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Original Article

### Strategies of Managing Co-Curricular Activities in Secondary Schools in Gulu City

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#### Keywords:

Strategies,  
Management,  
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Activities.

The study was on determining the strategies of managing co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Gulu City. The objective was to determine the strategies of managing co-curricular activities (CCAs) in secondary schools in Gulu City. Benchmarking, awarding scholarships, training and coaching, financing of CCAs, sponsorships to excelling students, assigning patrons and matrons with roles to manage clubs and societies, and role modelling denote strategies of managing co-curricular activities. Correlation design was employed; data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, and observation surveys from 218 respondents. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data on strategies of managing CCAs in secondary schools, and Bivariate Regression was used to generalise. The findings were presented in the form of tables and narratives from the interview. The findings revealed that the preferred strategies of managing CCAs by the different secondary schools in Gulu City were: assigning patrons and matrons, certificates, training and coaching, and scholarship, ranked accordingly. The findings revealed that though independent variables such as scholarship, sponsorship, benchmarking, financing, and assigning of matrons and patrons have positive outcomes, strategies such as role modelling and mentorship approach are demotivating if not employed with more care. It was found that strategies such as training and coaching, and the award of certificates of good performance, significantly improved students' achievement. The study recommended that the government should prioritise funding for co-curricular activities from the grassroots to the national level, focusing on talent identification and development. City leaders should lobby development partners and the central government for adequate funding.

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## INTRODUCTION

Strategies of managing co-curricular activities deal with the aspects of planning for co-curricular activities, organising the co-curricular activities, leading the co-curricular activities, controlling the co-curricular activities, conducting staff development training on co-curricular activities, and liaising with the outside community to assist with co-curricular activities (Burgess, 2013).

Historically, the concept of managing Co-Curricular Activities (CCAs) can be traced in the ancient literature, for instance, the ancient scriptures where CCAs like dying cloths, singing, milking, wrestling, archery, playing, cooking, warfare activities were quite common (Coven, 2015). The global development of strategies for managing co-curricular activities, according to Mahoney (2010), was enshrined in the education system, and it became apparent that all schools adapted to the appropriate strategies within their context. Students were given significant chances to get experience in CCAs through participating in games and sports, music, dance and drama, art, and crafts. In the United States, CCAs are managed accordingly to provide normative experiences for students. In the recent national surveys, it was reported that more than 70% of schools have employed relevant strategies to manage their co-curricular activities well over the past years (Mahoney, 2010). According to Lunenburg (2010), strategising to manage CCAs helps in the realisation of human capital development, students' future achievements, and argues that managing CCAs with the right strategies helps students to socialise and adapt to the changing environment outside and in classes.

## Statement of the Problem

According to Harber (2011) and Zhang et al. (2016), there were empirical indications that in the mid-19th Century. The management strategies for co-curricular activities were closely associated with this significant decline in student achievements in CCAs in secondary schools worldwide. In Uganda, in recent years, there has been a decline in students' achievements in co-curricular activities, with only a 32% achievement rate in the year 2019 in secondary schools (Norman, 2019). With effective strategies for managing CCAs, it was anticipated that students' achievements in co-curricular activities would surpass the average, ranging from 50% to 100% in all secondary schools in Northern Uganda (Bagala, 2017). Unclear strategies of managing co-curricular activities were observable in secondary schools in Gulu Municipality before it attained city status. This study investigated whether strategies such as mentorship, financing, scholarships, benchmarking, training, coaching, and role modelling were employed to manage co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Gulu City and reported on in 2024.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the strategies of managing co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Gulu City.

## Objective of the Study

To determine the strategies for managing CCAs in secondary schools in Gulu City

## Research Question

What are the strategies for managing CCAs in secondary schools in Gulu City?

### ○ Scope of the Study

The study was on strategies for managing co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Gulu City. Gulu City comprises two divisions: Gulu East Division (Laroo-Pece Division) and Gulu West Division (Bardege-Layibi Division). Gulu City is bordered by Gulu District from the North and the East, Omoro District from the South, and Amuru District from the North. Nineteen secondary schools were involved in the study. A study period between 2014 -2023 was covered by this study, as this is the period when Gulu registered a critical trend of events in co-curricular and no study has been conducted on the same period in time.

## Significance of the Study

This study hoped to provide valuable information on well-managed co-curricular activities as they contribute to students' holistic development by improving leadership, teamwork, time management, and problem-solving skills. Properly structured co-curricular activities help in balancing academic and non-academic engagements, reducing stress, and promoting better academic performance. Understanding management strategies helps school administrators in efficiently organising activities, ensuring participation, and balancing resources.

Participation in structured activities fosters discipline, responsibility, and interpersonal skills, essential for students' future success. The study finding helps schools develop strategies to identify and support students' talents in sports, arts, music, and leadership. Well-managed activities promote partnerships between schools, parents, and the community, enhancing support and resource mobilisation. The findings can guide policymakers and educators in formulating policies that enhance the effectiveness of co-curricular activities in secondary schools.

## Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that effective management strategies of school clubs could influence positive outcomes of CCAs in secondary schools. Therefore, the assumed methodology chosen collected relative data for the study without much influence from variables outside the study's interest. The identified sample respondents were assumed to have provided relevant data that informed the study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Review

This study was anchored on the Achievement Theory of Motivation (McClelland, 1961). The Achievement Theory of Motivation (ATM) suggests that certain societies and individuals demonstrate higher success in accomplishments compared to others. McClelland argued that people engage in innovative and improved actions, driven by a need for achievement or an orientation toward accomplishment, seeking excellence, progress, and personal growth. He believes in the potential for individuals to be trained, coached, sponsored, mentored, and role-modelled, and suggests that managers can effectively encourage such strategies (McClelland, 1961). Therefore, the use of role models, coaching, training, benchmarking, scholarship, awarding certificates, using patrons and matrons, among others, are considered strategies to enhance motivation and encourage students' participation in CCAs, as was the case in Massachusetts, USA (Winter, Sterling and Cotton, 2015). Achievement Theory was preferred over other theories because it clearly explains the interplay between independent variables and dependent variables.

*Conceptual perspective of the study*, Prachi (2018) viewed strategy as a general direction set for the company and its various components to achieve a desired state in the future. Strategy is all about integrating organisational activities and utilising and allocating the scarce resources within the organisational environment so as to meet the present

objectives. Strategies of managing co-curricular activities are a set of well-aligned activities with the aim of occupying a valuable position within a competitive landscape (Boris, 2019). This study borrowed idea from Boris to refer to strategies of managing co-curricular activities as a well laid down set of actions to achieve specific goals. For instance, awarding scholarship to talented students, financing CCAs, benchmarking the good practices from well performing schools and assigning of personnel like patrons and matrons to manage the activities of clubs and societies as adapted from McClelland (1961).

*Contextual perspective of the study*, Farrugia (2015), highlighted the importance of implementing co-curricular activities' management strategies, such as benchmarking and scholarships, to improve students' achievements in co-curricular activities. They observed that benchmarking, widely practised in many countries, played a crucial role in increasing students' engagement in co-curricular activities, contributing to their emotional, social, physical, and civic development. It was clear that the current generation represented future leaders who needed to be well-prepared to independently lead and shape the future of our country, underscoring the importance of adequately equipping them for the challenges that lay ahead.

Of late, the global education system has undertaken exceptional development and revolutions, presenting school managers and governments with the challenge of adapting to this new era (Laura, 2017). The speedy changes have replaced traditional approaches in schools and ushered in a dynamic trend that demands a contemporary approach. Consequently, there was a need to embrace new strategies for managing co-curricular activities, and preparing students for activities beyond the classroom was vital for the success of participants in co-curricular activities, encompassing both hard and soft skills, such as career-oriented process knowledge and time management. Simultaneously, coaching played a

vital role in rectifying and enhancing students' involvement and performance through management observations and advice derived from day-to-day co-curricular activities. Effective coaching fostered teamwork skills, improved interpersonal communication, enhanced task-related skills, and provided encouragement (Laura, 2017).

Similarly, as per Davalos (2019), mentors or coaches in the United Kingdom faced significant challenges, with one of the prominent issues being the identification of appropriate strategies for managing extracurricular activities in schools. Numerous high schools in the UK struggled to overcome the difficulties associated with the inadequate application of suitable strategies for managing co-curricular activities, resulting in a substantial impact on students' achievements in these activities (Shavez, 2019). There were escalating challenges in the management of co-curricular activities in schools, as highlighted by Siffa (2011). Instances of students' failures in co-curricular activities have been reported in Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia during the 21st century, attributed to the use of inappropriate strategies in dealing with students involved in co-curricular activities.

The impact of the scholarship strategy in managing co-curricular activities in schools was a subject of contemplation. Catalyst (2020) reported from Singapore that numerous school stakeholders tended to neglect crucial strategies such as sponsorship, mentoring, and role models for effectively managing co-curricular activities with high student achievements. The application rates for scholarships were reported at 2%, and mentorship at 3.2%. Yet, these co-curricular categories played a pivotal role in shaping individuals' advancement through organisations: Role models showcased successful behaviours, providing a clear visualisation of how co-curricular activities were carried out, making a difference for participants who may not have otherwise encountered or interacted with them. Coaches offered guidance on

development and often assisted with soft skills such as active listening, among other aspects (Catalyst, 2020).

In a similar vein, Elizabeth (2019) highlighted that the primary purpose behind mentorship, sponsorship, and coaching was to enhance students' achievements, yet numerous schools were hesitant to embrace these practices. Many teachers exhibited reluctance towards mentorship, considering it time-consuming, and often attributed students' lack of attention to their advice. Mentors played a crucial role in guiding students not only in their academic endeavours but also in their broader life pursuits. They actively worked to propel students forward, acknowledging their efforts and advocating for collaborative efforts. Coaching actively involved participants in co-curricular activities, offering ongoing training and guidance to excel in their respective fields. Coaches empowered students to make independent decisions for success.

Jenelle et al. (2021) had discovered that clubs and societies faced closures due to a lack of student interest in joining them, with scouting, for instance, experiencing a mere 1.2% student participation in 2020. However, financing the activities of clubs and societies could pose a challenge due to discrepancies in the treasurers' books and difficulty accessing them for various activities. The establishment of robust financing and accounting systems was crucial to handle all organisational funds with meticulous care, promote co-curricular activities, and ensure students' achievements.

According to the Guyana Ministry of Education Sector Strategic Plan (2014-2018), there was a concerning 69% decline in the utilisation of role modelling as a strategy for managing co-curricular activities in secondary schools. However, they emphasised that involving role models in students' lives could significantly contribute to fostering positive and appropriate behaviours within co-curricular activities. Having a role model could inspire students to follow the path of a successful individual in the same field, instilling commitment

to co-curricular activities and maintaining focus on achieving priorities through effective time management in school activities. Role modelling served as a powerful motivator for students, enhancing their commitment. Through school-based role models, students exhibited increased interest and participation in daily school activities like co-curricular activities, willingly taking on duties and responsibilities (MoE&S, 2016).

