

# Co-Curricular Activities and Students Discipline in Higher Institutions of Learning in Gulu City

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## Abstract

Co-curricular activities are essential in learning processes because they allow students to gain experience and apply what they have learned in the schools, including acquisition of required discipline. The study used a mixed methods approach and Case study design. Data was collected from two higher institutions of learning and analysed using Statistical Package of Social Science. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that co-curricular activities play a crucial role in fostering discipline among the students in higher institutions of learning. There is a very strong relationship between participation in co-curricular activities and students' discipline. In conclusion, the study highlights the positive impact of co-curricular activities on students' discipline. Students who actively engage in these co-curricular activities develop important skills and attitudes that contribute to their overall discipline. It is recommended that institutions of higher learning should provide co-curricular activities that have influence on students' discipline. Teachers and administrators should actively promote and encourage student participation in co-curricular activities.

## Keywords

co-curricular activities – students' discipline – higher institutions of learning

## 1 Introduction

The responsibility of education worldwide is to bring change in students' behaviour and personality in a more desirable form. The Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) are also recognized as a source of enrichment and vitalization of the school curriculum, mainly through the cultivation of CCA, which are no longer looked upon as extras but as an integral part of the school programs (Singh, 2017). CCA are an essential part of a well-rounded education. Ensuring quality

education itself is a part of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Goal-4, and a means for achieving sustainable development as a whole. CCA are, therefore, an important facet of education as a whole and participation in such activities provides students with opportunity for improvement of discipline (Karamat et al., 2024). These activities are generally conducted outside of the class and may or may not have a direct relationship with the core curriculum. Such activities include; games and sports, clubs and societies and other hobbies designed to help the learner adjust socially and physically. Social adjustment makes students consider their colleagues' behaviours and become positively or negatively disciplined depending on the context of socialisation (Acquah & Anti Partey, 2014, see also Chapter 9, this volume).

Ahmad et al. (2020) argued that students who get involved in CCA learned teamwork, administration qualities, discipline, self-confidence, time management, persistence in extreme circumstances, responsibility towards prearranged tasks, and the development of positive actions. This makes the students responsible for their discipline and conduct themselves positively. CCA were shown in the beginning with many seeing it simply as a fact that would pass and quickly fade away. Eventually people including educators began to see benefits of CCA but it took a while to adhere to them (Singh, 2017). Non-Academic Activities (NAA) were viewed as being primarily recreational and therefore were discerned from academic achievement without any disciplinary effect and were consequently discouraged.

Lyoba and Mwila (2022) argue that CCA enables students in Higher Institutions of learning (HIL) to apply learnt skills in a real-world context. They have become well integrated into the daily life of the schools. It allows learners to develop self-discipline among themselves. Involvement in CCA has led to students' self-discipline and personal cleanliness.

Through CCA, students are also able to fulfil their personal goals and improve on their general skills needed in everyday life. Mishra & Aithal (2023) posit that co-curricular activities may enhance students' problem-solving, analytical and Critical Thinking Skills (CTS) through cooperative activities and hands-on experiences which influence development of discipline, social skills, and high school completion. Furthermore, participation in CCA teaches students about long term commitments and a sense of responsibility to perform given tasks correctly (Banging & Idris, 2017).

Co-curricular activities are defined as activities performed in schools for the purpose of strengthening students' learning either inside or outside the classroom and for developing learner's personality. CCA promotes the growth of diverse mental and personality dimensions, including intellectual, emotional,

social, moral and artistic development. These activities include disciplines that are not part of the usual academic curriculum but are beneficial for an individual's overall development. Through CCA, students will gain extra skills in life such as communication skills, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, team working skills, leadership skills and other skills which will help them in career prospects (Siddiky, 2019). The HIL provides a logical and convenient platform for students to experience these skills through CCA. It demonstrates how to cultivate discipline, commitment, and self-discipline, tenacity, self-control, and a healthy regard for the school environment.

Goldstein (2024) defines discipline as the practice of training oneself or others to follow a set of rules, principles, or guidelines in order to achieve a desired outcome. It involves the development of self-control, the ability to stay focused and committed, and the willingness to make sacrifices or delay gratification in pursuit of a long-term goal. Discipline is often associated with self-discipline, which refers to the ability to regulate one's thoughts, emotions, and behaviours in a way that is consistent with one's goals and values. Self-discipline involves setting clear priorities, managing time effectively, and maintaining a strong sense of motivation and commitment. In essence, discipline is about cultivating the habits and behaviours that support our goals and values and making a conscious effort to stay on track even when it's difficult or uncomfortable. It requires effort, commitment, and perseverance, but it can be a powerful tool for personal growth and achievement. Discipline involves training, especially of the mind and character, to produce self-control habits of obedience, and as a result to set rules for conduct and methods by which training may be given.

