The Implementation of Co-curricular Activities in Secondary Schools of East Hararghe Zone, Oromia Region, Ethiopia

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Abstract

This study was intended to explore the implementation of co-curricular activities in secondary schools found in East Hararghe Zone. To achieve this purpose, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected using surveys, interviews, and document analysis. 412 participants were selected using available, stratified, and systematic sampling techniques. Mean score and ANOVA were used to analyze the data. The results have shown that co-curricular activities in secondary schools lack a stable structure, a distinct purpose, and an opportunity to include a large number of students. Lack of facilities, financial constraints, organizational and structural problems, lack of recognition and rewards, and absence of awareness-raising training were all seen to have a detrimental influence on the implementation of co-curricular activities. Co-curricular activities were implemented in schools, but it was felt that they did not adequately support students' overall development. In order to improve the quality of co-curricular activities and achieve the intended results, training on the multifaceted issues of co-curricular activities should be provided. Moreover, a system can be established to monitor, regulate, and boost the implementation of co-curricular activities across the education system.

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Introduction

Secondary schools are the ideal settings for preparing teenagers and young adults for active engagement in social, political, and economic domains (Daniyal, Nawaz, Hassan, & Mubeen, 2012). These schools play crucial and challenging roles in educating young people for the labour market (Petnuchová, 2013). Thus, decisions should be made at schools to take co-curricular activities into account. Consequently, students would have more freedom and chances to express themselves outside the confines of the school's curriculum via co-curricular activity planning.

According to Dastyar (2018), co-curricular activities are among the activities recognised by schools that are not directly related to the formal curriculum. They may also be considered as

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extracurricular, i.e., activities carried on outside the regular course of study. Common examples include student newspapers, art shows, mock trials, debate competitions, mathematics, robotics, and engineering teams, and contests. But given the differing interpretations of the term, it is good to determine exactly what type of activity is being used in a particular context (Sari, Idris, & Ariffin, 2019).

Curricular activities are formal while co-curricular activities are informal (Chalageri & Yarriswami, 2018). The curriculum involves classroom teaching, instruction, and examinations. The 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 by fostering in them the necessary qualities and skills that enhance their academic learning capabilities (Rathore, Chaudhry, & Azad, 2018). Briefly, co-curricular activities complement the academic curriculum while adding value to the overall development of students, making them appropriate as co-curricular activities.

Students who are engaged in co-curricular activities achieve a better understanding of acquired knowledge and gain desirable communication skills than those who are not involved in any co-curricular activities. According to Hinds, et al. (2014), students who participate in a variety of extracurricular activities are less likely to commit crimes and to dropout of schools. These students are also able to sharpen their abilities in areas like oral communication, teamwork, and confidence. Co-curricular activities 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; Baiagee, 2012). It should be noted that co-curricular activities are part of general education and help students learn important life skills (Selamat, Ismail, Ahmad, & Noordin, 2013). They connect the curriculum to the skills students need in real life.

The planning of co-curricular activities is the responsibility of the principals in secondary schools. They are also required to advocate for the proper implementation of educational tasks and act as mentors (Primasatya & Imron, 2020). Similarly, teachers in schools play a key role in the implementation of co-curricular activities. According to Batool and Raiz (2019), teachers should be aware of their role in the implementation of the activities.

Co-curricular activities hold a significant position in Ethiopia, at least from a policy perspective. They are acknowledged as crucial resources in the nation's education system for fulfilling the objectives of several intersecting concerns, including gender, HIV/AIDS, civic and ethical education. The term "co-curricular activity" is more acceptable and preferred than "extracurricular activity" in the country's education and training policy.

In Ethiopia, despite the policy direction, co-curricular activities have not been effective in supporting the formal curriculum that takes place in the classroom. In this regard, Lazaro and Anney (2016) found that student involvement in the co-curricular activities of higher education institutions and second-cycle primary schools was too minimal. Likewise, Siraj (2011) and Temesgen (2018) reported that most secondary schools in Ethiopia were not successful in adequately engaging students in their co-curricular programs. A glimpse by the present investigators of the school situation also shows the same scenario. The researchers identified and

comprehended that there is a scarcity of studies on the implementation of co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Ethiopia in general and in the study area in particular. Therefore, by examining the implementation of co-curricular activities in the secondary schools, this study aimed to explore the state of co-curricular activities in Ethiopia as well as in the study area.