Bayat (2015) suggested a strategy for managing co-curricular activities by emphasising the assignment of patrons and matrons with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Recognising and rewarding their efforts or job well done provided students with valuable opportunities to seek guidance on their career paths and engage in co-curricular activities with proper support for achieving their goals. Providing verbal feedback to students, planning daily routines, and monitoring school activities outside classes helped children expand and develop their talents, refine their listening skills, and encouraged them to express their thoughts about co-curricular activities as they actively pursued their ambitions (Green, 2015).

Morris (2016) noted that numerous schools, especially in West African countries like Nigeria, lacked the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively manage Co-Curricular Activities (CCAs). Specifically, only 32% of teachers in Nigeria were reported to possess the required expertise in applying relevant strategies for CCA management in secondary schools. This indicated that a significant 68% of teachers were not adequately engaged in utilising appropriate strategies to foster students' achievements through co-curricular activities. Despite its pivotal role in enhancing students' skills beyond academics, the management of CCAs posed various challenges for schools.

In Africa, the management of CCAs was a demanding task with low status, yet it was intricately linked to a child's intellectual, emotional, social, and moral development. For instance, the



development of social skills and relationships was evident as students often engaged in CCAs with peers from different grades, fostering relationship skills and lasting friendships. Additionally, clubs and societies led by dedicated and experienced matrons and patrons effectively nurtured students' talents, enabling them to compete for and earn certificates, trophies, and medals while also learning valuable skills such as time management and leadership (Amy, Feldman & Matjasko, 2016; Matjasko et al., 2019).

In Uganda, the Education Act (2008) emphasised that the Government of Uganda decentralised the management and supervision of co-curricular activities in schools. Co-curricular activities should be well managed by using requisite strategies of managing co-curricular, coaching/training, awarding scholarships, and other desirable strategies to bring about offers of a variety of opportunities for students' achievements in CCAs. Empirically, strategies of managing co-curricular activities were known for enhancing high students' achievements in co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Uganda.

The utilization of strategies such as mentorship and coaching in the administration of co-curricular activities like sports, scouting, and drama has been introduced in secondary schools in Gulu Municipality. However, the results did not meet expectations, indicating a gap in the effectiveness of the applied strategies or potential challenges in their execution (Bagala, 2017). To tackle this issue, it was deemed crucial to delve deeper into the reasons behind the low achievements in co-curricular activities. Possible factors could have included a lack of resources, insufficient training for mentors and coaches, or inadequate emphasis on the significance of co-curricular activities in the overall development of students. Moreover, socio-economic factors, cultural influences, or infrastructure limitations may also have played a role.

It would have been beneficial for educational stakeholders, including school administrators, teachers, parents, and policymakers in Gulu, to have collaborated and reassessed the existing strategies for managing co-curricular activities. This might have involved revisiting mentorship and coaching programs, ensuring proper training for those involved, and promoting a culture that values the role of co-curricular activities in fostering holistic student development and achievement in CCAs (Bagala, 2017). Furthermore, conducting a thorough evaluation of the implementation of these strategies, as well as gathering feedback from students and educators, could have provided valuable insights. This information could have informed the development of more effective and tailored approaches to enhance students' achievements in co-curricular activities in Northern Uganda's secondary schools.

## **Empirical Review**

### ***Strategies of Managing Co-Curricular Activities in Secondary Schools***

Dean (2015) conducted a study aimed at comprehending students' success by evaluating extracurricular activities in high schools in the United States of America. In his research, he reported that mentorship had been the predominantly favoured approach employed by teachers in most of the surveyed schools. Dean emphasised in his findings that, to foster inclusive student participation and achievements in all school activities, it was imperative to integrate coaching and training for talent development. It is worth noting that Dean's study focused specifically on high schools in the United States of America, whereas the present study narrowed its scope to secondary schools in Gulu City.

Moreover, Gralewski & Jankowska (2020) and Dhanmeher (2014) conducted separate studies that addressed parenting styles and the creativity of high school students in third-world countries like Persia. They underscored the significance of benchmarking

and mentorship for the effective functioning of school co-curricular activities (CCAs). These studies suggested that these approaches could align the goals, vision, and requirements of school networks, contributing to the improved management of their activities. Dhanmeher (2014) investigated the connection between attitudes, parenting practices, and the creativity of first-year high school students in Persia. He recommended assigning teachers as matrons and patrons of clubs and societies to inspire and cultivate aspirations in students, promoting ongoing aspirations by making students aware of the value of their achievements in CCAs, a strategy he reported as rarely used. Both studies indicated relevance to the current study concept, although they were conducted in different countries, leaving a gap for this study to address in secondary schools in Gulu City, Northern Uganda.

Similarly, Shirley (2017) in his study on the learning returns in educational investment in London noted that the level of students' achievements in CCAs was high as a result of their involvement in mentorship in debating roles, and their communication and public speaking abilities improved significantly, leading to regular awards of certificates. Shirley further reported that students actively engaged in internal debating roles were the highest performers in national and regional competitions, winning recognition annually. Shirley's study emphasised the importance of role models in students' learning and achievement drives. The above study left out methodological and temporal gaps, which this study fills. This study, intended for secondary schools in Gulu City, Uganda, utilised both qualitative and quantitative paradigms, bridging the gap between Shirley's qualitative research in London high schools, and reported on in 2023.

