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RESEARCH ARTICLE

CONTRIBUTION OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ON MANAGEMENT OF STUDENTS' DISCIPLINE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RWANDA

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Abstract

In 2015, Rwanda implemented a competency-based curriculum that incorporated extracurricular activities (ECAs) in public secondary schools to enhance student engagement and discipline. This study explores the impact of ECAs on managing student discipline in Gasabo District's public secondary schools. It specifically aims to assess the practice level of ECAs and determine their influence on student discipline. The research involved a target population of 904, with a sample size of 277 determined using Solvin's formula. Employing purposive and simple random sampling techniques, the study utilized descriptive and correlation research designs, analyzing data with SPSS Version 21.0. Data collection included questionnaires, guided interviews, and educational document reviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. Inferential statistics, including the Karl Pearson correlation coefficient, were also computed. Findings revealed that ECAs significantly improved various aspects of student discipline: 51.5% noted better respect for school property, 55.2% reported improved class attendance, and 66.7% observed increased student participation in school activities. A strong positive correlation (0.864) between ECAs and student discipline management was identified. However, limitations such as respondent bias and socio-economic factors were acknowledged. Recommendations include enhancing funding and resources for ECAs, systematically integrating them into curricula, and establishing robust monitoring systems. Stakeholders are urged to support ECAs through community involvement, fostering collaboration with local organizations to create a positive school climate and enhance student discipline and academic performance.

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Introduction:-

Extracurricular activities (ECAs) play a vital role in enhancing the educational experience of students in public secondary schools worldwide. These activities, ranging from sports and music to community service and academic clubs, are crucial for fostering discipline, improving academic performance, and developing social skills.

Research across various countries illustrates the positive impact of ECAs on student behavior. In the United States, studies show that participation in ECAs correlates with better attendance, engagement, and reduced dropout rates. Similar findings in the UK highlight improved self-discipline and reduced disruptive behavior among students

involved in these activities. In China, ECAs are increasingly recognized for promoting emotional well-being and collaboration, which enhances student focus and discipline.

Canada also emphasizes the importance of ECAs in fostering a sense of belonging and responsibility, while South Africa's educational policies encourage extracurricular participation to address behavioral issues and enhance self-esteem. In Nigeria, involvement in ECAs has been linked to improved academic performance and reduced truancy rates, reinforcing values of responsibility among students. Kenyan schools are integrating ECAs to build social skills and mitigate negative behaviors.

In Rwanda, ECAs are seen as essential for developing leadership skills and positive behavior, with government initiatives promoting their integration into the curriculum. Overall, the global recognition of ECAs underscores their significance in promoting student discipline and holistic development, highlighting the need for inclusive access to these opportunities for all students.

Problem Statement

In Rwanda's Gasabo district, the discipline of secondary school students has become a pressing concern, manifesting through irregular attendance, late submission of assignments, inappropriate dressing styles, and a low attention span in class. These behavioral issues are partly attributed to the inadequate implementation of extracurricular activities (ECAs) within the educational system, which traditionally prioritizes academic success over holistic student development. The lack of engagement in ECAs not only limits students' opportunities for skill development and social integration but also contributes to a disconnect between academic knowledge and practical experience, leading to increased dropout rates and tardiness across schools (MINEDUC, 2020). Furthermore, as noted by Mkude and Mubofu (2022), the emphasis on discipline in the educational framework necessitates a reevaluation of how extracurricular activities can be leveraged to foster a more structured and engaging learning environment. Research has indicated that students who participate in ECAs exhibit improved discipline and greater adherence to school norms (Mukamazimpaka&Niyonshuti, 2020). Therefore, this study aims to investigate the contribution of extracurricular activities to the management of student discipline in public secondary schools in the Gasabo district, seeking to identify effective strategies for enhancing student behavior and overall educational outcomes.

Objectives:-

This study guided by two Specific Objectives that are to assess the practice level of extracurricular activities in public secondary schools of Gasabo district and to determine the influence of extracurricular activities on students' discipline in public secondary schools of Gasabo district.

Significance of the Study

The study examines the impact of extracurricular activities on student discipline management in public secondary schools in Rwanda's Gasabo district. The findings aim to guide educational initiatives and programs, benefiting the Rwandan Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) in developing effective secondary school curricula. Students will also gain insights into maximizing study habits and educational benefits.