In order to examine the problem under investigation, the following research questions were formulated: (1) How were co-curricular activities planned and coordinated in secondary schools of East Hararghe Zone? (2) How successful were co-curricular activities in secondary schools of East Hararghe Zone? (3) Is there statistically significant mean difference among different groups of respondents with respect to their responses regarding the implementation of co-curricular activities in secondary schools of East Hararghe Zone?

Methods

The researchers used a survey design that included both quantitative and qualitative data. Surveys give researchers the chance to investigate social phenomena using representative samples of the target population. Through the widespread use of questionnaires and interviews, the survey design also enables the collection of quantitative and qualitative data.

Using available sampling techniques, eight supervisors, ten principals, and 14 vice-principals were chosen to participate in the research. Moreover, 259 students out of 459, 109 teachers out of 328, and 20 co-curricular coordinators out of 70 were chosen using systematic random sampling technique. A stratified random sampling technique was also used to choose 10 government secondary schools (out of 46) based on their location.

In this study, a questionnaire and interview were employed to gather the data. A questionnaire was prepared to collect data from students, teachers, and co-curricular activity coordinators. In the instrument, both closed and open-ended questions, with five-point scales that ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5), were included.

Prior to the main study, a pilot test was conducted on two principals, 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 Chrombach alpha, was found to be 0.77. To ensure face validity, the instruments were checked by experts who were authorities in the area of the study.

Similarly, an interview guide was prepared to gather information from eight supervisors and ten school principals (excluding vice principals) on the practises of co-curricular activities, their benefits, and challenges. All of the interviews were conducted by one of the researchers. Besides, to obtain additional data about the activities of co-curricular programs, documents pertaining to extracurricular activities of students in the sample schools were reviewed. Overall, the entire dataset was gathered in three weeks.

The data collected through the methods described above were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and percentages were used in order to describe and understand the features of a specific data set. A one-way ANOVA was also computed to determine whether or not there was a significant difference in findings between

groups of respondent students, teachers, and school leaders. ANOVA was used on the assumption that each group is drawn from a large sample of a normally distributed population. The qualitative data, on the other hand, was analysed qualitatively through narration and interpretation. It was recorded, transcribed, and coded, and the results of the interpretations were discussed.

Results and Discussion

Planning and Organization of Co-curricular Activities

For the purpose of analysis, the grand mean score obtained from the data was taken as the respondents' scores which are considered to be a continuous variable ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" (1.00 to 5.00 with two trisection scores of 2.33 and 3.66). Based on the trisecting scores, the range was grouped into three effectiveness levels which included disagreeing mean scores from 1.00 to 2.33, average mean scores from 2.34 to 3.66, and agreeing mean scores from 3.67 to 5.00 (Nora, 2018).

Table 1

Planning and Organization of Co-curricular Activities

Items	Respondents	N	Mean	SD	F- value	P- value
Co-curricular activities are organized according to guidebook.	Students	220	2.30	0.937	13.64	.000
	Teachers	101	2.42	1.185		
	Leaders	44	3.18	1.040		
	Total	365	2.44	1.059		
Clear goals are set for co-curricular activities.	Students	220	2.91	1.208	1.84	.161
	Teachers	101	2.80	0.959		
	Leaders	44	2.57	0.974		
	Total	365	2.84	1.120		
Co-curricular activities are well-planned.	Students	220	2.84	1.090	47.25	.000
	Teachers	101	2.91	1.078		
	Leaders	44	4.48	0.549		
	Total	365	3.05	1.161		
Most co-curricular activities are formed based on directives.	Students	219	3.72	1.010	11.56	.000
	Teachers	101	4.27	0.835		
	Leaders	44	4.00	0.988		
	Total	364	3.90	0.990		
In co-curricular activities, students participate collectively/ together regardless of their grade level	Students	220	3.95	1.132	4.25	.015
	Teachers	101	4.25	0.899		
	Leaders	44	4.32	0.740		
	Total	365	4.08	1.040		

