

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**DEAF STUDENTS' VIEWS ON THE INFLUENCE OF CO-  
CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ON THEIR SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC LIFE  
AT AKENTEN APPIAH UNIVERSITY OF SKILL TRAINING AND  
ENTERPRENEURAL DEVELOPMENT**



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**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN SPECIAL EDUCATION**

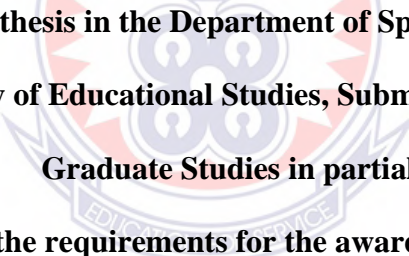
**2021**

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**A thesis in the Department of Special Education,  
Faculty of Educational Studies, Submitted to the School of  
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the award of the degree of  
Master of Philosophy  
(Special Education)  
in the University of Education, Winneba**

**DECEMBER, 2021**

## DECLARATION

### Students' Declaration

I, Cynthia Asare Birago, declare that this Thesis, with exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

**Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....

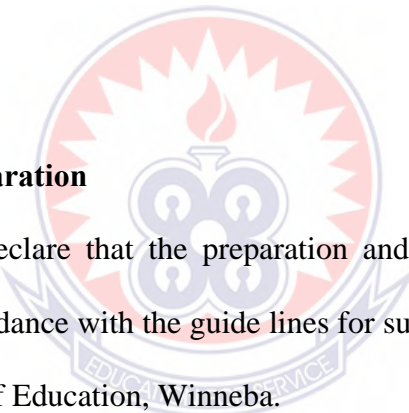
### Supervisors' Declaration

I, hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guide lines for supervision of Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

**Name of Supervisor:** Dr. Alexander Mills Opong

**Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....



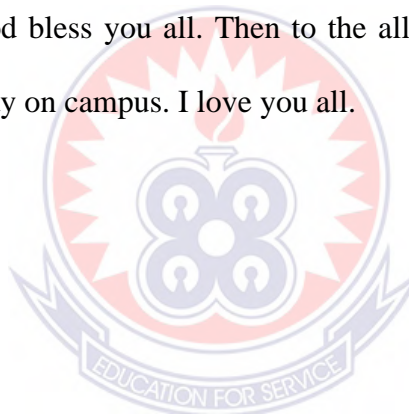
## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my sons Peniel, Nisi and Doxa and Rev. Richard my husband



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All thanks and praises go to the Almighty God for seeing me through this academic journey, to Him be all the glory. I am again, grateful to my supervisor and advisor, Dr. Alexander Mills Oppong for his knowledge shared, patience and the role he played to make this Thesis complete. To all lecturers and staff in the Department of Special Education especially, Dr. Daniel Fobi and his wife, Mrs. Joyce Fobi for their various contributions towards this academic success. I say AYEKOO. Great thanks to my pastor Apostle Nana Agyemang, my entire family members: my father Mr. Maxwell Asare, my mother Mrs. Susana Owusu and to all my siblings Leticia, Joyce, Mercy, Joshua and Deborah for their prayers and support. God bless you all. Then to the all my classmates for the help you shown me during our stay on campus. I love you all.



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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine deaf students' views on the influence of co-curricular activities on their social and academic life at Akenten Appiah Menken University of Skill Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED). This study employed a qualitative approach and a case study design. Astin's (1992) theory of student participation was employed in this study. Data was gathered through census sampling from 13 deaf students. Semi-structured interviews were used for data collection and thematically analyzed. The findings of the study revealed that the types of co-curricular activities deaf students at AAMUSTED engage in include academic co-curricular activities, physical activities, and religious co-curricular activities. Regarding how co-curricular activities influence the social life of deaf students at AAMUSTED. The study established that these activities help students develop personal competence, social and interpersonal skills, and provide them with a personal sense of belonging. The study further revealed that co-curricular activities influence deaf students' academic life. Specifically, they help students develop cognitive and good time management skills. Therefore, it was recommended that AAMUSTED should encourage its students to actively participate in a diverse range of co-curricular activities, including academic clubs, sports, and religious groups, as these provide valuable opportunities for skill development, social bonding, and personal competence.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Co-curricular activities are courses offered by educational facilities to help promote skills and high level of thinking for all students despite their statuses (Adeyemo, 2010). Co-curricular activities enable the educational system to supplement and complement the main curricular or syllabi activities. These are very important part of educational institutions in order to develop the students' personality as well as to strengthen classroom learning. Co-curricular activities have a wide horizon to cater for the cultural, social and aesthetic development of all learners. These activities promote enthusiasm, vitality, useful members of society; so that, they play their roles effectively.

All over the world, people living with disabilities particularly those who are deaf are recognized as a group of vulnerable people. Persons with hearing impairment are mostly categorized as deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH) based on the severity of their hearing loss which might be permanent or fluctuating and may range from mild hearing loss to profound deafness (Stevens et al., 2021). Hearing loss is however, the loss in the ability to hear only 25 or less decibels of sound (Koenhnke et al., 2022). According to the (2021) Housing and population census in Ghana, persons with hearing loss are about 211,712 out of a total population of 678,877 persons living with disabilities in Ghana (Nyarko, 2013).