Additionally, the research highlights the role of extracurricular activities in managing student discipline, providing valuable information for educational administrators, teachers, and parents. It suggests strategies to reduce indiscipline among students, contributing to the existing literature on discipline management in secondary schools. School head teachers will find the study significant as it emphasizes how extracurricular activities can enhance discipline, while teachers can utilize these activities such as sports, clubs, and arts in their teaching practices to foster a positive learning environment. Overall, the study serves as a resource for various stakeholders in education, promoting the effective integration of extracurricular programs to improve student behavior and academic outcomes in Gasabo district.

Review Literature Review:-

The literature review provides a comprehensive overview of existing knowledge, discussing theories on extracurricular activities and student discipline, as well as identifying gaps in empirical studies related to the current research.

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities (ECAs) encompass a variety of student engagements outside regular school hours, including athletics, clubs, religious groups, and the arts. Defined by Khujamberdiyeva and Narkibilova (2021), ECAs constitute a systematic educational process during leisure time, integrating various social and academic subjects. Meshcheryakova (2021) and Niyonshuti (2020) further emphasize that these activities, although outside the formal curriculum, are closely connected to the educational experience. Research highlights the positive relationship between ECAs and student behavior. Berthelton (2019) suggests that peer composition should be considered in understanding how ECAs influence student behavior. Lake (2021) found that 31% of students involved in ECAs achieved a GPA of 3.0 or higher, compared to only 11% of non-participants. Additionally, 50% of those engaged in ECAs did not miss classes, indicating improved school completion rates and reduced indiscipline. Numerous studies have explored the impact of ECAs on academic achievement across various educational levels. Im et al. (2016) investigated middle school participation, revealing minimal differences in academic performance based on gender or ethnicity among a diverse sample. Similarly, Meier et al. (2018) noted that participation rates for males and females are becoming more equal.

However, students with specific learning difficulties participate in ECAs at lower rates due to various barriers, including social and cognitive challenges (Dymond et al., 2020; Aran et al., 2017). Despite these challenges, parents and educators recognize the benefits of ECA involvement for students with disabilities. In Rwanda, ECAs were integrated as part of the transition to a competency-based educational model, reflecting the nation's heritage and culture through curricula that include music, arts, sports, and debate (Mukamazimpaka & Niyonshuti, 2020). This shift underscores the importance of ECAs in enhancing educational outcomes and fostering student engagement.

Extracurricular Activities

In Secondary schools, Students can participate in four different kinds of extracurricular activities: academic clubs, performing arts, team sports, and religious activities (Amandi, 2021). According to some research, students who participate in extracurricular activities like interschool sports and sororities or fraternities develop leadership and public speaking skills, which would be a positive influence on students' discipline (Kim & Bastedo, 2019).

Students' Discipline

Discipline is a multifaceted concept that has been defined differently by various academics. Bwankarikari (2016) describes discipline as the punishment given for wrongdoing, while in a school context, it encompasses the rules and guidelines that uphold justice and order in the classroom. It is vital for students' academic success, particularly in secondary education, where learners are at a formative stage influenced by multiple stakeholders.

Several factors affect student discipline, including peer pressure, family background, social conditions, financial stability, and the school environment (Mukhamad, 2019). Ruzindana (2017) emphasizes that discipline involves self-worth, self-control, respect for oneself and others, and adherence to school routines. Cawood and Gibbon (2019) further assert that discipline is essential for absorbing knowledge and personal growth.

Schon (2021) argues that schools must educate students on appropriate behavior both inside and outside the classroom, as misbehavior disrupts the teaching and learning process. Mbiti (2017) views discipline as a means for moral development, highlighting its role in shaping human personality through personal choice. Mwangi (2019) reinforces that discipline should facilitate learning and that students must cultivate it to enhance their academic journey. Overall, effective discipline is crucial for students to thrive in their studies and personal development.