Boris (2019), in his study on the development of modern high school education career services in London, observed that training and coaching were the most appropriate strategies employed by teachers in the development of students' talents.

Teachers remained focused on bigger goals and achievements outside classes. From the perspective of Fouts (2010), training and coaching produced positive results in assisting patrons and matrons in carrying out their roles effectively, helping to address challenges associated with talent development and students' achievements in CCAs. However, role modelling was not commonly used in Portuguese high schools. The strategies mentioned for managing CCAs in high schools are relevant to this study, but there are differences in terms of times and geographical scopes. This study utilises both qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate and report the findings in the year 2022.

Reeves (2010), in his investigation into the effects of school stratification on the career and educational aspirations of girls in Kenya's secondary schools, reported that mentorship could lead to goal orientation. When students were mentored, they felt inspired and consistently focused on CCAs. According to Dey and Cruzvergara (2014) and Gralewski & Jankowska (2020) in their studies on high school education career services and diversity, Manchester emphasised that role modelling from excellent teachers and successful alumni helped manage CCAs better. It provided real-time support to teachers in dealing with students' ambitions to achieve highly in CCAs, promoting self-reliance in the future. However, Bayat (2015) also noted that benchmarking, another effective strategy, was not considered in their findings. This study aimed to include benchmarking and report on secondary schools in Gulu City.

Cardy (2011) observed that career development activities in high schools had an impact on students' life success in Derby, UK. He noted that the effectiveness of financing CCAs depended on the school's ability to appreciate the session, emphasising the need to incorporate other strategies. Tobias (2011) from Washington, DC pointed out that for students to achieve higher in CCAs, appropriate management was crucial. A clear sponsorship programme should be

determined, and teachers should identify available skills for CCAs and career successes to enhance achievements.

Cuseo, Fecas, and Thompson (2017), in their research based on thriving in schools and beyond, indicated that school authorities mostly applied scholarship programs and assigned matrons and patrons to enhance the level of CCAs for greater student achievements. Rahma et al. (2022) also reported that the use of patrons and matrons was the most preferred key strategy. They indicated that excellent matrons and patrons, supported by a school financing strategy to boost club activities, kept students engaged in CCAs and hopeful about their future, which could induce the desired level of students' achievements. Similarly, this study aimed to understand all the above aspects from the secondary schools in Gulu City and employed both qualitative and quantitative paradigms in the current era of education system management.

Siliker (2018) observed in India that utilising role models comprehensively eliminated managerial barriers. This model fostered competency development across broad management areas. Interaction with competent adults was identified as crucial for building resilience, and the infusion of identity could instil knowledge and skills while providing opportunities to challenge ideas.

However, Siliker reported the non-use of mentorship and scholarship in his findings, gaps that this study aims to address in secondary schools in Gulu City. The literature above presented sufficient evidence to emphasise the necessity of this study. The current study intends to bridge the aforementioned gaps in methods and scope based on strategies for managing co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Gulu City.

### Summary

Concerning strategies for managing CCAs, there were gaps in unpacking the nature of positive responses that could be realised when each strategy was employed for each CCA. Many scholars used surveys to collect data, and their reports did not comprehensively depict the level of application of the strategies. Furthermore, the scope appeared narrow, leaving numerous methodological gaps that this study critically seeks to address by employing both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses on a broader scope.

### Conceptual Framework of the Study

Achievement Theory of Motivation clearly portrays the interplay that takes place in organisations and is relevant underpinning of this study as presented in Figure 1, below.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Showing the Strategies of Managing CCA in Secondary Schools in Gulu City**

#### Strategies of Managing CCAs:

- Benchmarking
- Awarding Scholarships
- Training and Coaching Financing of CCAs
- Sponsorships to Excelling Students
- Assigning Patrons and Matrons to Manage Clubs and Societies
- Role Modeling

**Source:** *Researcher (2022)*

Strategies of managing co-curricular activities are assumed to facilitate students' achievement orientation and eventually motivate students' achievements in co-curricular activities in

secondary schools in Gulu City. The achievement orientation is identified as benchmarking best practices, awarding Scholarships, training and Coaching of Students, Matrons and patrons,



financing of CCAs, assigning Personnel like Patrons and Matrons to Manage Clubs and Societies, and role modelling facilitates activities of clubs and societies.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Orientation

Qualitative and quantitative approaches were used. The qualitative approach helped in collecting non-numerical data. Quantitative approach complemented the qualitative approach to collect numerical data. Combining the strengths of both methodologies helped the researchers to triangulate data and validate findings and gain deeper insights into research questions, as supported by Creswell and Plano-Clark (2018).

### Research Design

This study used a correlation design. Correlation allowed the researcher to analyse quantitative data with ease and it revealed the influence of each strategy of managing co-curricular activities; benchmarking, scholarship, sponsorship, use of

patrons and matrons, and award of certificates, among others, and revealed interdependencies.

### Target Population

The study targeted and involved head teachers, teachers, the city sports officer, and the city inspector of schools. This decision was arrived at because of the roles and responsibilities in managing the different activities of clubs and societies in the learning institutions within Gulu City.