How does participating in co-curricular activities influence the social and academic life of deaf students? In many developing countries for example Ghana, co-curricular

activities have become essential part of the academic calendar in the tertiary institutions such as University of Education, Winneba (UEW). For instance, the researcher has observed that in UEW, the Department of Special Education in collaboration with the Department of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Sports (HYPERS) have modified certain aspects of their curriculum to encompass co-curricular activities geared toward the inclusion of students with disabilities such as those who are deaf and or hard of hearing (DHH). With these co-curricular activities, the university meets the expectations of stakeholders in facilitating the development of various domains of mind and learning of all the students (Kariuki & Ogawa, 2021). AAMUSTED is one of the inclusive tertiary institutions within the Ashanti Region in Ghana running TVET programmes. Meanwhile, the reverse happens in AAMUSTED though the enrollment in the number of deaf students between the 2018-2021 academic year had increased to about fifty percent (50%) at AAMUSTED. Stemming from the fact that it is imperative that communities in Ghana demand quality education for deaf students. Educational institutions are tasked to provide deaf students with the prerequisite skills to enable them become useful members of society in order to play their roles towards the development of their country (Wasal & Mohammad, 2014). Therefore, it is worthwhile to validate that it is very crucial for the students to inculcate co-curricular activities into the programmes to better foster the lives of all the students. Globally, different co-curricular activities, in which students participate, both inside and outside the school are among the multiple factors that can positively influence their livelihood (Muhammad et al., 2011).

For instance, in United States of America, co-curriculum activities have been associated with an improved education level, high interpersonal competences, higher aspirations and a better attention level amongst students (Fredericks et al., 2019). Indeed, co-curricular activities and other recreational programmes are also necessary for the growth of a healthy mind and body for students with special needs too (Hodgde and Runswick, O. 2021). As a result, modern educationists proposed that curriculum does not rest solely on teaching and learning in classroom, but it includes work in library, laboratory and workshop, participation in games and sports in playground and numerous informal contacts between teachers and learners in these places (Abdulaziz, 2014), making it a key aspect of the curriculum that requires the attention of all stakeholders of tertiary institutions across the country.

Abyed (2011) reported that learners who are deaf in the public schools demonstrated lower scores on measures of perceived self-confidence in the areas of peer popularity, ease of making friends, and the ability to have positive peer interactions than did hearing students in the same schools as a result of the fact that these learners were seldom exposed and or engaged in co-curricular activities organised by the schools. Quaye (2023) reviewed on six studies of self-esteem in learners who are deaf and hard of hearing in mainstream classrooms and reported low self-esteem amongst them. The author noted further that the problem was as a result of them not being exposed to co-curricular activities and concluded that it has a direct bearing on their academic performance (Quaye, 2023). Similarly, Da Silva et al. (2022) noted that across their studies, majority of the learners' reported difficulties with peer

relationships and social interactions in general are children who are deaf and do not involve in co-curricular activities.

Frontiers in Education, (2023) opined that it is therefore essential for educational institutions to include co-curricular activities to mimic social skills intervention programmes which result in significant improvement of assertive behavior in students, increase their emotional adjustment, social adjustment, and self-image of those who are deaf. Therefore, it is critical for universities to shape their programmes such that the tutors devote time and attention to the social and emotional development of their students with hearing impairments to enable them adjust socially and academically like their hearing peers (Quaye, 2023). Thompson et al. (2023) conducted a mixed-methods study at Lancaster University in the U.K. investigating deaf students engaged in co-curricular activities and their perceived value. The study found that students felt that participation in extra-curricular activities was fun, a way of coping, a way to contribute to society, and a way to develop skills and learning. The results showed that students were aware of the value of extra-curricular activities on employability, developing confidence, character, social skills, planning, and organization. Another study that analysed the GPAs of 3,147 deaf students and tracked their attendance at co-curricular activities found that students who attended between five and fourteen events (e.g., speakers, musicians, plays) over the four years had significantly higher GPAs than students who attended fewer than five events or students who attended more than fourteen events (Bergen-Chico & Viscomi, 2022). The development of mind and body are equally important in any good education system making the introduction of sports and games as integral part of any school

curriculum very crucial (Thinguri et al., 2014). As a result, Muhammad et al. (2011) suggested that, sports play most important role in the lives of people with special needs by keeping them healthy and mentally fit. For many individuals, participation in deaf sport events is a major means of socialization because it creates an avenue for meaningful interactions with others who communicate using sign language which in turn assists them to exemplify their thoughts (Muhammad et al., 2011). Meanwhile, in AAMUSTED, co-curricular activities especially sports, games, and other clubs are seldom engaged in by the deaf students and this has had a negative influence on their social life and relationships, especially with those without disabilities hence, this study.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Identifying successful practices that improve student adjustment in school is a priority in higher education. Tinto (2016), a leading theorist in the field of college students' studies identified self-efficacy and a sense of belonging among the motivators for student persistence that can potentially be attained through co-curricular participation, and support degree completion. Co-curricular activities are recognized as a source of enrichment and vitalization of the school curriculum, mainly through the cultivation of hobbies, and interests. These activities are no longer looked upon as extras but as an integral part of the school programme (Klesse and D'Onofrio, 2014). Participation in co-curricular activities provides many important outlets for all caliber of students in today's world. The researcher has observed that in most tertiary institutions across the country, co-curricular activities provide deaf students with challenges, alternative resources, and life-long learning experiences.

Organised sports also provide an opportunity for initiative, emotional regulation, goal setting, persistence, problem solving and time management (Larson et al., 2016), which may help to explain association found between sports participation and academic achievement (Mahoney & Cairns, 2017; Marsh and Kleitman, 2022).

In Ghana, Broh (2022) found that participation in some activities improves achievement, while participation in others diminishes achievement. This is supported by Kimiko (2015), who found that participation in athletics, television viewing and community service has a positive effect on academic performance while participation in musical performance does not improve academic performance. According to Hanover Research (2014), several studies have found that students are more reluctant to leave an institution after joining a campus organization. Elevating the status of co-curricular activities by recognizing them on a transcript presents a clear message of the value of the activities in both supporting student successes while at the institution as well as supporting their career success once they graduate. Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) survey was built on the premise that student engagement is significantly related to student learning, persistence, and academic attainment (McClenney et al., 2022).

Ananya (2017) determined the overall effect of co-curricular activities on deaf student's academic performance and personality development. The outcome seemed favorable. The study report demonstrated how co-curricular activities enhance students' academic pursuits. It revealed that females participate in co-curricular activities at a greater rate than boys. Furthermore, it is shown that females are obtaining better grades in all subjects. Glass and Gesing (2018) conducted a study

that focused on international students and their involvement in campus organizations. However, the results of the study found that there were statistically significant differences in overall composition and strength of social networks between international students who participated in campus organizations and those who did not participate in campus organizations.