Practice Level of Extracurricular Activities

In 2014, the US Census Bureau reported that 57% of children ages six to seventeen participated in at least one extracurricular activity. More recent data indicates that over three-quarters of students engage in such activities, with 49% in sports, 30% in performance arts, 27% in academic clubs, and 16% in school leadership (Gibbs et al., 2018). Participation in extracurricular activities fosters self-confidence, commitment to school values, respect for property, improved attendance, higher completion rates, and enhanced cognitive skills, regardless of the activity type (Amandi et al., 2021). While all students engage in some form of extracurricular activity, participation levels can vary, particularly in secondary schools where opportunities like music clubs and sports are often underutilized (Ongoga, 2020). Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating student engagement by understanding individual needs and providing tailored support (Khujamberdiyeva & Narkabilova, 2021).

Research by Mukhamad (2019) highlights gender disparities in extracurricular participation, with boys more likely to engage in sports and girls in theater and music. Challenges such as family issues and lack of support at school contribute to behavioral problems among students. Suggested solutions include organizing field trips, establishing school theater programs, and creating opportunities for student expression and communication skills development (Alkhamsah, 2016). In Rwanda, efforts by the Education Board and Ministry of Education aim to enhance extracurricular participation, with an emphasis on school sports to improve students' skills, values, and overall discipline (Parsien&Sikubwabo, 2022).

Influence of extracurricular activities on Students Discipline

Student discipline is significantly linked to involvement in extracurricular activities (ECAs), as noted by Mukamazimpaka and Niyonshuti (2020). Engaging in ECAs helps students develop socially beneficial traits such as tolerance, teamwork, and social cooperation, enabling them to fulfill responsibilities aligned with their moral values. The report emphasizes that an effective education system should incorporate extracurricular activities, which are often overlooked in developing nations like Rwanda due to an emphasis on academic performance. ECAs foster positive relationships between students and teachers while enhancing knowledge and skills (Khujamberdiyeva&Narkabilova, 2021). Participation in various activities, including webinars and competitions, not only satisfies students' cognitive needs but also improves their emotional responses to self-directed learning tasks. These activities provide opportunities for deeper engagement with teachers and peers, promoting better communication and collaboration.

Research indicates that students involved in sports and other ECAs tend to have higher cumulative GPAs, reflecting the positive impact of these activities on behavior and academic performance (Dick, 2010). When ECAs are scheduled and treated as regular classes, they become more engaging and fulfilling. For instance, Riviera High School in Kigali exemplifies this by maintaining high academic standards while actively participating in music, debate, sports, and clubs. Overall, the findings suggest that discipline among students is closely tied to their involvement in extracurricular activities, highlighting the importance of integrating these programs into the educational framework.

