments" (Marsh and Kleitman, 2002). It is obvious that extracurricular activities have an impact on academic performance and education ever since their inception. The question is how are extracurricular activities affecting academic performance today?

Statement of the Problem

It has been observed that there are benefits of involvement in social activities in school, but to what extent is this affecting academic performance of student especially in Niger Delta University. The study specifically examines the extent to which involvement in extra-curricular activities in school is affecting student academic performance, which of these extra-curricular activities are actually beneficial to the student and what can be done to improve on the beneficial activities.

Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of the study is to determine the effect of social/extracurricular activities on students academic performance in Niger Delta University, more specifically the study intends to examine:

- The influence of extra-curricular activities on the academic performance of students in Niger Delta University;
- Students' attitude towards extra-curricular activities and its influence on their academic performance in Niger Delta University;
- Value placed on extra-curricular activities and its influence on academic performance of students in Niger Delta University;
- Students' choice of extra-curricular activities and its influence on their academic performance.

Research Questions

In other to achieve the objectives of the study; the following research questions were posited:

1. Is there any influence of students' involvement in extra-curricular activities in school on their academic performance?
2. To what extent does student's attitude towards extra-curricular activities influence academic performance?
3. Can the value a student place on extra-curricular activities in school influence academic performance?
4. Is the academic performance of students influenced by their choice of extra-curricular activities?

Research Hypotheses

The following four hypotheses were coined from the four research questions posited for this study, these are stated in their null (H_0) and alternate form (H_a):

H_{01} . There is no significant influence of students'

involvement in extra-curricular activities in school on their academic performance;

H_{a1} . There is a significant influence of students' involvement in extracurricular activities in school on their academic performance;

H_{02} . The attitude of students' towards extra-curricular activities does not have any significant influence on their academic performance;

H_{a2} . The attitudes of students' towards extra-curricular activities have significant influence on their academic performance;

H_{03} . Students' value of extra-curricular activities has no significant influence on their academic performance;

H_{a3} . Students' value of extra-curricular activities has significant influence on their academic performance;

H_{04} . There is significant influence of choice of extra-curricular activities on the academic performance of student;

H_{a4} . Choice of extra-curricular activities in school has significant influence on the academic performance of student.

Method

The design of the study was a descriptive survey research design with a population of 298 students from three hundred (300 Level) and four hundred (400 Level) registered students for the 2011/2012 academic session in the department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State. A sample of hundred (100) students, fifty (50) each from 300 and 400 level students were randomly selected to constitute the sample size for the study which is 33.5% of the population and this is within the benchmark of a representative sample size (i.e. 30% and above of the population). The sampling technique used was the stratified random sampling technique.

The instrument for data collection was the self-administered structured questionnaire developed by the researcher, the questionnaire was divided into two parts: Part A aimed at collecting demographic information of the respondents while Part B sought to collect information base on the research questions posited for the study. The instrument was structured to elicit the degree of agreement with the item statements based on a 5 points Likert scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Undecided (UD), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD). The instrument for this study was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation. In order to determine the reliability of the instrument, the instrument was pilot tested on students of other department

(Vocational Education not involved in the study) were given the questionnaire to answer and after a period of one week the same instrument was given to the same students again to answer, after scoring the instrument the reliability index was determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, a 0.76 correlation coefficient was obtained which is within the reliable bench mark (0.60 to 1.00)

The instrument was personally administered by the researcher to the respondents and they were given some time to respond carefully and objectively to the instrument, after which it was collected from them. Data collected were analyzed using percentages while Chi Square (χ^2) was used to test the hypotheses.

Analysis of Demographic Variables

Table 1 Demographic Data

Sex		Age			CGPA Range					
M	F	16-25	26-35	36-45	3.50-4.49	3.10-3.49	2.40-3.00	2.10-2.39	1.50-2.00	1.00-1.49
43	57	22	65	13	9	14	25	23	16	13
43%	57%	22%	65%	13%	9%	14%	25%	23%	16%	13%

It was discovered from the study that out of the 100 questionnaires distributed 57(57%) of the respondents were female while 43(43%) were male, also 22(22%) of the respondents fell within the age range of 18–25 while 65(65%) of the respondents are within the age range of 25–35 years and 13 (13%) are within the age range of 35–45 years. The demographic table also shows the different percentages of the respondents and their varying CGPA range – from Pass to second class upper division. 13% of the sampled respondents are within

Results

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse data collected and results presented in tables. Analysis was also based on the research questions posited for the study. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed and retrieved for use in the study. For the purpose of analysis and concise representation on tables, the five (5) point Likert scale was collapsed into three (3) point of agreed (A), undecided (U), and disagreed (D). This was done by summing up the responses of strongly agreed (SA) with agreed (A) responses to be the agreed (A) responses, likewise the disagreed (D) responses were summed up with the strongly disagreed (SD) responses to be the disagreed (D) responses.

the Pass Classification, 39% are within the Third Class range, 39% are within the Second Class Lower Division, 9% are within the Second Class Upper Division and none is within the First class. The second class upper division range is between 3.50 – 4.49 CGPA.