### Sample Size

A total of 270 participants were involved in the study; 19 head teachers, 249 teachers, one city inspector of schools, and one city sports officer were determined by Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table of sample size determination. Head teachers are the overseers of all the school activities, teachers are the implementers of all teaching and learning activities at schools, the city inspector of schools inspects on behalf of the central government the status of all schools and reports on and the city sports officer is in charge of all the co-curricular activities within the city.

**Table 1: Showing the Distribution of Study Population.**

Category	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Techniques
Teachers	709	249	Sample Random Sampling
Head Teachers	20	19	Purposive Sampling
City Sports Officer (CSO)	01	01	Purposive sampling
City Inspector of Schools (CIS)	01	01	Purposive sampling
Total	731	270	

### Sampling Techniques

Simple random sampling was used to sample out teachers, and that gave them equal opportunities to participate. Purposive sampling was used on head teachers, CSO, and CIS because of their roles and responsibilities in the study area.

### Data Collection Techniques

- *Questionnaire surveys:* These were used to collect data from teachers, and it was

appropriate for an educated large sample population, and they contributed to achieving uniformity of facts gathered, as suggested by Kaplan & Maxwell (2019).

- *Interviews:* Self-administered interviews were conducted with head teachers, CIS, and CSO as key informants of the study. The technique fitted the respondents as they had limited time for other techniques. Their roles provided them with valuable insights into the study variables,

making them essential contributors to the research field.

- *Observations:* This technique was used by the researcher to observe games and sports, netball, football, volleyball, among others, as they could take place immediately.

### Data Collection Instruments

- *Questionnaires:* Closed-ended questionnaires were used to capture background information of respondents and primary data information on strategies of managing CCAs using the Likert Scale.
- *Interview Guide:* A Structured interview guide was used to collect data on strategies of managing CCAs from head teachers, CSO, and CIS, taking advantage of their limited time and schedules.
- *Observation Checklist:* Hand in hand with other instruments, the researcher observed strategies used by the different schools to manage CCAs and verified data collected using other instruments.

### Quality Control

- *Validity:* The Total Survey Error Framework was used to assess and reflect on refining the quality of the questionnaires, interview guide, and their results, and it helped to reduce the possibility of errors (Pennay, 2014). Survey approach aided the holistic views of the data collection process concurrently (Whiteley, 2014). The results of instrument validity were 0.7, as required and acceptable in research (Amin, 2005).
- *Reliability:* Internal consistency of the instrument was used to assess the level of reliability of the instrument (Yamashita and Miller, 2021). The Likert scale was found to be the most reliable means of measuring behaviours, attitudes, and opinions of individual respondents on the subject matter

under investigation. Using the Cronbach alpha coefficient, it was noted that the reliability estimate of the research instrument was 0.87, and the reliability of individual items was all above 0.85. Hence, no items were dropped.

- *Extraneous Variable.* Random sampling was used to select this study according to the variables. Quality, therefore, was ensured by the use of clear instructions to all the participants to provide the much-needed facts.

### Administrative Procedures

- Dean Faculty of Education and Humanities issued the research with a letter to introduce him in the field while collecting data. No research assistant was used due to limited finances to facilitate any, therefore, all the data were collected by the researcher himself (interviews and questionnaires management).

### Ethical Consideration

This study adhered to ethical principles, ensuring integrity, respect, and responsibility towards participants and their data. Participants had the freedom to withdraw at any stage without consequences. They were provided with detailed information about the study's purpose, objectives, procedures, and potential risks. Participants' identities were not linked to the collected data, and their information was kept secure. Data access was restricted to the researcher and his supervisors, and responses were used solely for research purposes. The findings were shared ethically, accurately, and without misrepresentation.

### Data Analyses

This research data was processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS: Version 15.0) as it covers many tests of statistical analysis (Coakes, 2008). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the interview data as it filtered respondents' stories, and it allowed the researcher to emphasise crucial elements within the

respondents' narratives and highlight key points that reverberated effectively with the readers of this research. Observation data were analysed narratively and provided all-inclusive semantic insights into various aspects of communal singularities. The researcher employed a rubric to assess the effectiveness of strategies in managing co-curricular activities (CCAs), categorising scores above 80% as high, scores between 70-80% as moderate, and scores below 70% as low. Descriptive statistics analysis: frequency, percentage, and rated scores were used to establish the strategies of managing CCAs in secondary schools (Coakes, 2008).

### Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The initial concern in the study was methodological gaps, specifically the reluctance of respondents to disclose information due to fears that it might be made public, potentially compromising the quality of data. This was mitigated by employing strategies such as ensuring confidentiality and anonymity in

reporting, creating a comfortable environment during data collection, and clearly emphasising the purpose of the study. Information that was missed out by the questionnaire on strategies of managing co-curricular activities, specifically, was delimited by interviews and observation. The impact of extraneous variables that could have affected the quality of respondents' information was minimised by providing clear instructions during the study.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of respondents were categorised based on their division of location, school level, gender, years of teaching experience at the school, school ownership, guiding principles of the institution, decision-making values, and involvement as a matron or patron of a club or society and participation in specific co-curricular activities (CCAs) within the school.

**Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (Teachers)**

		Frequency	Percent
		N	%
Division	<i>A</i>	110	55.8
	<i>B</i>	87	44.2
Level of the school	O' Level	59	29.9
	A' Level	138	70.1
Gender	Male	138	70.1
	Female	59	29.9
School Foundation	Government	76	38.6
	Private	121	61.4
Schools' decision-making based on	Religious values	127	64.5
	Non-Religious values	70	35.5
A matron or patron of any school?	No	122	61.9
	Yes	75	38.1
Years spent in the school	1-3 years	86	43.7
	4-6 years	58	29.4
	7-10 years	28	14.2
	Others	25	12.7
Highest Qualification	Diploma	50	25.4
	First Degree	138	70.1
	Master Degree	9	4.6

Table 2 above shows that the study involved teachers from two divisions: 55.8% from Division A and 44.2% from Division B. Regarding the level of education they teach, the majority (70.1%) were from A-Level schools, while 29.9% were from O-Level institutions. In terms of gender, 70.1% of respondents were male, whereas 29.9% were female, indicating a gender imbalance favouring male teachers. Regarding school ownership, 38.6% of the teachers worked in government schools, while a higher percentage (61.4%) worked in private schools. Decision-making in schools was largely influenced by religious values (64.5%), while 35.5% based their decisions on non-religious values. When asked if they served as matrons or patrons, 38.1% indicated they held such roles, while 61.9% did not. Teachers' experience in their current schools varied: 43.7% had worked for 1-3 years, 29.4% for 4-6 years, 14.2% for 7-10 years, and 12.7% for over 10 years. In terms of academic qualifications, the majority (70.1%) held a first degree, 25.4% had a diploma, and a small fraction (4.6%) had a Master's degree.

The dominance of male teachers (70.1%) suggests a gender disparity in the teaching profession at this level, which may have implications for gender representation and mentorship for students. A higher number of teachers were from private schools (61.4%), which may indicate that private schools employ more teachers, potentially due to government schools having lower staffing levels or recruitment limitations. With 64.5% of teachers stating that school decisions were based on religious values, this suggests that faith-based principles significantly shape school policies and administrative choices. This could impact inclusivity and diversity in decision-making. The fact that 43.7% of teachers had worked in their schools for only 1-3 years indicates high mobility or turnover, which could affect institutional stability, continuity in teaching, and overall student performance. The majority (70.1%) held a first degree, which aligns with education sector requirements. However, the low percentage of

Master's degree holders (4.6%) suggests limited advanced specialisation among teachers, which could impact professional growth and research contributions in the field.

### Strategies of Managing Co-Curricular Activities in Secondary Schools in Gulu City

This section focuses on establishing the strategies of managing CCAs in secondary schools in Gulu City. Also, the study explored whether the popular strategies used were homogenous or the same between government-aided and private schools. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used, and the results are presented accordingly. It is important to mention that the strategies were ranked as low, moderate, and high, depending on the percentage of respondents who agreed or disagreed with them. As in the previous section, where achievement levels were developed based on the sum of yes or no answers. In this particular case, the rubric was developed based on the percentage of agreement (Strongly Agreed (SA) + Agreed (A)) and disagreement (Strongly Disagreed (SD) + Disagreed (D)). Thus, the rating was as follows: Above 80% - High; 70-80 % -Moderate, and below 70% -Low (it helped the researcher to easily convert qualitative information, thoughts, feelings, and opinions into quantitative data that were statistically analysed). Detailed analysis is presented in *Tables 3* and *4*. For better understanding, readers are reminded that the two tables should be read concurrently.

The analysis in the *Table 3* and *Table 4*, revealed that on average based on strongly agreed responses, the preferred number of strategies of managing CCAs by the different secondary schools in Gulu City notably; assigning of patrons and matrons (60.5% strongly agreed), certificates (51.1% strongly agreed), training and coaching (48.4% strongly agreed) and scholarship (48.2% strongly agreed). In addition, looking at strongly agreed opinions of the respondents, the study revealed that mentorship (36.1% strongly agreed) and sponsorship (35.0% strongly agreed) are secondly

ranked in percentages as being used by a good number of schools in Gulu City. The details of which are summarised in both *Tables 3* and *4*.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Strategies of Managing Co-Curricular Activities in Secondary Schools in Gulu City by School**

Strategies	Items	SD	D	A	SA
		N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)
Scholarship	In this school, there is a scholarship for talented boys and girls in CCAs	15(7.6%)	23(11.7%)	64(32.5%)	95(48.2%)
Sponsorship	This school has several sponsored talented boys and girls in CCAs	18(9.1%)	32(16.2%)	78(39.6%)	69(35.0%)
Bench-marking	The games and sports teams of this school go out to great-performing schools to learn how they manage CCAs in their schools	14(7.1%)	65(33.0%)	76(38.6%)	42(21.3%)
	Benchmarking on good practices of managing co-curricular activities has improved how CCAs are managed in this school	22(11.3%)	43(22.1%)	86(44.1%)	44(22.6%)
Financing	Students, pay a membership fee for joining any clubs and societies in this school to fund our activities	52(26.4%)	51(25.9%)	49(24.9%)	45(22.8%)
	As students of this school, we annually contribute to the sports gala	43(21.8%)	52(26.4%)	46(23.4%)	56(28.4%)
Role modelling	This school organises sessions for role models to talk to us once every term	15(7.6%)	54(27.4%)	60(30.5%)	68(34.5%)
	This school has a set of role models they call to periodically talk to students on CCA focuses	17(8.6%)	60(30.5%)	66(33.5%)	54(27.4%)
Training and Coaching	In this school, we have school trainers and coaches hired to train and coach students' CCAs	7(3.6%)	11(5.6%)	66(33.7%)	112(57.1%)
	Every evening and early morning, we are engaged in training and coaching before and after classes, respectively, to build our talents	18(9.1%)	37(18.8%)	64(32.5%)	78(39.6%)
Assigning patrons and matrons	In this school, all the clubs and societies are assigned patrons and matrons to manage their activities	10(5.1%)	6(3.0%)	51(25.9%)	130(66.0%)
	Our patrons and matrons are assigned clear roles and responsibilities to initiate and handle the CCAs in this school	8(4.1%)	15(7.7%)	65(33.3%)	107(54.9%)
Mentorship programme	This school has mentors to provide information about career pathways to students in CCAs	10(5.1%)	34(17.3%)	72(36.5%)	81(41.1%)
	Our school mentor helps us to explore careers, set our goals, develop contacts for talent development, and identify resources to boost CCAs.	9(4.6%)	39(19.8%)	88(44.7%)	61(31.0%)
Reward and recognition	In this school, talented boys and girls are rewarded and recognised during assemblies to motivate them	10(5.1%)	18(9.1%)	66(33.5%)	103(52.3%)
Certificates	Our school administrators award certificates to students in CCAs annually	15(7.7%)	25(12.8%)	58(29.6%)	98(50.0%)