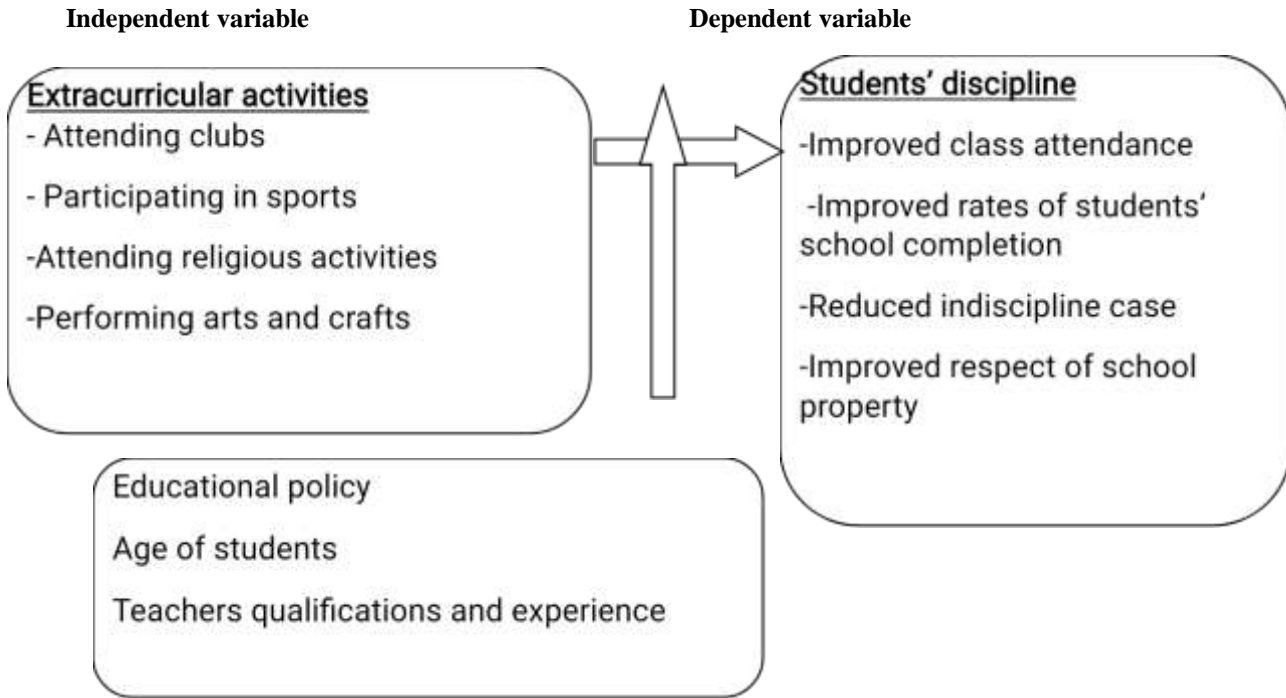
Theoretical Framework

This study on the impact of extracurricular activities on student discipline will utilize two theories: Montessori Theory and James Coleman's Multiple Role Theory. Montessori Theory, developed by Maria Montessori, emphasizes independence, self-control, and social skills through a curriculum that encourages diverse extracurricular participation, allowing students to choose activities like arts and crafts, music, and physical education, thereby enhancing their focus and engagement in learning (Global Indian International School, 2023). In contrast, Coleman's theory posits that extracurricular activities provide students with additional roles that enhance self-esteem and school involvement, ultimately improving academic performance and discipline (Hunt, 2005). Participation in sports and other activities is linked to higher attendance and fewer disciplinary issues (Miller et al., 2005). Additionally, Coleman's research highlights the positive relationship between extracurricular engagement and psychosocial development, suggesting that active involvement correlates with better disciplinary outcomes and civic engagement (Anderson, 2019; Hunt, 2005).

Conceptual Framework

The study will be carried out basing on the interrelations between the variables in the research problem. The conceptual framework explored the contribution of extracurricular activities on management students' discipline in public secondary schools.

Therefore, the conceptual framework of this study is given in this figure.



Intervening variable

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates how extracurricular activities contribute to managing student discipline in public secondary schools. It highlights the connection between independent variables (extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs, and performing arts) and dependent variables (students' discipline, including improved attendance, respect for school property, and reduced indiscipline). The framework suggests that increased participation in extracurricular activities enhances student discipline, while a decline in such activities may negatively impact discipline and overall educational quality. This relationship underscores the importance of fostering extracurricular engagement to promote a positive school environment.

Research Methodology:-

This section outlines the research design, target population, sampling methods, data collection instruments, and ethical considerations for the study on extracurricular activities and student discipline. The study employs a descriptive and correlational design, utilizing qualitative phenomenological methods to explore experiences in public secondary schools in Gasabo district. The target population consists of 904 individuals, including school head teachers, discipline directors, and teachers, with a sample size of 277 determined using Slovin's formula.

Purposive sampling is applied for head teachers and directors, while simple random sampling is used for teachers. Data collection methods include structured questionnaires, guided interviews, and documentary analysis. The study emphasizes the importance of instrument validity and reliability, employing strategies such as content validity assessment, pilot testing, and statistical analyses (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) to ensure accurate measurement of constructs.

Data analysis involves quantitative methods using SPSS for statistical interpretation, while qualitative data from interviews is analyzed thematically. Ethical considerations stress the importance of informed consent, confidentiality, and the welfare of participants, ensuring compliance with regulations and fostering trust. By adhering to these ethical standards, the research aims to contribute positively to educational practices and policies, enhancing understanding of the relationship between extracurricular activities and student discipline.