In African countries, CCA were introduced in the curriculum for more than one purpose such as to increase academic performance, influencing students' discipline and others. This is where most African countries put more efforts on discipline so as to strengthen the education system. In this region, the education system also should emphasise students' discipline in view of having effective behaviour that students must have in order to fulfil the school rules and regulations (Ahmad, 2014). Adaptability, self-assurance, communication, teamwork, imagination, leadership, and organization are a few of the abilities that modern educators must possess (Okumu & Opio, 2023, p. 435) and these are acquired through CCA in Higher Institutions of Learning.

In Uganda, school life was characterised by learners' active participation in sports, music and drama, among others, during breaks or organised periods of the day, week or term (Asaba, 2015). Before the introduction of formal education, boys would go wrestling as a means of spending their leisure time, and this was one way of practising CCA in Uganda.

## 2 Theoretical Background

This study was guided by Social Learning Theory (SLT) derived by Albert Bandura in 1960. Albert Bandura is considered the father of SLT. In the 1960's he conducted a now famous experiment called the Bobo doll experiment that led to his official writings from 1961–1963 (Alvarez, 2020). Albert Bandura's SLT suggests that people learn new behaviours by observing and imitating others. The theory emphasises the importance of observational learning, where individuals acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs by watching the actions of others and the consequences that follow, leading to the modelling and adoption of observed behaviours. The most important element of the experiment was seeing how children behaved after seeing the adult get rewarded, punished, or no consequence for physically abusing the Bobo doll. This learning can be acted on, a learner sees others politely ask for a treat and get one skill and act on. In the same way, a learner sees a friend involved in CCA, picking a lock and they learn something new which changes their behaviour leading to improved discipline. Especially when it comes to aggressive behaviour, SLT plays a big role in how all people and especially learners learn. SLT, emphasises the importance of observing, modelling, and imitating the behaviours, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others (McLeod, 2024). The students get involved in CCA and master the skills, enjoy their consequences and improve their discipline. SLT suggests that social modelling and good behaviour are powerful classroom tools. The SLT is relevant to the study in that it significantly impacts our understanding of human behaviour and has informed fields such as education. It influences learners' aggressive behaviour by observing, modelling and imitating the behaviour, attitudes and emotional reactions. Through physical interactions during co-curricular activities in schools, students observe different behaviours and become disciplined. The SLT implies therefore that learners who participate in CCA learn from the trainers and teachers through observation since the trainers and teachers are role models of learning. Consequently, they imitate the behaviours of the role model and act like them. Bandura noted that behaviours from role models that have favourable outcomes are more likely to be copied/imitated easily than behaviours with unfavourable outcomes. Discipline is therefore favourable outcomes implying that these learners are likely to be more disciplined than those that don't participate in co-curricular activities.

## 3 Statement of the Problem

Worldwide, co-curricular activities were introduced in normal education institutions for more than one purpose such as increasing academic performance

as well as influencing students' discipline, where most African countries put more efforts on discipline so as to strengthen the education system. In the Ugandan education system, the issue of student discipline is very crucial. And HIL also emphasises students' discipline in view of having effective behavior that students must have in order to fulfill the school rules and regulations due to Turyamureeba and Kaizire (2023). This can enhance students' discipline leading to the quality of education in Uganda. Co-curricular activities play a crucial role, not only in improving academic performance but also improving students' discipline by building character (Odama, 2023). Participating in co-curricular activities (CCA) have positive effects, such as students, improve the rate of school completion as well as students' social values developed when they are well involved in various activities such as arts, music, drama, club and debate, sports and games, dance and religious activities (Bonaventure & Claire, 2020).

Creating a culture that promotes excellent behaviour requires a clear vision of what good behaviour looks like (Department of Education, 2022). This could make them to conduct themselves well in whatever they do. Many secondary school students in Uganda participate in co-curricular activities but misconduct themselves during co-curricular activity competitions; especially when they lose in the competitions, they could beat their colleagues and neighbouring villagers after. These acts revealed a lot of indiscipline portrayed among secondary school students especially during competition in Co-curricular activities (Kabakyenga & Ahumuza, 2023). The students often get engaged in antisocial behaviours such as strikes, stealing, fighting, bullying, drinking and some have become street kids as well (Turanovic & Siennic, 2022; Ndehi, Ndung'u, & Nyagah, 2023), yet students' engagement in co-curricular activities is expected to bring about discipline. It is not known whether co-curricular activities have any influence on students' discipline in HIL. This is what has prompted the researcher to investigate the influence of Co-curricular activities on students in Higher Institutions of Learning in Gulu City by i. Assessing the level of students' discipline, ii. Determining the level of students' participations in co-curricular activities, and iii. exploring the influence of different Co-curricular activities on students' discipline.