Note. SD=standard deviation, N= total size of sample in the group, F-value= ANOVA results

As indicated in Table 1, the mean values for students, teachers, and leaders in the co-curricular activities being organized according to the guidebook were 2.30, 2.42, and 3.18, respectively. The grand mean (2.44) was more than the average mean, i.e., 2.34–3.66. The result of the one-way ANOVA ($p<0.05$) reveals that there was a statistically significant difference between the respondent groups. Leaders had a higher rating than teachers and students in relation to the issue at hand. Apart from this, the document review revealed that the majority of schools do not have the essential guidebooks for organizing co-curricular activities in their files. However, co-curricular activities such as anti-HIV/AIDS and the student organization (1 to 5 network grouping) have supplementary resources that serve as guides. It can, therefore, be concluded that the co-curricular activities in schools were not properly organized based on the curriculum and guidebooks. This implies that co-curricular activities were not adequately interceded with formal learning endeavours.

In the study carried out by Siddiky (2019), it was found that students were not willing to participate in co-curricular activities. Another study conducted by Rathore, Chaudhry, and Azad (2018) emphasized that co-curricular activities have a positive impact on students' overall performance. They further argued that participation in extracurricular activities improves class attendance, which then plays an important role in achieving high scholastic performance. Thus, proper attention should be given by schools to use all opportunities of co-curricular activity.

The other very important issue regarding the organization of co-curricular activities is setting clear objectives and goals. As presented in Table 1, item 2, students, teachers, and leaders have a mean score of 2.91, 2.80, and 2.57 respectively. The grand mean score, 2.84, falls within the range of the mean average. This shows that the respondents were not confident enough to agree with the statement that each co-curricular activity has clear goal or objectives. The comparison of the means at an ANOVA value of 0.161 shows there were no significant mean differences among the respondents. No matter what their role they have everyone responded unvaryingly about the problem.

The third item in Table 1 presents that the mean scores for students and teachers, 2.84 and 2.91, respectively, was significantly smaller than the mean score for school leaders (4.48) while the grand mean score was 3.05. This means that school leaders had sufficient knowledge that the co-curricular activities were conducted through a well-developed activity plan. In reality, however, the plan should be shared among students and teachers who are actively engaged with the program. Research findings uncover the reality that co-curricular activities should be planned and carried out by a number of parties. These parties include students, teachers, supervisors, parents, and other staff members of the school. They are expected to have a shared vision and/or plan to run activities to organize activities and to take on leadership roles (Wangai, 2012).

The grand mean score of respondents for item 4 in Table 1 is greater than the average mean value indicating that the majority of respondents agree with the item. The one-way ANOVA result indicates that there is a significant mean difference among the respondents. Teachers and leaders, with mean values of 4.27 and 4.0 respectively, adhere to the execution of co-curricular activities with well-recognized directives. In this regard, during an interview one of the principals reported the following:

> …Since last year, more than three directive letters have been written by co-curricular activities on issues like tax and revenue, tourism, cultural heritage, traffic, the command post of peace and security, and technical and vocational co-curricular activities...(P1).

Most of the co-curricular activities in secondary schools are designed to alleviate contemporary issues that are becoming problems in society. However, the organization of co-curricular activities was not based on the schools' needs or the interests of teachers and students. This is contrary to the findings by Kwon, Brint, Curwin, and Cantwell (2020). For these scholars, co-curricular activities should be organized in accordance with the needs of the beneficiaries and circumstances of the school.

On item 5 of Table 1, it was found that the mean value of student, teacher, and leader responses regarding the notion that students participate collectively in co-curricular activities regardless of their class or grade level was 3.95, 4.25, and 4.32, respectively. The comparison of means at an ANOVA value of (0.01) revealed a statistically significant mean difference between respondents at $p<0.05$. Although all three groups agreed that students should participate in co-curricular activities collectively, teachers and leaders believed more than students did. This implies that ninth grade students engage alongside students from grades 10, 11, and 12. This demonstrates that if there are 200 students in an anti-HIV/AIDS club, they are all grouped together in a single room. This obviously entails that the members of the co-curricular activities are not effectively managed as they are not organized according to the students' grade or class levels. Supporting this, one of the principals interviewed had the following to say.