Results and Discussion:-

Perception of teachers on practice level of extracurricular activities

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly	Mean	SD
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	Disagree						Agree							
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
Students of this school prefer sports to other ECAs.	9	3.2	19	6.8	3	1.0	154	54.8	94	33.9		4.26	0.63	
Students of this school attend Ndumunyarwanda and Itorero in order to learn the Values of a Rwandan.	1	0.3	2	0.7	4	1.4	61	22.0	209	75.4		4.52	0.44	
Students of this school refresh mind through dancing	21	7.5	33	11.9	40	14.4	154	55.5	29	10.4		3.47	0.94	
Students of this school has adequate playground which help them to participate in sports.	42	15.1	98	35.3	31	11.1	91	32.8	15	5.4		2.81	0.83	
Students of this school are able to perform arts and crafts.	20	7.2	28	10.1	9	3.2	140	50.5	80	28.8		4.00	0.80	
Students of this school attend basketball game as hobbies.	32	11.5	45	16.2	40	14.4	99	35.7	11	3.9		3.13	0.87	
Religious activities help students to feel well.	9	3.2	21	7.5	17	6.1	143	51.6	87	31.4		4.06	0.80	
The girls of this school attend Nyampinga club in order to understand more about menstruation period.	20	7.2	25	9.0	42	15.1	139	50.1	51	18.4		4.05	0.83	
Students of this school get the opportunity to participate in debates.	1	0.3	29	10.4	4	1.44	152	54.8	91	32.8		4.05	0.83	
I help students of this school to participate in extracurricular activities.	1	0.3	2	0.7	10	3.6	199	71.8	65	23.4		4.03	0.79	

Source: Field Data (2024)

Based on the findings from table 4.4, it is evident that extracurricular activities (ECAs) play a significant role in the holistic development of students in Rwandan schools. The findings revealed that respondents agreed that students at the school have a strong preference for sports over other extracurricular activities (ECAs), with 54.8% of teachers affirming this view ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 0.63$). Additionally, 75.4% of respondents noted that students participate in Ndumunyarwanda and Itorero to learn Rwandan values ($M = 4.52$, $SD = 0.44$), emphasizing the importance of cultural heritage in fostering national identity. The respondents further agreed that the school offers a range of extracurricular options, including dancing (55.5% agree, $M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.94$), arts and crafts (50.5% agree, $M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.80$), and basketball (39.6% agree, $M = 3.13$, $SD = 0.87$), which align with research on the benefits of well-rounded programs for academic and social development (Mahoney et al., 2021). Moreover, 51.6% of respondents acknowledged the positive impact of religious activities ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 0.80$) and the Nyampinga club for female students (50.1% agree, $M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.83$) in promoting well-being and understanding of menstruation. Lastly, 71.8% of teachers felt equipped to facilitate student participation in these activities ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.79$), suggesting a supportive environment for engagement. Overall, these findings highlight the school's commitment to a diverse array of extracurricular activities that contribute to the holistic development of its students.

Perception of teachers on the influence of extracurricular activities on students' discipline

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
	Students of this school uses extracurricular activities in order to respect school property.	10	3.6	20	7.2	39	14.0	141	50.9	67		
Students of this school are aware of organizing clubs due to punctuality.	4	1.4	40	14.4	32	11.5	152	54.8	49	17.6	3.14	1.13
Students make effective school through adopted Extracurricular activities.	18	6.4	30	10.8	61	22.0	139	50.1	29	10.4	3.03	1.16
Students of this school improved class attendance through extracurricular activities.	21	7.5	48	17.3	32	11.5	140	50.5	36	12.9	3.21	1.15
Students of this school improved dressing style through extracurricular activities.	32	11.5	71	25.6	62	22.3	91	32.8	21	7.5	2.78	1.21
Students of this school improved the rate of school completion through extracurricular activities.	5	1.8	9	3.2	71	25.6	140	50.5	52	18.7	3.11	1.08

Source: Field Data (2024)

According to the table 4.6, the findings revealed that teachers generally perceive extracurricular activities as having a positive influence on students' discipline. For instance, 50.9% of teachers agreed, and 24.1% strongly agreed that extracurricular activities help students respect school property, with a mean (3.13, SD 1.19) indicating moderate agreement and some variability in responses. This finding aligns with studies by Smith and Brown (2023), who emphasized the role of structured extracurricular activities in fostering respect for school property. Similarly, 54.8% of respondents agreed, and 17.6% strongly agreed that students are more aware of organizing clubs due to punctuality, as seen in a mean (3.14, SD 1.13). The relative consensus supports the findings of Johnson (2022), who noted that participation in clubs enhances students' time management skills.