#### 4 Literature Review

The study focused on the influence of Co-curricular activities and students' discipline in HIL. This section looked at what other researchers have investigated in line with CCA and students' discipline to find the gaps in their study that need to be fulfilled.

#### 4.1 *The Students' Discipline in Higher Institutions of Learning*

Discipline in the HIL is a study conducted within the context of an adult learning environment to analyse the impact of behaviour on safety, performance and goals, which aligns to wider noted controversies in working cultures (Patel & Cheng, 2021). Discipline originates from the Latin word *disciplina* meaning "instruction given, teaching, learning, knowledge" and from the Latin *discipulus* meaning "pupil" (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2020). Although its definition varies depending on the context, in the abstract form, discipline is often described as the practice of making people obey rules or standards of behaviour (Collins Dictionary, 2020).

Discovering the impact of discipline/lack of discipline in the HIL provides a basis for how behaviour impacts on goals within this context. The absence of value-based attributes has detrimental effects on the safety and quality of students Patel and Cheng (2021), however, in the context of the HIL, absence of these attributes could create conditions whereby learning; the ultimate objective, may be impacted upon thereby preventing interactive learning pedagogies from being fully effective. Discipline in a HIL can be achieved by a collective responsibility in the management of the activities of the Institutions (Rowne, 2015).

Way (2016) made a direct link between discipline and safety and claimed that discipline that allows rules and regulations produces safe, orderly and generally conducive learning environments. Lopes and Oliveira (2017) added that teachers who focus on the engagement of students in CCA consequently prevent misbehaviours from occurring.

Although students are usually the source of lack of discipline due to underlying problems, they are not the only source. There are other sources that cause students to be indisciplined too (Debreli, Ishanova, & Sheppard, 2019). Discipline is synchronous to the actions taken by the lecturers to end lack of discipline and restore order in HIL. Lopes and Oliveira (2017) stipulated that discipline is as much reliant on the characteristics, clarity, and conduct of the lecturers, as the comprehension of students within the institutions. Discipline is the self-control that is gained by requiring that rules or orders be obeyed, and the ability to keep working at something that is difficult. Disciplinarians believe that such self-control is of the utmost importance and enforce a set of rules that aim to develop such behaviour. Teaching students to take responsibility for their study routine fosters independence and self-discipline which promotes self-reliance in life after completion of their studies.

#### 4.2 *Level of Students' Participation in Different Co-Curricular Activities*

Muamat (2016) found that students' involvement in CCA was inconsistent throughout the year and focused only on programs or competitions. CCA are

not part of the academic curriculum but are acknowledged by HIL as an essential part of the life of the students.

According to Yahya, Kutty, and Hadi (2019) the student's engagement in CCA was at a moderate-to-high level, they continued to report that there was a lack of effort in ensuring that all students were fully engaged in CCA. It is possible that not all the institutions of learning have interests in CCAs and do not encourage their students to be actively involved in the activities.

Bonaventure and Claire (2020) revealed that students who are in HIL automatically get opportunities of participating in school based CCA. These activities mostly develop students' discipline where students have freedom to participate in any which they prefer. The learning institution should encourage students to get involved in the CCA as part of the school programme. The activities have many benefits that can be tapped by students in the process of learning. Patel and Cheng (2021) revealed that co-curricular activities support productive learning and development for all young people in HIL. Yahya et al. (2019) pointed out that students who engaged in CCA were able to manage their time, became more disciplined and further shaped a disciplinary personality within the individual. This is an indication that during the time when students are engaged in CCA, they have different experiences, interact with different groups of students and adopt different behaviours. However, Allen et al. (2015) reported that students who did not engage in any CCA were affecting their level of personalities. This showed that participation in CCA has a greater chance of changing their behaviour.

#### 4.3 *The Influence of Different Co-Curricular Activities on Students' Discipline*

Schools need to conduct CCA that focus on the development of the individual's potential in terms of improving personality, discipline, well-being and communication skills. Students who engaged in CCA were able to manage their time, became more disciplined and further shaped a disciplinary personality within the individual. Mishra and Aithal (2023) argued that behaviour disorders and discipline among students can be improved through curricular and CCA. Participation in CCA helps in character development and social development in students of HIL (Karamat et al., 2024).