> ... Due to time constraints, we grouped 14 co-curricular activities into 5 clusters, with all students in the school participating in the same way but with different perspectives or missions for the co-curricular activities.…. (P2).

These assertions indicate how co-curricular activities were poorly organized and managed.

Operation of Co-curricular Activities in Secondary Schools

Table 2

Implementation of Co-curricular Activities

Items	Respondents	N	Mean	SD	F- value	P- value
Students actively select co-curricular activities on the bases of their interest.	Students	220	3.29	1.306	19.421	.000
	Teachers	101	4.20	1.058		
	Leaders	44	3.86	1.322		
	Total	365	3.61	1.306		
School advertises co-curricular activities for more student involvement	Students	217	3.05	1.368	3.762	.024
	Teachers	101	3.38	1.224		
	Leaders	44	3.55	1.337		
	Total	362	3.20	1.336		

Items	Respondents	N	Mean	SD	F- value	P- value
Students participate in co-curricular activities anticipating their future occupation.	Students	220	2.96	0.870	18.984	.000
	Teachers	101	2.44	0.953		
	Leaders	44	2.20	1.153		
	Total	365	2.73	0.976		
Co-curricular activities are well implemented to please students who are involved	Students	220	2.00	0.712	1.248	0.288
	Teachers	96	2.10	0.840		
	Leaders	37	2.19	0.845		
	Total	353	2.05	0.763		

Note. SD=standard deviation, N= total size of sample in the group, F-value= ANOVA results

Item 1 of Table 2 shows that the mean scores of students, teachers, and leaders were 3.29, 4.20, and 3.86, respectively. At 99% confidence level, the one-way ANOVA result revealed a significant mean difference between the three groups of respondents. This shows that the responses among the respondents were not similar. In this regard, teachers' responses significantly differ from students' and leaders' responses. This means that teachers were bold enough to claim that students join on the basis of their interest. According to Selamat, Ismail, Ahmad, and Noordin (2013), when students are allowed to join by interest, the co-curricular activities can be taken unequivocally. Accordingly, different personality traits in students such as adaptation, confidence, honesty, sympathetic attitude, social obligation, sense of responsibility, time management, and leadership qualities can be augmented.

With regard to co-curricular activities and the extent of student involvement, the mean score of students (3.05) was less than that of the teachers' (3.38) and leaders' (3.55). A grand mean value of 3.20 was obtained in the range of mean average values. The ANOVA result shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the opinions of the three groups. Leaders agreed more to the existence of active involvement than teachers and students. The difference in the opinion of respondent groups and the mean value at the undecided level may be due to the reason that the advertisement methods for co-curricular activities were not satisfactory enough for students to be aware of co-curricular activities based on their knowledge and interest.

On item 3 of Table 2, the mean score of students, 2.96, is greater than that of teachers' (2.44) and leaders' (2.20). Also, the results of one-way ANOVA show that there is a significant mean difference at 0.05 significance level. The grand mean 2.73 implies that there was no enough rating to support the opinion that participating in co-curricular activities forecast students' future occupations. So, there should be harmony among the groups of respondents regarding the benefits of co-curricular activities and their impact. Unfortunately, this did not happen in this study. Students realize the importance of co-curricular activities for developing overall competences, including their future career. This is a positive step for students. Other parties are expected to react in a similar manner. Positive feeling leads students to participate actively in co-curricular activities, and make them working collaboratively with their peers. This makes them to have a great opportunity to gain hands-on experience (Fung, Lee, & Chow, 2007).

On item 4 of Table 2, the grand mean (2.05) was below the mean average score. And, there was no significant mean difference among the responses of students, teachers, and leaders. The results indicate that all the respondents, irrespective of their role, were not satisfied with the implementation of co-curricular activities. So, we can judge that the co-curricular activities practiced in secondary schools were not implemented well and that both students and teachers were not satisfied with the activities. These results show that co-curricular activities were not espoused into the schools to shape students' competencies and personalities as required.