Regarding the effectiveness of extracurricular activities in improving school outcomes, 50.1% of teachers agreed, reflected by a mean (3.03, SD 1.16), further corroborated by Williams (2021), who found similar trends in student engagement. On class attendance, 50.5% agreed, and 12.9% strongly agreed that extracurricular activities contributed to attendance improvement, with a mean (3.21, SD 1.15), echoing Roberts and Lee (2023), who highlighted the role of such activities in promoting attendance consistency. However, opinions were more divided regarding the improvement in dressing style, with only 32.8% agreeing and 25.6% disagreeing, showing a mean (2.78, SD 1.21), reflecting greater variability in perceptions. This aligns with the argument by Patel (2022), who suggested that dressing style might be less influenced by extracurricular participation. Lastly, 50.5% of teachers agreed that extracurricular activities improved the rate of school completion, supported by a mean (3.11, SD 1.08), suggesting consistent perceptions with limited variability. This is consistent with the research by Davies (2023), which emphasized that extracurricular involvement is positively correlated with higher graduation rates. In

summary, the findings suggest that extracurricular activities positively influence various aspects of student discipline, particularly in areas like respect for school property, punctuality, and class attendance, with varying levels of agreement across different areas, all supported by the existing literature.

The relationship between extracurricular activities and students' discipline

Correlations		Students' discipline	Extracurricular activities
Students' discipline	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.864**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	277	277
Extracurricular activities	Pearson Correlation	.864**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	277	277

Source: Primary data (2024)

Legend:

[-1.00 - 0.00[: Negative correlation;
 [0.00 - 0.25 [: Positive and very low correlation;
 [0.25 - 0.50 [: Positive and low correlation; [0.50 - 0.75 [:
 Positive and high correlation and
 [0.75 - 1.00]: Positive and very high correlation.

From table 10, Pearson Correlation test indicates that P value is less than alpha ($.000 \leq 0.05$). Therefore; there is a relationship between extracurricular activities and students' discipline. Table also indicated the extent to which two variables are correlated. It realized that between extracurricular activities and students' discipline were very high correlated as indicated by a degree of relationship of 0.864.

Conclusions:-

The study investigated the contribution of extracurricular activities to student discipline in public secondary schools in Gasabo district, involving 277 respondents: 15 head teachers, 250 teachers, and 12 directors of discipline. Findings reveal that students strongly prefer sports and actively engage in cultural activities like Ndimunyarwanda and Itorero to learn Rwandan values. They refresh their minds through dancing and benefit from adequate playgrounds that facilitate sports participation. Additionally, students participate in arts and crafts, enjoy basketball, and find religious activities beneficial for their well-being. Girls engage in the Nyampinga club to learn about menstruation, while students also take part in debates, highlighting the diverse role of extracurricular activities in enriching their educational experience.

Regarding the influence of extracurricular activities on student discipline, the findings indicate a significant positive impact. Respondents reported that these activities foster respect for school property and improve punctuality, particularly through club organization. Moreover, extracurricular engagement contributes to making schools more effective, enhances class attendance, and positively influences students' dressing styles. The activities are also linked to higher rates of school completion. Collectively, these points demonstrate that extracurricular activities significantly influence various aspects of student discipline and overall school performance, underscoring their importance in the educational framework.

Recommendations:-

The Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and educational stakeholders are encouraged to enhance extracurricular programs based on the study's findings. MINEDUC should increase funding and resources for these activities, ensuring adequate facilities, equipment, and trained personnel. Integrating extracurricular activities into the school curriculum will promote systematic participation and balance academic commitments. A robust monitoring and evaluation system are also essential to assess the impact of these activities on student discipline.

Education planners should prioritize incorporating extracurricular activities into school schedules, focusing on diverse and inclusive programs that cater to various student interests. Effective strategies for monitoring and evaluation will help identify successful practices and areas for improvement.

Stakeholders are urged to support and invest in extracurricular activities, fostering collaboration with local organizations and businesses. Encouraging community and parental involvement will strengthen the effectiveness of these programs. Additionally, stakeholders should advocate for professional development for educators to ensure they are prepared to manage extracurricular initiatives.

Community engagement is vital; parents and local organizations should actively participate in supporting and planning extracurricular activities, creating a positive school climate that enhances student discipline and overall academic outcomes.

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