Most universities face the challenges in making connections between faculty, staff, and students, including fostering a campus culture of the success of students with different learning and social needs such as the deaf, scaling up innovative and successful programmes, collecting and sharing data that improve the college experience, and utilizing technology that best serves student needs (CCSSE, 2019).

Co-curricular activities, as the name implies, are those, not directly related with the prescribed curriculum and may include; sports, athletics, scouting, clubbing, excursions debates and various hobbies to bring social and physical adjustments in the students who are having hearing disabilities. The basic idea behind such activities in educational institutions is to build up students' character and personality as well as to train their minds in order to facilitate their social and academic life.

However, in AAMUSTED, co-curricular activities are seen as a preserve mostly for students with no disability leaving those with hearing impairments at a disadvantage. This they do because, such activities seem to be taking much of academic time and this as observed by the researcher has recognized that most of these students feel reluctant to make friends with their counterparts with no disabilities. Migrating from the above assertion, it is empirical to validate that their lack of privilege[s] in engaging in co-curricular activities led to their low-self personality and esteem

thereby affecting their way[s] of socialization the former which has a negative impact on their academic outcomes the latter. Moreover, there seems to be conflicting reports on the actual effect of co-curricular activities on the social lives of deaf students in the literature.

Researchers (Darling et al., 2015; Guest and Schneider, 2023; Marsh and Kleitman, 2022) are in favor of students' involvement of co-curricular activities because it affects their personal lives positively whilst others (Eccles and Barber, 2019; Larson and Kleiber, 2023; Smoll and Smith, 2022) reported the opposite. In addition, Clegg et al. (2020) conducted a case study of 18 administrators in the United Kingdom and found that there were inconsistencies and a lack of coherence in how staff perceived the impacts of co-curricular activities for deaf students. Finally, scanty literature is documented on the impact of co-curricular activities on the social lives of deaf students. These underscore the need for the proposed study to fill this paucity in literature within the nation by determining the influence of co-curricular activities on the social and academic life of deaf students at AAMUSTED.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine deaf students' views on influence of co-curricular activities on their social and academic life at AAMUSTED.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Outline the types of co-curricular activities deaf students participate in.
2. Explore the influence of co-curricular activities on the social lives of deaf students.

3. Investigate how co-curricular activities influence the academic life of deaf students.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

Based on the objectives this study sought to answer the following research questions;

1. What are the types of co-curricular activities deaf students participating in?
2. How do co-curricular activities influence the social lives of deaf students?
3. How do co-curricular activities influence the academic life of deaf students?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

It was envisaged that the findings of this study would help educational institutions to determine the exact co-curricular activities for deaf students and determine how they influence the social and academic success of deaf students. The findings would also educate the stakeholders in AAMUSTED on the need to pay greater heed to the inculcation and participation of co-curricular activities for all students with special needs due to its positive bearings it has on their personalities. Finally, the findings generated by the study would add up to existing knowledge in the field of special education, for future researchers delving into similar areas of study, and by extension to other corporate organizations and stakeholders of people with special needs in terms of policy making and implementation.

### **1.7 Delimitations of the study**

This study was delimited to the influence of co-curricular activities on the social and academic lives of deaf students in Aketen Appiah–Menka University of Skill Training and Entrepreneurial Development, Kumasi (AAMUSTED) in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Also, only the sub-headings, types of Co-Curricular Activities, Influence of Co-Curricular Activities on Social Life, and How Co-Curricular Activities Influence Academic Life were considered.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

The COVID- 19 pandemic and the nationwide strike action of university teachers made the collection of data for the research to delay. This is because the category of participants needed for the data collection could not access on phone. Due to their peculiar disability and the semi-structured interview, the researcher chose for the study. Most of the participants were not reachable and gathering data was a bit difficult. The researcher overcame these problems by creating a WhatsApp page for all participants in order to chat with them no her expectations.

### **1.9 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Co-curricular activities:** An enriched programmes that are well-structured to enhance ones social and academic life.

**Influence:** The ability or power to change, transform, or control someone or something.

**Deaf students:** They are students that cannot perceive sound with their normal ear and mostly depend on sign language as their mode of communication.

**Social life:** life that is outgoing, well relating in the society or a life that is free to play.

**Academic life:** Life manifested through learning and schooling.

### **1.10 Organisation of the Study**

The study was organised into five chapters. Chapter One consisted of the introduction which include the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, research hypotheses, significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study, operational definition of terms and how the study was structured. Chapter Two focused on the review of related literature on the topic of which included the theoretical, conceptual, and empirical review. Chapter Three discussed the methodology of the study which included the research approach, research design, population, sampling and sampling technique, instruments used for data collection, validity and reliability of instruments and trustworthiness of qualitative data. Finally, it considered the procedures for data collection and its analysis likewise the ethical issues that were observed. Chapter Four presented the data and discussed the findings, and lastly, Chapter Five focused on the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviewed relevant literature that hinge on the objectives of the study and discussed the theoretical framework for the study. It was reviewed under the following sub-headings:

- Theoretical Framework
- Conceptual review
  - Concept of Co-Curricular Activities
  - Concept of Deafness
  - Social Life of Deaf students
  - Participation of Deaf Students in Co-Curricular Activities
- Empirical Review
  - Co-Curricular Activities and the Social Lives of Deaf students
  - Co-Curricular Activities and the Academic Life of Deaf students
- Summary of Literature Review

#### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

##### **2.1.1 Theory of Student Participation**

This study adopted Astin's (1999) theory of student participation which argues that for a curriculum, to be effective it must elicit sufficient student efforts and energy from other stakeholders for it to be successful. Thus, the more involved managerial

heads structure events for all sorts of students to partake in, the more likely they are to succeed. The theory has five basic assumptions: Involvement requires a physical and psychosocial effort, Involvement is continuous and it is different for different students, Involvement can be both qualitative and quantitative, The benefits of involvement are proportional to the effort made by the student, and Academic performance correlates to the level of student involvement (Ladd, 2017). The theory of student involvement was derived from a longitudinal study that showed that students who participated in co-curricular activities of almost any type were less likely to drop out.