**Table 4: Summary of Strategies of Managing Co-Curricular Activities in which the Respondents' Disagreement and Agreement (in %)**

Strategies	Disagreement (SD+D) (%)	Agreement (A+SA) (%)	Rating
Scholarship	18.3	81.7	High
Sponsorship	25.3	74.7	Moderate
Bench-marking	36.7	63.3	Low
Financing CCAs	49.9	50.1	Low
Role modelling	37.0	63.0	Low
Training and Coaching	18.5	81.5	High
Assigning matrons and patrons	10	90	High
Mentorship programme	23.4	76.6	Moderate
Reward and recognition	14.2	85.8	High
Certificates	10.3	89.7	High

Rubric used by researcher to rate the strategies of managing CCA: Above 80% -High; 70-80 % - Moderate, and below 70% -Low. In particular, Table 4 summarises the analysis of the strategies used in the study area based on the designed rubric. The findings indicate that the widely used strategies of managing CCAs based on the respondents' opinions were: assignment of matrons and patrons (90.0%), certificates (89.7%), reward and recognition (85.8%), scholarship (81.9%), and training and coaching (81.5%). Strategies of managing co-curricular activities rated as moderate by the study respondents were mentorship (74.7%) and sponsorship (76.6%). The list employed strategies of managing CCAs rated low by these study respondents were benchmarking, role modelling, and financing CCAs.

Following the semi-structured interview with the Head teachers, it was found that most (13 out of 19 schools) of the schools used at least seven strategies. However, several Head teachers (10 out of 19) said that benchmarking and scholarship were uncommon strategies, as reported by one respondent;

*'Strategies of managing CCAs need finances. No strategy can ever succeed without finances.'*

Another added on;

*'Funding is key in the implementation of the strategies, but as private schools, we are limited by finance to create the impact of CCAs in Gulu City.'*

Furthermore, the study revealed that it is not only the strategies that result into students' achievements, there is need to sensitize both the students and parents on the importance of CCAs. Students must be disciplined and honest; clear programming by school management so that it does not clash with some other core activities such as academics, adequate budgeting and diversifying the CCA (games such as rugby, volley ball and many others should be introduced in schools). One respondent noted that for a better performance, students' talents should be identified and intensive training and coaching should follow. A respondent emphasised that;

*'Talents without training cannot be developed, but all those who go with proper financing of the activities.'*

It was clear from the Head teachers that finance is the backbone of the implementation of CCAs in the City. However, they observed that achievement in CCAs can be attained through training and coaching, proper guidance by the matrons and patrons, and giving sponsorship. The City Inspector of Schools also had a similar view. The inspector pointed out that financing, training and coaching, and sponsorship are key strategies in managing

CCAs in the City. The data from the observation were used to depict and confirm the verbal responses to the study respondents, and they are attached in Appendix G.

From the questionnaires and in-depth interviews, that is, the level of students' achievements and several preferred strategies of managing co-

curricular activities in Gulu City, it is natural to suggest that the achievements seem to be related to the main strategies such as financing, assigning patron and matrons, training and coaching, reward and recognition, awarding certificates of good performance and scholarship. However, this is a question that will be tackled in the third objective of the study.

**Table 5: Frequency Distribution of Level of Students' Achievements and Strategies of Managing CCAs in Secondary Schools in Gulu City (Observations).**

Theme One: Level of students' achievements indicated by	Frequency (Percentage)
Trophies	12(80.0%)
Medal	10(66.7%)
Award and recognition certificates	13(86.7%)
Theme Two: Strategies of managing CCAs indicated by	
Award and recognition certificate	10(66.7%)
Costumes	12(80.0%)
Participation	12(80.0%)
Playgrounds	13(86.7%)
Games and Sports Tool Kits	15(100%)
Budget for CCAs	9(60.0%)

The above findings revealed the data collected and analysed from observation checklists. *Table 5* summarised analysis of the level of individual schools' achievement in terms of trophies (80.0%), certificates, award recognitions certificates (86.7), and medals (66.7). The findings indicated that the widely available used strategies of managing CCAs based on the respondents' opinions were indicated by; award and recognition certificate (66.7%), costumes (80.0%), participation (80.0%), playgrounds (86.7%), games and sports kits (100%) and budgets for CCAs (60.0). The majority of the schools achieved above average in terms of the level of students' achievements in CCAs at the individual secondary schools' level.