The diverse range of activities offered in Co-Curricular Programme (CCP) allows students to explore their interests and develop their talents, leading to the maximum level of potential. Engagement in physical activity is also recognized to contribute a range of positive outcomes, specifically physical and mental health, social well-being (Othoo & Omondi, 2022). All these influence students' interest to participate in CCA in schools. Bonaventure and Claire

(2020) revealed that CCA can enhance students' discipline leading to the quality behaviour in HIL in sub-Saharan African countries. This is crucial as it could directly improve an individual's personality, which will further influence discipline. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a link between CCA and students' Discipline in HIL.

## 5 Methodology

This chapter gives details of the methodology which has been used in the current study. This includes details about target population, sampling procedure, research instrument and data analysis. The present research has been carried out to study the CCA and students' discipline in HIL in Gulu City

### 5.1 *Research Approach*

The research study used a mixed methods approach, more specifically an exploratory approach. Mixed method is a research approach whereby researchers collect and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data within the same study. Mixed methods require a purposeful mixing of methods in data collection analysis and interpretation of the evidence. In this type of approach, both qualitative and quantitative data are simultaneously collected, analysed and interpreted. There is no clear-cut procedure for conducting a study using mixed methods. However, you can conduct mixed methods research by the following. The first step is to determine whether a mixed methods research approach is appropriate for answering your questions and offer the best kind of evidence you need for your research study. Further, is it to use the results from one data type to corroborate, expand, develop, or complement the other?

Mixed methods address different types of questions, collect different kinds of data and deliver different kinds of answers. Each set of methods has its own inherent strengths and weaknesses, and each offers a particular approach to address specific types of research questions (and agendas). The research instruments used were questionnaires and interview guide. According to Pritha Bhandari (2023), this can enhance the validity and reliability of the data and their interpretation to gain a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. For quantitative data, a questionnaire survey was designed and administered to the lecturers and students. Qualitative data, interview guide was designed, and in-depth interviews were conducted with higher institution administrators to gain insights into their experiences with Co-curricular activities and their perceptions of how it influences students' discipline.



### 5.2 *Research Design*

An exploratory Case study design is a study that involves researching a specific topic to the point where thorough, detailed, and complete understanding occurs. The exploratory case study is used to explore presumed causal links that are too complex for a survey or experiment (Yin, 2014). Data was collected first to allow in-depth exploration of specific phenomena within a real-life context, while looking for patterns in the data and coming up with a model within which to view the data (Singh & Masuku, 2014). The design is appropriate for understanding the relationship between CCA and student discipline in HIL in Gulu City.

The research was conducted in two HILs in Gulu City. The area was selected because secondary school students who are being prepared for Higher Institutions of Learning get involved in co-curricular activities but also because many are involved in conflicts once they are free. The study is to explore the behaviour of these students in HIL and how this may be affected by CAA.

The researcher used probability and non-probability sampling (Elliot, 2020). The researcher conducted the study in two (02) HILs. The target population was ten (10) Administrators, twenty (20) Lectures and thirty (30) Students from HIL. These make a total of 52 respondents.

The researcher used judgmental sampling technique on school administrators; this was done because they are targeted to have specific attributes, smaller sample size and homogenous population that can pore over all data (Palinkas et al., 2015). Although the samples for qualitative inquiry are generally assumed to be selected purposively to yield cases that are “information rich” (Patton, 2002), there are no clear guidelines for conducting purposive sampling in mixed methods implementation studies, particularly when studies have more than one specific objective.

The second sampling technique used was simple random sampling. This is recognized as a reliable method of obtaining information where every single member of a population is chosen randomly, merely by chance. Each member has the same probability of being chosen to be part of a sample (Thomas, 2023).

Prior to the main study, a pilot test was conducted on two administrators, 10 teachers, and 20 students. The purpose of the pilot test was to check the reliability and validity of the instrument. Hence, the reliability of the items, which was calculated using the Cronbach alpha, was found to be 0.77. To ensure face validity, the instruments were checked by three experts who were authorities in the study area.

### 5.3 *Data Analysis*

Data analysis is the process of systematically collecting, cleaning, transforming, describing, modelling and interpreting collected data generally employing

statistical techniques. Data analysis is an important part of both scientific and business research (Eldridge, 2024). The information collected was edited, collated to eliminate errors and coded for analysis. Data was analysed using qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative data was analysed using Statistical software Statistical Package of Social Scientists, (SPSS) version 20. This package was used to enter and to analyse the data to identify patterns, correlations and trends between CCA and student discipline in HIL (Rahman & Muktadir, 2021). Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis to identify common themes and perspectives from the interviews and focus group discussion on Co-curricular activities and student discipline in HIL (Lochmiller, 2021). Data was triangulated to compare and contrast the findings from quantitative and qualitative data to ensure convergence and validate results. Triangulation of data from different sources was applied to strengthen the validity and reliability of the research results.