Several studies have utilized Astin's (1991) student involvement theory as a framework for the study of the impact of student involvement (Bergen-Cico and Viscomi, 2022; Foubert and Grainger, 2016; Jorgenson et al., 2018; Mikulec & McKinney, 2014) and have reported positive results with regards to learners personality and success at school. Astin's (1999) theory shows that all educational stakeholders must endeavor to make both physical and psychosocial investments and effort to involve all students despite their learning needs. In this study, this form of participation may include sporting activities, debating clubs, attending meetings, engaging others, or completing projects. Since, Astin's (1999) theory makes it clear that each student may have a different experience throughout the time spent on an activity, it makes it worthwhile to validate that when proper arrangements are made by managerial heads in Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skill Training and Entrepreneurial Development, it shall play a tremendous roles in their lives by increasing their self-confidence, socialization, and also to make them to achieve the

academic performances required of them. This theory also presents a model for highlighting the commitment and time required when students participate in co-curricular activities. The commitment represents the qualitative aspect and time refers to the quantitative aspect. Development and learning are factors of the degree of effort and energy demonstrated by students in the classroom or while participating in co-curricular activities. Astin's (1999) theory indicates that deaf students will get out of these experiences what they put into them. Therefore, this study applied the Astin's (1999) theory outline whether, the theory shall have a direct bearing on their social lives and academic success of deaf students or not.

### **2.1.2 Classical Conditioning Theory**

Ivan Pavlov (1936) Classical Conditioning theory of learning cited in Ammah (2016). Classical conditioning is learning through association and was first demonstrated by Ivan Pavlov. This theory argued that learning is association of a paired stimuli and response.

The researcher found this theory more appropriate for the current study because it allows an individual to adapt their behavior to a changing environment. Again, the theory can be applied in all human learning hence its appropriateness to the population under study.

Classical conditioning is defined as learning resulting from pairing any artificial stimulus over a number of trials until the artificial stimulus begins to produce responses similar to the response, which follows the natural stimulus (Ammah, 2016). The author further contends that, classical conditioning depends on the association of a response an individual makes automatically (unconditioned response) with a

previous neutral stimulus (conditioned stimulus). This association is accomplished through pairing the conditioned stimulus with an unconditioned stimulus that automatically elicits the unconditioned response. After enough pairings, the individual will make the conditioned response when the conditioned stimulus is presented alone. This means that learning occurs when there is a connection between a stimuli and response.

The theory emphasized the assumption that certain external forces automatically elicit certain internal responses (Schunk, 2020). In the classroom situation, certain conditions automatically call for a response (Schunk, 2020). For instance, the way a teacher introduces a lesson may arouse students' interest and prepare them for the lesson.

Association is very important to learning. Learning occurs when the unconditioned stimulus and conditioned stimulus occur together and produces a response. It is therefore important that teachers teach from known to unknown, that is establishing a relationship between what the students already know and the new topic to be taught for meaningful learning to take place. Students should learn in an environment that encourage pleasant emotions. They should be able to feel enjoyment in their learning contexts rather than being in contexts that cause anxiety. Teachers should use the native signed language when teaching deaf students to activate prior knowledge of these learners, to help them learn and conceptualize new information. How a teacher teaches influences students' performance therefore experiences and qualifications of the teacher, teaching strategies, and the right use of instructional resources enhance teaching and learning and consequently translate into students' high performance.

## **2.2 Conceptual Review**

### **2.2.1 Deaf Education in Ghana**

Formal education for the deaf was introduced in Ghana in 1957 by the late Rev. Dr. Andrew J. Foster, an African American and a graduate of Gallaudet University who was deaf and belonged to the American Deaf cultural community (Oppong, 2007). The aim of Rev. Foster was to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to deaf individuals and to introduce them to literacy and numeracy through sign communication. This started when Rev. Foster visited homes in Accra to search for deaf individuals. He later identified a few deaf individuals aged over 10 years and enrolled them as students in his private residence in Accra. During that time, early identification, hearing screening, audiological and educational assessment of individuals was lacking. It was parents of deaf and hard of hearing children who confirmed that their children could not perceive sounds and could not communicate in spoken language and that served as a method of identification. Rev. Foster taught his students in the homes of parents of the deaf but often educated his students in a primary school building on the weekend (Oppong, 2006).

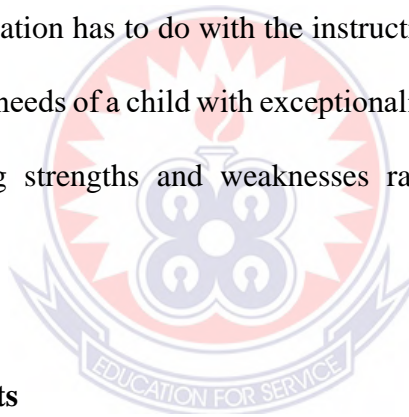
Rev. Forster relocated his special school for the deaf from Accra to Mampong-Akwapim in the Eastern Region in 1967. His method of instruction was a blend of American and Ghanaian signs, which later developed into Ghanaian Sign Language (GhSL). The development of Ghanaian Sign Language started when deaf children enrolled in Rev. Foster's school and shared their unique home signs with their peers and teachers. The teachers sometimes adopted and refined such signs and included them in their vocabulary of signed concepts for instructions (Oppong, 2007). Students