### Analysis of Observational Data

This subsection presents an analysis of data from the observation checklist, which was categorised under Appendix D: Strategies of managing CCA in the study area. Observations were carried out in nineteen (19) secondary schools in Gulu City. The findings revealed that 10 out of 19 schools had high evidence of strategies of managing CCAs (for instance, costumes and a good playground were observed). However, most of these schools are well-established missionaries' and government-aided schools. In the case of strategies to manage CCAs, it was noted that most schools did not have a budget for CCAs, as presented in *Table 6*.

**Table 6: The Number and Percentage of Observed Learners' Achievement and Strategies of Managing CCAs**

Sch. Code	Evidence of Strategies for Managing CCA						No. items N (%)
	Reward & Recognition	Costumes	Participation	Playgrounds	G & Sports	Budget for CCAs	
ACH-01 <sup>2</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	9 (100%)
ACH-02 <sup>2</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	--	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	--	7(77.8%)
ACH-03 <sup>2</sup>	--	<i>X</i>	--	--	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	4(44.4%)
ACH-04 <sup>1</sup>	--	<i>X</i>	--	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	--	6(66.7%)
ACH-05 <sup>2</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	--	8(88.9%)
ACH-06 <sup>2</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	9 (100%)
ACH-07 <sup>1</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	9 (100%)
ACH-08 <sup>1</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	9 (100%)
ACH-09 <sup>2</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	--	--	5(55.6%)
ACH-10 <sup>2</sup>	<i>X</i>	--	--	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	--	4(44.4%)
ACH-11 <sup>2</sup>	<i>X</i>	--	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	--	5(55.6%)
ACH-12 <sup>2</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	--	5(55.6%)
ACH-13 <sup>1</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	9 (100%)
ACH-14 <sup>1</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	9 (100%)
ACH-15 <sup>1</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	9 (100%)
ACH-16 <sup>2</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	9 (100%)
ACH-17 <sup>2</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	9 (100%)
ACH-18 <sup>2</sup>	--	--	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	--	3(33.3%)
ACH-19 <sup>2</sup>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	--	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	--	6(66.7%)
<b>N</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>(%)</b>	<b>(84.2%)</b>	<b>(84.2%)</b>	<b>(73.6%)</b>	<b>(94.7%)</b>	<b>(94.7%)</b>	<b>(52.6%)</b>	

Key: *x*-- the school have evidence; -- No evidence seen

Superscripts: 1 government-aided schools & -2 private schools.

## DISCUSSIONS.

The findings revealed that the preferred strategies of managing CCAs by the different secondary schools in Gulu City were: assigning of patrons and matrons (60.5% strongly agreed), certificates (51.1% strongly agreed), training and coaching (48.4% strongly agreed) and scholarship (48.2% strongly agreed). The study indicated that CCAs need teachers' roles (that is, as patrons and matrons) in shaping CCAs in secondary schools. For instance, patrons and matrons should be able to guide and support students to achieve and realise their talents as suggested by Das (2016). Furthermore, the in-depth interview with Head teachers and City Inspector of Schools revealed that training and coaching are very important in managing CCAs;

this view has been echoed by Shum, Lee, and Cheung (2021). They emphasised that students should be trained until they achieve the desired skills, although this might be time-consuming. According to Kamau et al (2020), many schools' managers considered CCAs as unnecessary activities that consume academic time, and a similar view was noted in this study, where one of the respondents in an in-depth interview said that CCAs are time-consuming and costly. However, another respondent acknowledged that CCAs require time, and to avoid conflict with academic activities, proper programming or scheduling time and budgeting of CCAs in schools are required.

Another important strategy revealed by the study was financing CCAs. The study indicates that

private schools in the study area employ the strategy more than the government schools. Although some of the respondents said that private schools are limited by finances. Obviously, school managers usually employ their managerial skills based on the optimum allocation of resources and evaluating activities to achieve desired goals and objectives. In this case, CCAs might have been less attended to than academic activities. But to a greater extent, private schools employ this strategy, and this could be due to less stringent accountability requirements in private schools compared to government schools or flexibility in planning, budgeting, and implementation in private schools. What was appealing in this study was the overall view (Head teachers, CIS, and CSO) that CCAs cannot succeed without finance.

The findings revealed an important aspect of this study's objectives, which is the acknowledgement that students' achievement in co-curricular activities can be influenced by various factors beyond the curricular and school programming. The researchers like Gralewski and Jankowska (2020) and Whiteley (2014) equally recognise that individual motivation, dedication, and talent play a significant role in determining the level of success students attain in CCAs. Furthermore, the findings reveal that the support and resources available to students can impact their achievements in CCAs: Some students may excel in these activities if they have access to adequate support systems, such as dedicated coaches/mentors, well-equipped facilities, and funding for training or competitions. On the other hand, students who lack such support may struggle to reach their full potential.

## CONCLUSION

This study concluded that almost all seven strategies of managing CCAs, assigning matrons and patrons, sponsorship, scholarship, benchmarking, role modelling, training and coaching, mentorship, and sponsorship are widely used in most secondary schools with different levels of statistical significance on students' achievements. Though the

private secondary schools are selective in their choices of strategies to manage CCAs.

## Recommendation

The city leaders should always lobby for development partners and the central government to provide enough funding support to the sports sector, right from the local to the national level.

## Suggestion for Further Study

As this study didn't cover all the aspects of strategies of managing CCAs, the researcher suggests: Investigate the influence of school leadership styles and students' achievements in co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Gulu City.

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