#### 5.4 *Ethical Considerations*

The researcher used the following sets of principles to guide the research designs and practices in order to protect the rights of research participants, enhance research validity and maintain scientific integrity. *Voluntary participation*: Voluntary participation is individual willingness to choose to take part in research studies without any coercion or pressure. It is based on informed consent. The researcher provided adequate information about Co-curricular activities and students' discipline to allow participants to make decisions on whether or not to participate. *Confidentiality*: This is the condition in which the researcher knows the identity of a research subject but takes steps to protect that identity from being discovered by others. The researcher-maintained confidentiality by keeping the identity of the human subjects. The researcher protected the information privately by using password protected files, and encryption when sending information. The other information was stored in a drawer kept under key and lock. *Anonymity*: The researcher prepared consent forms and distributed them to the participants to sign as he went to collect data. *Communication Results*: This is the responsibility and ethical dissemination of research findings. The researcher ensured the validity, timeliness and accessibility of new knowledge which adhered to ethical principles.

#### 5.5 *Limitations and Delimitations*

Time limited the number of respondents at each site in order to meet the set deadline. Hence the study was conducted in only two HILs in Gulu City and drew a total sample of 52 respondents, these findings of the study may not be generalised to all HILs countrywide. The questionnaire design limited the opportunity to ask further questions related to CCA and students' discipline in

higher institutions of learning. Future research may wish to employ semi-structured interviews that allow the retrieval of deeper understanding. This study was limited to investigating the influence of CCA and students' discipline in a case study of HIL in Gulu City and did not consider the extent of CCA in other areas in addition to failing to quantify the students' discipline in these institutions.

6 Findings

This section gives the analysis of the study which is the most important part of the study. The study focuses on CCA and students' discipline: A case study of HIL in Gulu City. The code given for participants interviewed was (Administrations in Institutions of Learning (AIL)).

6.1 Students' Discipline

The results of the descriptive analysis on students' discipline in higher institutions are provided in Figure 10.1.

Respondents were asked about the level of students' discipline in institutions of higher learning. The results indicate larger frequency (30 out of 42) of the respondents agreed and (6 out of 42) strongly agreed that the level of students' discipline is high as indicated in Figure 10.1. Participants were asked to state the level of students' discipline in institutions of higher learning; this

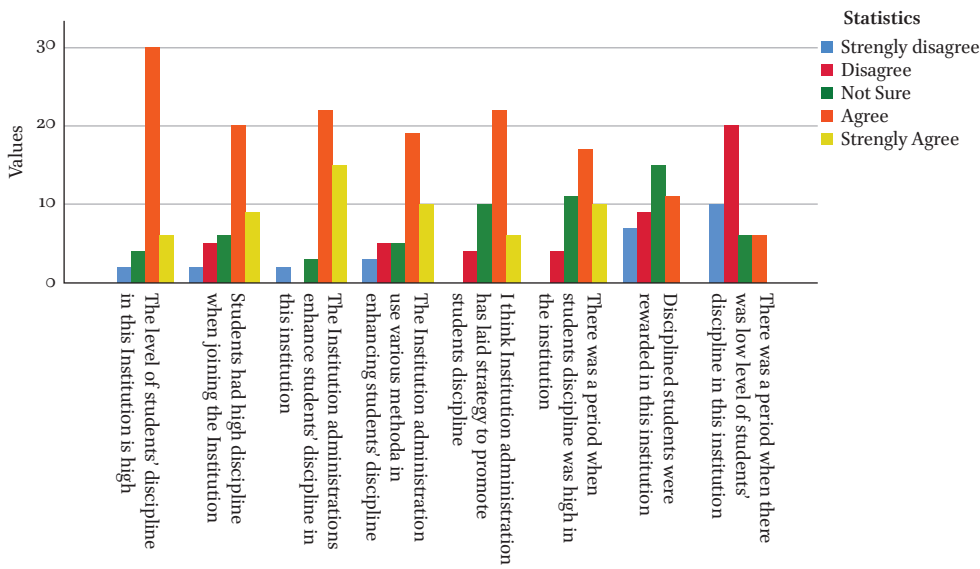


FIGURE 10.1 Showing students' discipline in the institutions of higher learning

was to explore students' conduct in these institutions. The participants AIL 3, 5, 6, 9 responded that "I think students' discipline is moderate – high in this institution, it is between 50%-75%".