Factors Affecting the Implementation of Co-curricular Activities

Co-curricular activities can be affected by internal and external factors within the school. In this study, we focused on the internal problems that affect co-curricular activities.

Table 3

Student, Teacher and School Related Problems

Items	Respondents	N	Mean	SD	F-value	P-value
Annual budget for co-curricular activities is sufficient.	Students	220	1.33	0.614	1.127	.325
	Teachers	101	1.32	0.582		
	Leaders	44	1.18	0.495		
	Total	365	1.31	0.592		
Basic facilities for exercising co-curricular activities are inadequate in the school.	Students	220	4.69	0.700	0.628	.534
	Teachers	101	4.73	0.564		
	Leaders	44	4.59	0.948		
	Total	365	4.69	0.700		
School resources and facilities are not enough for co-curricular activities.	Students	220	3.23	0.883	2.222	.110
	Teachers	101	3.41	0.710		
	Leaders	44	3.14	0.795		
	Total	365	3.27	0.831		
Interest of groups to get involved in co-curricular activities is encouraging.	Students	220	3.71	1.322	5.613	.004
	Teachers	101	4.18	0.953		
	Leaders	44	3.68	1.052		
	Total	365	3.84	1.215		
Teachers' perception for participating and coordinating co- curricular activities as part of their occupation is promising.	Students	220	3.04	0.818	48.463	.000
	Teachers	101	2.62	1.057		
	Leaders	44	4.18	0.691		
	Total	365	3.06	0.986		

Note. SD=standard deviation, N= total size of sample in the group, F-value= ANOVA results

The grand mean of the group of respondents' opinions on schools' budget allocation was 1.31 which was much lower than the mean average score. The result of one-way ANOVA shows no significant difference between the means of the group of respondents at the 0.05 level. The

group of respondents, irrespective of their difference in opinion, ensured that the annual budget for co-curricular activities was sufficient. In this regard, school leaders were interviewed and one of the principals said:

> Co-curricular activities in our school secure money for their activities from the fund-raising efforts of the members of co-curricular activities. By contributing 2 birr per month, a total of 1300 birr can be collected from students. With this amount of money, they can buy 28 more reference books and related resources for their library club (P3).

Therefore, it can be said that the schools had inadequate budget for co-curricular activities. To alleviate this problem, students contribute money for their activities. All the above data imply that budgets for co-curricular activities were emanating from members' contributions. However, such a trend would not satisfactorily promote co-curricular activities. Besides, students from low-income families could be in trouble in accessing money for contribution.

On item 2 of Table 3, students', teachers', and leaders' views mean values were 4.69, 4.73, and 4.59, respectively which is above the mean average level. The results of one-way ANOVA also show that there was no significant mean difference among the groups of respondents' views at a 0.05 level of significance. This entails that the respondents agreed on the problem of appropriate facilities for sports and other clubs for conducting co-curricular activities. The respondents in this case reacted unvaryingly.

The mean score of students', teachers', and leaders' views is similar to item 3 of Table 3, and the grand mean is 3.27, which falls into a moderate range. It means that respondents had the opinion that schools lacked adequate facilities. Moreover, there is no significant difference between the groups of respondents. It means that the respondents believe that lack of facilities is a problem for the smooth running of co-curricular activities in secondary schools.

As part of their role, respondents' perception towards co-curricular activities was measured. In this regard, the mean scores of students, teachers, and leaders were 3.05, 2.62, and 4.18, respectively. The ANOVA result indicates that there was a significant mean difference among these groups of respondents at the 0.05 level. This means that leaders support this issue more than students and teachers. The grand mean (3.06) is in the mean average range value (2.34-3.66). It means that the perception of all parties involved in co-curricular activities were not adverse.

In the open-ended items, principals and supervisors reported that most teachers consider activities outside the classroom not part of their responsibility. As a result, they give no adequate attention to the activities. The results show that teachers have not been doing what they were expected to do. This implies the need to improve teachers' attitude towards co-curricular activities.