Research Question One

Is there any influence of student involvement in extra-curricular activities in school on their academic performance?

Table 2 Extra-curricular Activities and Academic performance

S/N	Statement	No. of respondent who agreed	No. respondent who disagreed	No of undecided respondent
1.	Student involvement in social activities takes time away from them.	78 (78%)	13 (13%)	9 (9%)
2.	Student sometimes fail course(s) due to their involvement in social activities in school.	67 (67%)	25 (25%)	8 (8%)
3.	CGPA/GPA of students is sometimes being affected due to their involvement in social/extracurricular activities in school.	66 (66%)	21 (21%)	13 (13%)
4.	Study habit of student is often affected by their involvement in social/extracurricular activities in school.	55 (55%)	24 (24%)	21 (21%)

From Table 2 above 78(78%) respondents agreed to the view that students' involvement in social/extracurricular activities takes time away from them, while 13(13%) respondents disagreed and 9(9%) of the respondents were indecisive. 67(67%) of the respondents agreed that students sometimes fail course(s) due to their involvement in social activities in school, while only 25(25%) of the respondents disagreed. Summarily from the Table

above it was observed that the first statement recorded the highest number of agreed responses 78%; while the fourth statement recorded the lowest number of agreed responses (55%).

Research Question Two

To what extent does students' attitude towards extra-curricular activities influence their academic performance?

Table 3 Attitude of students towards extracurricular activities and academic performance

S/N	Statement	No. of respondents who agreed	No. of respondents who disagreed	No of undecided respondents
1.	Student like getting involved in social/extracurricular activities in school.	80 (80%)	14 (14%)	6 (6%)
2.	Students spend more time on social/extracurricular activities compared to the time spent studying.	45 (45%)	35 (35%)	20 (20%)
3.	Students are viewed as good student when involved (participating) in social/extracurricular activities.	52 (52%)	30 (30%)	18 (18%)
4.	Participation in social/extracurricular activities motivate student academically.	57 (57%)	29 (29%)	14 (14%)

Table 3 above shows that 80(80%) of the respondents agreed while 14(14%) of the respondent disagreed to the view that student like getting involved in social/extracurricular activities in school and 6(6%) of the respondents were undecided. On the statement 'students spend more time on social/extracurricular activities compared to the time spent studying', 45(45%) of the respondents agreed while 35(35%) respondents disagreed and a high percentage of

20(20%) respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. It was observed that statement one recorded the highest number of responses 80% who agreed and statement two recorded the lowest with 45(45%) disagreed

Research Question Three

Can the value a student placed on extra-curricular activities in school influence academic performance?

Table 4 Students Value on Social/Extracurricular Activities and Academic Performance

S/N	Statement	No. of respondents who agreed	No. of respondents who disagreed	No of undecided respondents
1.	Students sometimes forfeit their class/lecture(s) for social/extra curricular activities in school.	69 (69%)	24 (24%)	7 (7%)
2.	Students spend more money on social activities in school than they do on their academics.	42 (42%)	39 (39%)	21 (21%)
3.	Students would afford to trade their study time for social/extracurricular activities in school.	63 (63%)	22 (22%)	15 (15%)
4.	Students always participate in social/curricular activities in school.	64 (64%)	28 (28%)	8 (8%)

The above Table 4 shows that 69(69%) of the sample respondents agreed that student sometimes forfeit their lecture(s) for social/extracurricular activities in school, 24(24%) respondents disagreed while 7(7%) undecided to the statement. If extra-curricular activities will make students to be absent for lectures then meeting up 75% attendance to lecture will be in doubt which will certainly affect their performance

and probably not writing of examination; as it is a Niger Delta University policy for only students who have met the 75% attendance to write the course examination.

Research Question Four

Is the academic performance of student influenced by their choice of extra-curricular activities?