The respondents were asked whether students had high discipline while joining the institutions. The results showed that 20 out of 42 respondents agreed while 9 out of 42 strongly agreed and 6 out of 42 were not sure. Participants were asked to state students' discipline when joining the institutions. The participants responded AIL 1, 6, 7 & 8 that "Students' discipline was low when they were joining the institution of higher learning".

The findings in Figure 10.1 showed that 22 out of 42 agreed and 15 out of 42 strongly agreed that the administrations play a significant role in enhancing students' discipline in these institutions, hence the students' discipline is good. Participants reported that institutions administrations (AIL 2, 3, 8 & 9) play a significant role in enhancing students' discipline in the institutions "By introducing institution rules and regulations booklets, activating different clubs and societies and strengthening student leadership having a periodic talk with students on student discipline".

Given that the majority of respondents agreed with the issues, as indicated on the Figure 10.1, the degree of student discipline is good. This implies that the institution's administration plays a significant role in enhancing students' discipline in these institutions, hence the students' discipline is good.

The heights of the bar graph indicate that a high percentage of respondents agreed with the items selected. It was found that the majority of respondents (21 out of 42 and 15 out of 42) highly agree and strongly agree that these institutions offer a variety of CCA. There were few respondents who strongly disagreed (2 out of 42) on all of the different categories of Co-curricular activities available in HIL. The link between different co-curricular activities in the institutions is strengthened by responses by AIL 1, 3, 5, 7 & 10, indicating that "There are various co-curricular activities that students in institutions of higher learning participate in, these include; football, adaptive sports, netball, music dance and drama, clubs and societies, debates".

The findings from respondents on the bar graph in Figure 10.2 indicated that 20 out of 42 respondents agreed, while 11 out of 42 respondents strongly agreed that students often participate in these CCA in HIL. These were expressed by the participants AIL 8 & 5 who responded that, "I understand students participate in CCA once a year, for some it is regularly, for others like clubs and societies every semester".

The findings indicate that 18 out of 42 respondents agreed while 8 out of 42 strongly agreed, and 6 out of 42 disagreed that there are some CCA which are well implemented and please the students who are involved in these institutions. However, several participants (AIL 3, 4 and 9) pointed out that "Co-curricular

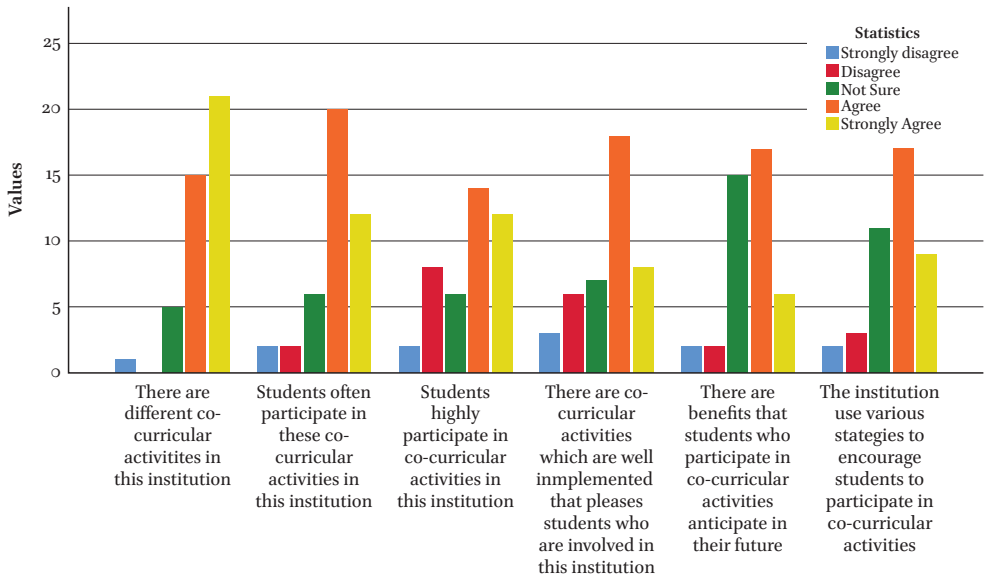


FIGURE 10.2 Level of students' participations in different co-curricular activities in this institution

activities which are well implemented and that please students who are involved are adaptive sport, football, music dance and drama, clubs and societies”.

A high proportion of respondents in the study (17 out of 42 and 6 out of 42) agreed and strongly agreed that there are benefits that students who participate in CCA anticipate in their future, while 15 out of 42 were not sure whether the students who participate in CCA anticipate benefits in their future. At the same time, a high proportion of participants (AIL 1, 2, 7, 6 & 8) rationalised their confidence to participate by claiming that “We want to be international and national participants who are more disciplined members of society as a result of participating in co-curricular activities”.