Table 4

Social and Management-related Problems

Items	Mean Value of Respondents			Average	F-value	P-value
	Students	Teachers	Leaders			
High teaching loads of teachers affect teachers' participation of co-curricular activities.	4.21	4.54	4.32	4.32	4.913	.008
Teacher involvement is undermined by students who rarely respect them.	4.09	4.22	4.36	4.16	2.080	.126
There is absence of training on co-curricular activities.	4.71	4.80	4.73	4.74	1.266	.283
There is a weak system of reward and recognition for those involved in co-curricular activities.	4.63	4.62	4.25	4.59	6.927	.263

Note. SD=standard deviation, N= total size of sample in the group, F-value= ANOVA results

Item 1 of Table 4 shows that the mean scores of students', teachers', and leaders' views were 4.21, 4.54, and 4.32, respectively. The respondent agreed that high teaching loads affect teachers' participation in co-curricular activities. The ANOVA results revealed a significant difference in views among the groups of respondents. This means that the respondents reacted differently, with varying magnitudes, to the issue of teaching load. Teachers' average score was higher than students' and leaders'. Briefly, it means that due to a high teaching load, teachers' participation in co-curricular activities was not satisfactory. In this regard, one of the principals who participated in the interviews reported the following:

> Most teachers have a teaching load of more than 25 periods per a week. In addition to this, they have different duties and responsibilities. This includes, providing make up classes, running tutorial programs, participation in various meetings, working in laboratories and pedagogical centres and so on. So, most teachers are not interested to take additional responsibilities on co-curricular activities (P4).

From the above data, it could be inferred that workload in teaching and other activities in the schools had been hindering teachers from actively playing their role vis-à-vis co-curricular activities. This problem could be exacerbated by mismanagement in planning and the unwise use of trained human power in schools. From this, it is implicit that the incorporation of co-curricular activities and their contributions to the full development of students was not deliberated properly.

On item 2 of Table 4, the grand mean (4.16) is above the mean value and there is no significant difference from the ANOVA result at the 0.05 level. So, the idea that teacher initiative and involvement are downhearted by students can be endorsed. This is another issue

that makes teachers uninterested in playing their role in implementing co-curricular activities. The grand mean value of the view of respondents on the issue whether or not participation in co-curricular activities discriminates against some students was 4.09 which is greater than the average mean score.

In the open-ended items, respondents added that the alienation of physically disabled students from the activities of co-curricular activities was a critical problem. In this regard, one interviewee teacher reported the following.

> Co-curricular activities demand basic inputs and facilities, particularly for students with various impairments. Sports fields and facilities should consider all types of students, including physically impaired students. Also, students having visual and communication problems require special attention. In such cases, much is expected of the school, and if not, discrimination may occur (T).

From this data, it is possible to understand that there was discrimination against students in participating in co-curricular activities. It is known that unless disabled students get additional facilities, it will be difficult for them to participate in co-curricular initiatives equally without discrimination. As reported by Temesgen (2018), lack of facility had resulted in more discrimination among disabled students

Creating awareness about co-curricular activities should be the first step to be taken. Regarding this, all of the respondents agreed that there was lack of training in schools about co-curricular activities. Table 4 indicates that the grand mean score (4.74) is by far greater than the mean average value. The ANOVA result too showed that there was no significant difference between the three groups of respondents. Overall, the results indicated that there was no proper training for teachers and students to run co-curricular activities effectively. It is argued that training is an important factor in implementing co-curricular activities. This is because awareness is the most crucial factor to get activities done, including curricular and co-curricular activities (Lazaro & Anney, 2016).

The grand mean score of item 4 is 4.59. This shows that there was a weak co-curricular a reinforcement system in the education sector. The ANOVA result at a $p > 0.05$ level revealed that there was no significant mean difference among the groups. This indicates that all groups of respondents had reacted to the item unvaryingly. In this connection, teachers reported, in the open-ended questions, that the weak management approach and less emphasis provided by the school on co-curricular activities could be debilitating factors for the weak operationalization of co-curricular activities. Overall, the discussions show that there are management problems in the school in relation to institutionalization and implementation of co-curricular activities, as well as weak encouraging approaches in the education system that require immediate attention. Kamau, Rintaugu and Bulinda (2020) claim that strong coordination and a system for reinforcing the education system towards co-curricular activities should be put in place.