were taught to read and write using the grammatical structure of Ghanaian Sign Language and to count in sign language (Bediako, 1982) cited in (Oppong, 2007). Although, the core curricular contents included literacy, numeracy, and traditional vocational education in the forms of basket and doormat weaving, sewing for girls, and tailoring for boys yet the school taught the students to read in English, write, and count. The school also taught vocational skills such as dressmaking, food and nutrition, and food crop and animal farming. Asamoah, one of the first professional teachers of the deaf who worked with Rev. Foster, from 1965 to the early 1970s confirmed that, spoken language supplanted sign language when the administration of the school shifted to British professional educators of the deaf (Mensah, 2020). Many Ghanaian ethnic groups abhorred deafness and believed it was a waste of money and resources to provide formal school education for Deaf and hard of hearing children (Mensah, 2020). These cultural prejudices among the Akan, Ewe, Ga, Dagomba, Nzema, and Ntsumuru included views that deaf people cannot learn or socialize and that deafness is a contagious disease. There was a fear of stigmatization and labeling from other family members and the community in general, so many parents were unwilling to send their Deaf child to the school. However, in the early 1990s, with increased literacy among parents and growing awareness that deafness is not contagious, and that deaf individuals can be taught to read and write English, many parents of Deaf children saw the need to enroll their deaf children in formal school education.

### **2.2.2 Special Needs Education**

Smith (2020) described special needs education as a specifically designed learning instruction to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including instruction conducted in the classroom, and in other settings. A child has special educational needs if that child has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them (Smith, 2020). These educational difficulties attract special education provisions. Globally, countries have realized that special education is a fundamental right for persons with disability and is crucial for reaching the global education for all children (Mwangi, 2013).

Special needs education has to do with the instructions that are individually tailored to meet the unique needs of a child with exceptionality, taking into account the child's individual learning strengths and weaknesses rather than following one set of curricula.



### **2.2.3 Deaf Students**

Knors and Marschark, (2019) explained deaf students as those students whom due to disease or accident are born with hearing loss or develop hearing loss later in life. Deaf students are students concerned with having problem of receiving and interpreting sound or a message (Udaya, 2013).

Marschark (2019) indicates that deaf students are those students in whom the sense of hearing is defective and this could range from ability to hear partially to total deafness. Mba (2001) describes deaf students as those with total deaf, hard of hearing or students with partial hearing. Easterbrooks and Estes (2020) postulates that

students with hearing impairment are school going age individuals who have partial hearing loss, meaning that the ear can pick up some sounds; others have a complete hearing loss, meaning that the ear cannot hear at all.

Punch and Hyde, (2016) also explained that persons with hearing loss are those who have lost some, but not all of their hearing and who can or cannot benefit from the use of hearing aids in order to understand the use of speech. Marschark and Spencer (2019) concluded that those who cannot benefit from the use of hearing aids are classified deaf while those who can benefit from the use of hearing aids are classified hard of hearing. Ladd (2017), noted that deaf students are those students with slight hearing loss, mild hearing loss, moderate hearing loss, severe hearing loss and profound hearing loss.

Punch and Hyde (2016) described individuals who are deaf as those in whom the sense of hearing is non-functional for the ordinary purpose of life. Based on this definition, deafness can be classified into two; congenital deafness is when an individual is born with hearing problem and the adventitious deafness are those who are born with hearing but the sense of hearing becomes impaired in a later stage of life. Children may bear with poor or no hearing ability at the time of birth and most elderly people can miss some hearing with their age. Individuals who are deaf could have a full or partial decrease in the ability to detect or understand sounds caused by a wide range of biological and environmental factors (Punch and Hyde, 2002).

#### **2.2.4 Deaf Culture**

Deaf culture is a life style for many who are born deaf and hard of hearing and for others with acquired hearing loss that has acculturated into it. It has its own history,

values, tradition, folklore and communication. Individuals who are deaf culturally do not consider deafness as pathology. Deaf culture is a suggestion of the ways to improve interaction between individuals who are deaf and communication professionals (Ladd, 2017).

A person who belongs to deaf culture shows some degree of hearing loss which may range from moderate to profound. A person may be born in deaf culture or may become acculturated later in life by adopting its language, values and practice (cited in Ladd, 2017). It is denoted as Deaf with a capital “D.” A culturally defined group of individuals who share similar values, language, beliefs, traditions, moral attitudes, and mannerisms. Individuals in the Deaf community do not see their deafness as a disability and prefer the term hearing loss to hearing impairment, as they do not see their hearing status as impairment (Viscars, 2004).

The language of deaf culture is Sign Language which involves hand shapes presented in specific directional patterns and hand movements positions relative to body parts. All carry semantic, grammatical and pragmatics information (Ladd, 2017). Although adults who are culturally deaf tend to communicate using sign language. Having a knowledge and skill of sign language helps service providers to adequately deliver health service for the deaf (Who, 2014).

Behaviorally, individuals who are deaf are visually oriented, continuous eye contact is considered important during conversation. Appropriate ways to get individuals who are deaf includes tapping the shoulder, waving hand in person’s line of sight. It is inappropriate to touch the hands while they are signing. Punch and Hyde (2016) stated that individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing after birth became suspicious

when they do not understand what others are saying. Individuals who are deaf of late onset sometimes experience depression and feeling of inadequacy because subconscious auditory cues which coupled them with the hearing world since birth is lost (Ladd, 2017).

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Deafness has been considered to be a condition that needs treatment and intervention; it has been perceived as an unusual trait (Richardson, 2014). Most individuals who are deaf culturally consider themselves as not having a disability. However, healthcare professionals have traditionally defined deafness as a disability (Sheppard, 2013). Currently, there are many who still consider Deafness as a disability. However, this does not have to continue. For example, in Britain doctors are educated to approach deafness as essentially an issue that creates language problems and communication barriers, rather than as a handicap or disability (Punch and Hyde, 2016). Deafness is characterized as a simple physiologic condition or disease that affects the ears, but many individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (HOH) consider it a way of life (Shuler et al., 2013).