This implies that there are a variety of CCA in the HILs, and that students actively participate in these co-curricular activities in these institutions and there are significant benefits of these CCA to students.

As can be seen from the graph in Figure 10.3 (30 out of 42) respondents agreed with the statements that students are interested in participating in CCA in these institutions. Out of 42, 5 strongly agreed and 5 were not sure; the modest proportion of respondents who strongly disagreed with these issues is indicated by 2 out of 42. The participants (AIL 6, 2 & 10) responded that “Students have interest in participating in CCA as they gain prestige and build social capital, kills stress and boredom, helps develop the mind and concentrate in class”.

Findings from the study indicated that 24 out of 42 and 7 out of 42 respondents agreed and strongly agreed that participating in CCA has an influence on students’ discipline. This was followed by 8 out of 42 respondents who

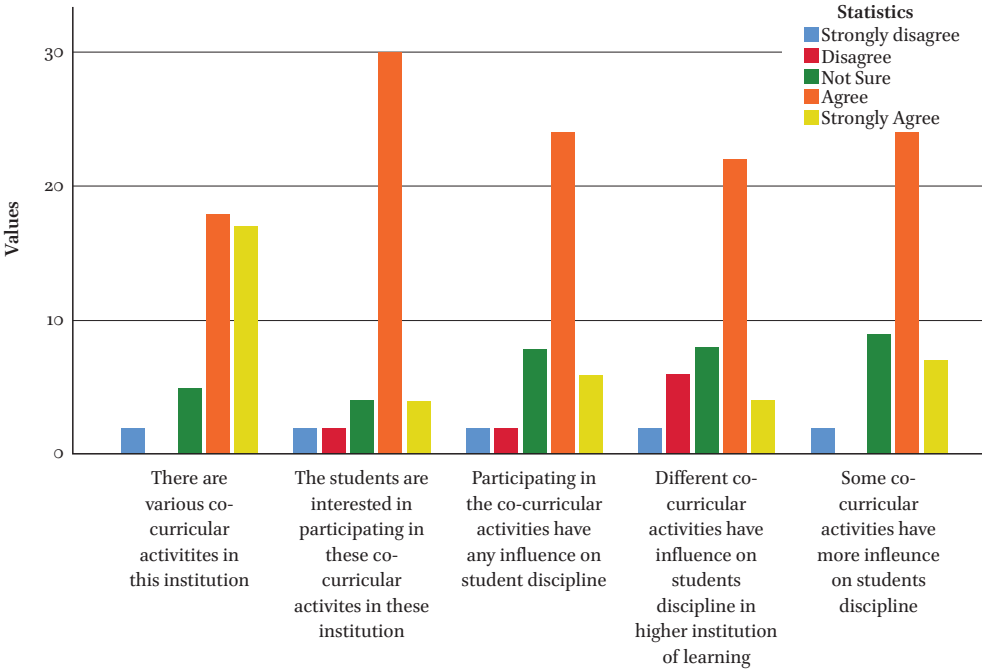


FIGURE 10.3 Influence of different co-curricular activities on students' discipline

reported that they are not sure whether participating in CCA has an influence on students' discipline. However, several participants (AIL 4, 5, 10 & 8) pointed out that "Participation in CCA influences students' discipline as it protects them from idleness and disorders".

From the study findings 25 out of 42 and 8 out of 42 agreed and strongly agreed that some co-curricular activities have more influence on students' discipline; of these 9 out of 42 were not sure whether some co-curricular activities have more influence on students' discipline. These were expressed by participants (AIL 1, 3, 7, 9 & 10) at all levels as, "I understand that football, netball, adaptive sports, music dance and drama, clubs and societies are co-curricular activities that have influence on students' discipline in the institutions of higher learning".

This implies that participation in different CCA in HILs in Gulu City has impacts on students' discipline as they get engaged and have different experiences from their peers. Based on the analysis of the different responses, we conclude that CCA influences the level of students' discipline in the HIL.

**6.2 Relationship between Students' Discipline and Participation in Co-Curricular Activities in Higher Institutions of Learning**

To determine the relationship between a student's discipline and participation in co-curricular activities, we use Pearson correlation analysis.