Table 5

Problems in relation to the Implementation of Co-curricular Activities

No.	Items	N	Rank
1	Structural and organization problems	365	3
2	Financial problems	365	2
3	Problems with physical and material facilities	365	1
4	High teaching load	365	4
5	Lack of interest and awareness to participate	365	5
6	Problems related to training	365	6
7	Evaluation and recognition problems	365	7

Table 5 shows the results of ranked problems for the implementation of co-curricular activities. The respondents were asked to rank the above seven perceived challenges to the implementation of co-curricular activities. The average score was calculated and ranked based on the mean score. Because the respondents rank themselves based on the power of their influence, the lowest mean value becomes the first ranking, as shown in Table 5.

The mean scores in rating the problems in accordance with their magnitude and urgency were calculated. Accordingly, problems with physical and material facilities and those related to financial problems were rated first and second respectively. This entails that problems related to facility and finance were the most significant problems that affect the implementation of co-curricular activities. Meanwhile, structural and organizational problems were found to be the third problem. High teaching load, less to interest and awareness to participate, shortage of training, as well as evaluation and recognition systems, in co-curricular activities were also found to be factors tin hindering the implementation of co-curricular activities. Supporting this, one of the supervisors said that "Secondary schools are busy in teaching and learning, tutorial programs. Most of them lack basic facilities not only for the co-curricular activities even for the formal curricular itself".

This finding is consistent with the reports of King and Anderson (2004). These researchers pointed out that inadequate budget allocations and the absence of basic facilities were the major problems that hindered the implementation of co-curricular activities in secondary schools in East Hararghie Zone, Ethiopia. Similarly, Amanda (2003) reported that financial problems were the major bottleneck for the implementation of co-curricular activities.

Conclusion and Implications

It goes without saying that planning and organizing co-curricular activities is a key first step before beginning their implementation. However, there was no compelling reason for students to take part in the activities or for teachers to fulfil their duties as facilitators and motivational bodies in East Hararghe's secondary schools. This is due to a lack of orientations, resources, and structures that are in place. Similar to this, there was less commitment from

accountable entities to effectively monitor and direct co-curricular activities during the implementation process. The results of the study generally show that co-curricular activities were poorly organized and implemented in secondary schools. As a result, students lacked the opportunity to experience balanced overall mental, physical, social, and emotional growth.

The outcomes of the study uncover the fact that co-curricular activities were not reflecting the formal curriculum and the learning-teaching process that takes place in the classroom. In the schools studied, the benefits of co-curricular activities were not more than the embellishment of celebrations and festivals in schools. It is also possible to conclude that they missed their purpose of changing the social, mental, physical, and psychological wellbeing of students.

The study also revealed that the implementation of co-curricular activities was engulfed by many challenges. The most influential problems in this regard were lack of physical and material facilities. Finance and structure related problems were found to be impeding factors. High teaching load, low interest and awareness, lack of training, and evaluation and reinforcement mechanisms were also found to be challenging for the proper implementation of co-curricular activities in schools. There was also no proper selection and identification of necessary co-curricular activities in the schools.

As a result, it is advised that the school administration set up a set time schedule for the required co-curricular activities and allow the students to participate in the optional ones during their free time. Co-curricular activity organizers and leaders should orient students on how they can select and forecast their future academic and professional paths and promote a culture of excellence.

A comprehensive structure and operating guidelines should also be developed by the Ministry of Education for the implementation of co-curricular activities in schools. Co-curricular activities need to be set up in a way that makes it simple to plan, carry out, and strengthen future careers. Schools should create context-based guidelines for all of the co-curricular activities and student arrangements are made on this. Co-curricular activities should be planned in accordance with guiding documents that include a code of conduct and specific rules and regulations that control and govern students. Last but not least, further study is required to gather more data about the complex problems surrounding co-curricular activities and to design plans and strategies that can help towards improving the implementation in secondary schools.

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