Deafness crosses barriers of gender, ethnicity, age, economic status, and certain Deaf groups are at further risk for marginalization (Sporek, 2014). A group of special concern is deaf women. Deaf adolescent females face unique challenges accessing web-based health information including questions about body image, physical

activity and nutrition, puberty, and relationships (Smith, Massey-Stokes, & Lieberth, 2012).

Arulogun et al, (2013) also showed that experiences of Nigerian young women with hearing impairment discovered that humiliation to ask questions in the company of an interpreter, communication and cost were all key barriers to accessing suitable reproductive health care (Arulogun, Titiloye, Afolabi, Oyewole, and Nwaorgu, 2013). Challenges also exist in developed countries concerning knowledge levels of the Deaf on health related information and the need for enhanced accessibility to health care for pregnant deaf women has been highlighted by several studies (Equy, Derore, Vassort, Mongourdin, and Sargent, 2012; Parsons, 2013; Sporek, 2014).

In the United States, it was reported that deaf patients experience fear, mistrust, and frustration in healthcare encounters while research in Brazil discusses a “scenario of incommunicability” among the different social actors which makes it difficult to exchange information and allow professional treatment for deaf patients (Pereira and Fortes, 2010).

Several studies have addressed the experiences of individuals who are deaf in medical situations. Interpersonal interactions between hearing health professionals and deaf patients may be difficult if the health professionals do not understand the rules and behaviors of deaf culture. For example, the providers may be perceived as impolite if they do not maintain eye contact when speaking to an individual who is deaf.

Steinberg et al. (2006) used focus group discussions in three U.S. cities to research individuals who are deaf health care experiences. Participants in the focus groups said that they communicated best when “medically experienced certified interpreters”

were provided, but that these were “infrequently available.” Themes that emerged from the focus groups included deaf patients’ skewed understanding of the health care provider’s instructions and their sense of fear in medical settings. The latter included both a fear of the consequences of miscommunication and a fear of letting health care providers know that the communication was inadequate. Likewise, participants were fearful of changing doctors, as a new doctor might be reluctant to pay interpreters. Participants also reported a sense of mistrust, and a feeling that some providers disliked attending to deaf patients. The authors of the study concluded that individuals who are deaf who use ASL have much in common with members of other linguistic minority groups: limited access to English communication, infrequent contact with healthcare providers who know their language and culture, and the frequent necessity of using family and friends as interpreters (Punch and Hyde, 2016). Individuals who are Deaf face several difficulties accessing health information than hearing individuals. Deaf sign language users do not have access to incidentally occurring information about health issues in tramways, or on the radio or TV, and there is a general lack of health information and education materials provided in sign language (Knoors and Marschark, 2019). Limited English literacy and a lack of available information in Sign Language reduce access to preventative health care information for deaf people in Australia (Napier & Kidd, 2013). Furthermore, well-educated deaf people who have completed U.S. high schools or colleges have relatively low health literacy (Iadd, 2017). In Spain, Deaf communities are not reached by health promoting programmes (Munoz, Bradham, & Nelson, 2011). Unfortunately, some studies indicate that there exists a lack of appropriate sign

language terminology, such as one U.K. study which reported that British Sign language does not have a sign for the word cholesterol (Patel et al., 2011). Individuals who are deaf in Michigan (United States) have poor knowledge of recommended cancer prevention approaches (Patel et al., 2011). To alleviate many of the health disparities experienced by Deaf American sign language users, interventions to improve health outcomes for individuals with low health literacy and limited English proficiency are essential (McKee and Paasche-Orlow, 2012).

Individuals who are Deaf face more difficulty accessing health information than hearing people. Deaf sign language users do not have access to incidentally occurring information about health issues in tramways, or on the radio or TV, and there is a general lack of health information and education materials provided in sign language (Pollard, et al., 2019). Limited English literacy and a lack of available information in Sign Language reduce access to preventative health care information for individuals who are deaf in Australia (Napier and Kidd, 2013).

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Public health information that is being presented from a hearing doctor to a Deaf patient should be accessible. This should be available with or without a sign language interpreter.

### **2.2.5 Concept of Co-Curricular Activities**

School co-curricular activities are structured school-based programs that complement academic instruction and contribute to students' cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development (Eccles and Roeser, 2017). Feldman and Matjasko, (2018) stated that co-curricular activities are extracurricular, extra-class, non-class, school-life, and student activities. Co-curricular activities are activities performed by students that fall outside the realm of the normal curriculum of the school. Also known as enrichment programmes they are courses offered by educational facilities to help promote skills and high level of thinking for students (Adeyemo, 2010).

Co-curricular activities include activities such as sports, drama, music, scouting, dance and various clubs, which are all important part of the educational experience of many students. Leung et al. (2011) concurred that despite the lack of a precise term, co-curricular activities seem more student-centered than the regular classes. In co-curricular activities, students assume responsible positions of leadership; play together and also socialize amongst themselves (Leung et al., 2011).

Co-curricular activities promote enthusiasm, vitality, positive thinking and team spirit which in turn, contribute to personality development. Co-curricular activities facilitate the development of various domains of mind and personality such as intellectual development, emotional development, social development, moral development and aesthetic development (Khan and Iqbal, 2014). Most studies found that learners who participate in co-curricular activities are more successful academically than those who do not (Adeyemo, 2010). Co-curricular activities

provide a student with a personal sense of belonging and integration with the school causing a feeling of accomplishment, self-worth and high self-esteem.

Furthermore, research conducted by the Education Department of the United States of America in 2000 discovered that the students who actively contribute in the co-curricular activities are more likely to have a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 or more as compared to those who are not involved in co-curricular activities (Daniya et al., 2012). Researchers have found positive associations between participation in co-curricular activities and academic performance of the students (Eccles and Roeser, 2017). Most of the co-curricular activities have found to be good in constructing and enhancing academic performance of the students (Feldman and Matjasko, 2018).