TABLE 10.1      Correlation analysis between students’ discipline and participation in co-curricular activities

		Discipline	Co-curricular activities
Discipline	Correlation coefficient (r)	1	0.983
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	42	42
Co-curricular activities	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.983	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	42	42

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

TABLE 10.2      Interpretation of magnitude of correlation coefficient

Correlation coefficient	Comment
0.00–0.19	Very low
0.20–0.39	Low
0.40–0.59	Moderate
0.60–0.79	High
0.80–1.00	Very high

There is a statistically significant relationship ( $r = 0.983, p = 0.000 < 0.01$ ) between students’ discipline and participation in CCA as depicted in Table 10.1. Using Table 10.2, it means that there is very high relationship between the participation in co-curricular activities and students’ discipline in HIL since the correlation coefficient  $r = 0.983$  falls in the range  $0.80 - 1.00$ . This very high value of  $r$  implies that participation in co-curricular activities highly affects students’ discipline. In other words, students’ participation in curricular activities increases by 98.3% for every unit increase in students’ discipline.

7      Discussion

CCA are helpful in development of students’ mind and personality-related skills that include intellect, emotions, social, moral, and aesthetics. These make CCA important in discipline building. The major objective of the study was to examine the influence of CCA on students’ discipline in HIL. The study

found that students' have moderate-high discipline in HIL. The results of the study are in line with the findings of studies conducted by Hasifa (2021) who posit that the school's morale could be high or low depending on the tone of discipline of that school. Discipline in an HIL can be achieved by a collective responsibility in the management of the institution.

In examining whether students had high discipline while joining the institutions, the study found that the majority of respondents agreed to the idea compared to a few of the respondents who disagreed while some respondents remained unsure. The findings were consistent with the findings of previous scholars. For example, Salgong et al. (2016) who revealed that student discipline has been a problem of ongoing interest for scholars, school administrators, and policy makers for a long time. The students come from high schools with different behaviour and reserve their behaviour while joining institutions of higher learning. Study revealed that the administrations play a significant role in enhancing students' discipline in these institutions, hence the students' discipline is good. The results of the study are in line with the findings of studies conducted by Odama et al. (this volume) and Nekesa (2018) which revealed that the school administration is holding regular meetings with the student council on discipline issues. The student leaders should not interfere with the disciplinary process after forwarding a disciplinary issue to the Institutions administrations. Institution's administrations introduce institution rules and regulations booklets, activate different clubs and societies and strengthen student leadership having a periodic talk with students on student discipline, thus making student discipline good.

It was found that the majority of respondents highly agreed that institutions of higher learning offer varieties of CCA. This finding is consistent with the reports of Rathore, Chaudhry & Azad (2018) that co-curricular activities such as singing, dancing, gardening, mass drill, community work, and games are expected to play significant roles in reinforcing the overall development of students in schools. CCA can provide students with direction to engage in meaningful activities. Following this engagement, it is hoped that the skills learned through these activities can cultivate a healthy lifestyle after school years (Nghia, 2017).

The findings from respondents indicated that the majority of the respondents agreed that participation in different co-curricular activities in institutions of higher learning has impacts on students' discipline as they get engaged and have different experiences from their peers. The result of the present study is similar to the results of a study conducted by (Athar et al., 2023) who found that by participating in CCA students learn about the values in ethics and discipline, students develop and enhance their cognitive skills. Ashfaq (2021) argued that CCA influences the personality of the students; they become more



loyal, punctual, and active. This shows that co-curricular activities are important in shaping students' discipline. The findings indicate that there is a very high relationship between CCA and students' discipline. The findings were consistent with the findings of previous scholars. For example, Bonaventure and Claire (2020). CCA are an integral part in the learning process since they influence students' discipline and reduce time wastage of students in doing immoral actions. This is an indication that CCA occupies students, and they do not have time to misbehave.

## 8 Conclusion

Based on the study findings it can be concluded that most of the respondents agreed that students' discipline in HIL is good as they follow rules and regulations provided by Institution's administration, hold assemblies and guide the students on discipline. The findings also show that most of the respondents agreed that there are various CCA that students in HIL participate in; these include football, adaptive sports, netball, music dance and drama, clubs and societies, debates. The students who play different games are guided by general rules of the games thus improving their discipline. CCA increased the confidence level of the students. By participating in co-curricular activities students become more socially interactive. Students become more motivated through CCA. There is a very high relationship between the participation in co-curricular activities and students' discipline in HIL. CCA influences the level of students' discipline in the HIL. The study confirms that engagement in CCA significantly boosts students' discipline in HIL in Gulu City.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Almighty God for the strengths and guidance given to me. I would wish to acknowledge the Faculty of Education and Humanities for allowing me to use the facilities when writing this book chapter. I wish to thank BSU for the guidance and support in the process of writing the book chapter.

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