Table 5 Choice of Social/Extracurricular Activities and Academic Performance

S/N	Statement	No. of respondents who agreed	No. of respondents who disagreed	No of undecided respondents
1.	Participation in student unionism improves my academic performance.	33 (33%)	56 (56%)	11 (11%)
2.	Participation in sport/athletics improves my academic performance.	47 (47%)	37 (37%)	16 (16%)
3.	Participation in social club/cultural activities improves my academic performance	67 (67%)	26 (26%)	7 (7%)
4.	Participation in musical performances (singing/dancing) improves my academic performance.	67 (67%)	30 (30%)	3 (3%)
5.	Watching of TV improves my academic performance.	53 (53%)	31 (31%)	16 (16%)

Result from the above Table 5 shows that 33(33%) of the respondents agreed while 56(56%) disagreed to the view that participation in student unionism improves their academic performance, and 11(11%) of the respondents were undecided. Comparing the responses on the statements 'participation in sport/athletics improves my academic performance' and 'participation in social club/cultural activities improves my academic performance', the greater percentage of the sampled respondents agreed with the latter than the former i.e. 67% as compared to 47%. On the statement of 'participation in musical performances improves my academic performance',

67(67%) of the respondents agreed while 30(30%) of the respondents disagreed. 53(53%) of the respondents agreed to the view that watching of TV improves their academic performance, while 16(16%) of the respondents were undecided and 31(31%) of the respondents disagreed.

Testing the Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested using Chi Square (χ^2), after the observed and the estimated mean have been calculated.

Table 6 Chi Square for the Four Variables Investigated In the Study

VARIABLES	Calc.	Critical	df	
Extra-curricular activities (Ho1)	25.95	21.03	12	0.05
Attitude on extra-curricular activities (Ho2)	32.74	21.03	12	0.05
Value placed on extra-curricular activities (Ho3)	24.08	21.03	12	0.05
Choice of extra-curricular activities (Ho4)	52.92	26.30	16	0.05

Key: Calc. χ^2 - calculated value of chi square (χ^2); Critical χ^2 - critical value of Chi Square (χ^2)

df - degree of freedom; - significance level

Decision

From Table 6 above, the calculated Chi Square (χ^2) value is greater than the critical Chi Square (χ^2) value for all the four hypotheses therefore the null hypotheses stated earlier are all rejected the various alternate hypotheses accepted.

Discussion of findings

The result of hypothesis one reveals that there is significant influence of students' involvements in extra-curricular activities on their academic performance in school this findings contrasted with the findings of Broh (2002); Guest and Schneider (2003); Marsh and Kleitman (2002) who in their studies found a positive relationship between student involvement in extra-curricular activities and their academic performance. Findings from this studies shows that attitude towards extra-curricular activities on campus have negative influence on their academic performance this conclusion was drawn from hypothesis two, however this contradicts the findings of Shepherd (1996), Darling, Cardwell and Smith (2005) who opined that attitude of student towards extra-curricular activities does not have any influence on their academic performance.

Guest and Schneider (2003) in their studies believed that students and school administrators assign certain values to the various extra-curricular activities, ascribing importance on some over the others they opined that three factors influence value students place on extra-curricular activities in school, and they are the "what" this is the type of participation or activity undertaken which influence development outcomes, the "where" suggest that school and community context in which extra-curricular activities takes place matters, and finally the "when" suggest that the historical context in which extra-curricular participation takes place influence both how it is valued and its effect on subsequent development, the findings of this study also collaborates with their findings there is significance between value on extra-curricular activities and students' academic performance. These findings also agrees with the findings of Faber (2008) who in her research work at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, USA discovered that student like getting involved in extra-curricular activities because of the value they placed on it.

The findings of this study reveals that there is significance influence of choice of extra-curricular activities on the academic performance of students, this collaborates with the findings of Ponter (1999), Eady and Wilson (2004) and Kelstron (1998) who had similar views, however certain extra-curricular activities were found to be beneficial to students while some where not, for instance social activities like participation in musical performances, social club/cultural activities and television viewing improves student academic performance this also is in conformity with the findings of Ponter (1999) and Kelstron (1998) while social activities like student unionism and sport/athletics are not beneficial to students in Niger Delta University, which contradicts the findings of Guest and Schneider (2002).

Conclusion

Conclusively, it can be infer that involvement in extra-curricular activities in school (Niger Delta University) has a negative influence on the academic performance of students, this is informed by the degree of positive responses in agreement to the statement item raised to this respect, also attitude of students towards social extracurricular activities affects their academic performances, while also value on extra-curricular have a detrimental influence on the academic performance of students. In addition the study showed that choice of extra-curricular in school have an influence on the academic performance of student in Niger Delta University.

Implications of the study

The educational implications of these findings cannot be overemphasized. As the adage says "the way you dress your bed so you will lie on it" student should take their studies very seriously and not to get involved in too many extra-curricular activities as this have an adverse effect on their academic performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is therefore recommended that:

- Students should take their studies, very serious, and be less involved in extra-curricular activities in school as this takes time and resources away from them, that if

invested in their studies will aid in improving their performance academically, and even if they do, they should learn to manage their time effectively.

- School administrators also should come up with policies that will regulate and checkmate the level and kind of extra-curricular activities that takes place on campus so as to minimize the negative effect of extra-curricular activities on the campus.

- Lecturers and counselors should be aware of the effect of extra-curricular activities so as to be able to counsel their student properly on the consequences and advantages of involvement in extra-curricular activities in school.

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