Daniyal et al. (2012) carried out study a on co-curricular activities and divided the students into those that perform formal activities and those that perform non-formal activities. The formal activities are those activities which include the involvement of students in sports, dramas or debates competition. On the other hand, the activities such as listening music or watching television are classified as informal activities. Co-curricular activities and other recreational programmes are also necessary for the growth of a healthy mind and body of deaf students (Habib et al., 2011). Their study further indicated that deaf children were participating much less in sports and physical activities as compared to their counterpart students without disabilities.

### **2.2.6 Concept of Deafness**

The human ear perceives simple tones in the range of 20 to 20,000 Hz and also complex signals such as speech and music. Both types of signals are used in the assessment of hearing loss. Hearing impairment leads to loss of normal verbal

communication. The hearing-impaired persons have in common, their difficulty in hearing spoken and other sounds. They also depend on what they see which they supplement to what they hear (Gadagbui, 2018).

**Table 2.1: Classification of Deafness**

<i>Classification</i>	<i>PTA range in dBHL</i>
Normal Hearing	-10 to 15
Slight Hearing Loss	16 to 25
Mild Hearing Loss	26 to 45
Moderate Hearing Loss	46 to 55
Moderately-severe Hearing Loss	56 to 70
Severe Hearing Loss	71 to 90
Profound Hearing Loss	91 and more

The level of normal conversational speech is approximately 65dB SPL. Thus, for a person with hearing impairment of 60dB HL or more, verbal communication would be difficult.

Hearing loss is measured along a continuum and while deafness usually refers to a more profound deafness, how a person classifies himself is a personal decision that reflects more than just the ability to hear. According to Musengi and Chireshe (2012), hearing loss affects between 4% and 5% of the world population. The consequences

of deafness will depend on the ear/s involved, the degree and the type of hearing loss and the age of onset.

Marschark and Spencer, (2016) expressed that hearing impairment is the generic term that include both the hard of hearing (partially hearing) and deaf. These two terms came up because of newer diagnostic and testing method, persons classified as deaf have been classified as hard-of-hearing. The hard-of-hearing are those who can benefit maximally from auditory training and from wearing hearing aids. This then enables them to acquire speech and language naturally. The deaf are set of people whose sense of hearing is completely lost as a result of damage in the auditory channel, thus such people's sense of hearing are rendered in-active and non-functional with or without hearing aids for the day-to-day life purposes.

Deafness refers to conditions in which individuals are fully or partially unable to detect or perceive at least some frequencies of sound which can typically be heard by members of their species (Habib et al., 2011). Students with severe to profound hearing losses often report feeling isolated, without friends, and unhappy in school, particularly when their socialization with other children with hearing loss is limited. These social problems appear to be more frequent in people with a mild or moderate hearing loss than in those with a severe to profound loss. In the light of the above observations there is need for teachers to integrate the pupils in some activities so that they tackle the problem as a group. Sometimes such an approach will help to develop friendship among the pupils.

Researchers have studied attitudes towards deafness itself with varying results (Hankins, 2015). Marschark et al, (2019) found that deaf people were rated by hearing

people to be more solitary, slow, dependent, and reserved; less confident, communicative, pleasant, and assertive; and having fewer friends (Punch and Hyde, 2016). Hearing people often become disturbed, irritated, frustrated, or embarrassed when their expectations for how communication should go are not met when conversing with a deaf person (Ladd, 2017). It is not surprising, then, that there are manifold difficulties in communication between hearing people and Deaf people. According to Ostrove and Oliva (2010), a chief reason for this is that hearing and Deaf people have two different definitions of what “good communication” is. There are findings that show that deaf people have pretended to understand everything when interacting with hearing people, even if they do not (Van Gent et al., 2011).

The impact of hearing impairment depends on the type, extent and timing of the hearing loss. Some students will have lost hearing over a period of time, as a result, for example, of ageing or hereditary conditions (Mpofu and Chimhenga, 2015). Others may have suffered permanent hearing loss as a result of workplace noise, or have the condition tinnitus, a high-pitched ringing noise in the ear. Some will have had their hearing enhanced, though not entirely restored, with cochlea implants or hearing devices. Students with a hearing impairment may experience difficulty with certain sound frequencies and have difficulties when there is significant background noise. Deaf students and hearing-impaired students may require accommodations and assistive devices to facilitate access to education-an individual needs assessment will determine this. Accommodations may be as simple as preferential seating or as complex as wireless assistive listening devices in the classroom (Mpofu and Chimhenga, 2015).

According to Hankins (2015), deaf students who attend mainstream schools, on the other hand, have reported feeling like they have limited opportunities for interaction with their peers, as well as feelings of social isolation. However, they feel better educated and more skilled at interacting with hearing people than do those who attend residential schools (Hankins et al., 2015). There is no doubt that the support given to deaf children by their classmates would make things very easy for them and they prefer it to the support they gain from their teachers and others in the school (Mlay, 2010; Tadesse and Lynne, 2015). For Deaf individuals with no or minimal health conditions, there is great potential for effective participation in physical activity programmes.

### **2.2.7 Social Lives of Deaf Students**

Social skills generally refer to the abilities to understand, manage, and express the social and emotional aspects of one's life in a way that enables the successful management of life tasks such as learning, forming relationships, solving everyday problems, and adapting the complex demands of growth and development (Bashir et al., 2014). The degree to which students are able to establish and maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships, gain peer acceptance, establish and maintain friendships, and terminate negative or pernicious interpersonal relationships defines social competence and predicts adequate long-term psychological and social adjustment (Harris et al., 2016).

According to Bashir et al. (2014), an individual's circle of friends can support his or her development of social competence by (1) learning how to interact with people in a manner that he can accept and respond to positively, (2) helping to teach him social

skills, and (3) letting other people know that they are individual's friends and that developed many positive qualities. Nobody develops social competence or learns social skills in isolation, and nothing overcomes negative relational schemas better than positive peer interaction (Punch and Hyde, 2016). Easterbrooks and Estes, (2020) opined that improved academic skills, appropriate emotional adjustment, and increased social competence were the resultant outcomes of training and special education. Beside these positive outcomes, aggression level of the students receiving training and special education was also decreased (Bashir et al., 2014).

Deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) persons often have communication difficulties and consequently may not develop appropriate social skills and social relationships (Antia et al., 2011). The effect of degree of hearing loss on social outcomes is of considerable interest. Although it is expected that persons with a greater degree of hearing loss will have poorer social outcomes, research indicates that persons with all degrees of hearing loss have social difficulties.

### **2.2.8 Participation of Deaf Students in Co-Curricular Activities**

Knors and Marschark, (2019) are of the view that inclusive education is the main objective for the education of special need children and adolescents. It stresses the participation of special needs students in communities, culture, and curricula of local schools discouraging all forms of exclusion. Yet, one of the major factors, affecting the operation of a successful development of co-curricular activities among students is the provision of adequate facilities, equipment, and supplies. Mlay (2010) recommend the appropriate offer of physical education to deaf children that it is a subject which facilitates exchange of ideas, togetherness of deaf children with their

peers and ensures positive attitude of the non-deaf children towards deaf children (Tedla & Negassa, 2019).

The preference of a sport type may be determined by such variables as personal preference, characteristics of the sport, medical condition, availability of the facilities (equipment, appropriate coaching), cognitive ability and social skills of the person (Knors et al., (2019). Studies have shown reasons for sport participation among students with hearing impairment which include enjoyment or having fun, spending time with friends, improving fitness, developing competence and gaining new opportunities (Harris et al., (2016). A number of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators are at play in facilitating or impeding sports participation. Three elements can be identified: self-esteem or concept, attraction towards the activity and support from significant others (Weiss, 2004). Deaf children tend to manifest low self-concept (Marschark et al., 2002). They may not develop a desirable self-perception from self-judgment of their physical ability.

In her book, *Alone in the Mainstream*, Punch and Hyde, (2016) discloses interviews completed with now deaf adults. Punch and Hyde believed the academics in a public school to be considerably stronger than in a School for the Deaf. However, that educational placement came with an emotional price. When discussing the socialization impact of placing deaf children in public schools, participants in Oliva's study declared, "No deaf child should ever be alone in a mainstream setting. For them, the loneliness and lack of self-esteem resulting from the pervasive feeling of being different were so damaging as to negate any academic benefits" (p. 75). It is clear that some deaf adults look back on their educational years with anger, hurt and

sadness. Even years later, the feeling of social isolation and lack of acceptance by peers leaves an emotional wound that has yet to heal (Sisia, 2011).

### **3.0 Empirical review**

#### **3.1 Co-Curricular Activities and the Academic Life of Deaf students**

Co-curricular activities have increasingly been recognized as an essential complement to the formal school curriculum, providing enrichment through the cultivation of hobbies, interests, and life skills (Klesse and D’Onofrio, 2014). For deaf students, participation in these activities not only offers academic benefits but also plays a vital role in their social development. Various empirical studies have examined the influence of co-curricular involvement on the social and academic lives of deaf and hard-of-hearing students, revealing both positive outcomes and challenges.

Larson et al. (2016), through quantitative research on students involved in organised sports, found that such participation fosters crucial life skills including initiative, emotional regulation, goal setting, persistence, problem-solving, and time management. These qualities partially explain the observed association between sports participation and enhanced academic achievement. Complementing this, Broh (2022) conducted a quantitative study within Ghanaian tertiary institutions and observed that participation in some co-curricular activities could improve academic performance, while others might diminish it, indicating that the type of activity matters. Supporting these findings, Kimiko (2015) noted a positive effect on academic performance among students involved in athletics, television viewing, and community service, but no such benefit from musical performance.

Focusing specifically on deaf students, Ananya (2017) used a quantitative approach to assess how co-curricular activities affect academic performance and personality development. The study revealed favorable outcomes, particularly noting higher participation and better academic performance among female deaf students compared to their male counterparts. Similarly, Glass and Gesing (2018) examined international students' involvement in campus organizations and found statistically significant differences in the strength and composition of social networks favoring participants, highlighting the importance of campus engagement for fostering social capital among diverse student groups.

However, challenges persist in supporting deaf students' participation in co-curricular activities. Clegg et al. (2020) used qualitative case study methods to explore university administrators' perceptions in the United Kingdom and uncovered inconsistencies and a lack of organizational coherence regarding the benefits of these activities for deaf students. Their findings suggest institutional variability in recognizing and supporting deaf students' involvement. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE, 2019) further highlighted difficulties universities face in fostering connections among faculty, staff, and students with diverse learning and social needs, including deaf students, and the need for innovative programmes and supportive technologies.

While several researchers, such as Darling et al. (2015), Guest and Schneider (2023), and Marsh and Kleitman (2022), advocate for co-curricular participation due to its positive effects on students' personal and academic lives, other studies (Eccles and Barber, 2019; Larson and Kleiber, 2023; Smoll and Smith, 2022) report mixed or

even adverse outcomes. This divergence underscores the complexity of co-curricular engagement and calls for nuanced approaches tailored to individual and institutional contexts.

In summary, empirical evidence affirms that co-curricular activities can significantly enhance the social and academic lives of deaf students by developing essential skills, fostering social integration, and supporting academic achievement. Yet, barriers remain, including inconsistent institutional support and activity accessibility. Addressing these challenges requires focused efforts to create inclusive, supportive environments that recognize and promote the value of co-curricular participation for deaf students, ultimately contributing to their success both within the academic setting and beyond.



### **3.2 Co-Curricular Activities and the Social Life of Deaf students**

Research also documents the negative impact of a lack of social skills. Bayntun, (2018) indicated that individuals who lack social skills are often rejected by others and are at risk for developing mental health problems that persist during adulthood (Antia et al., 2011). According to Leung et al. (2011), Banta did a three-year longitudinal study following undergraduates through their college life, learning experiences, adjustment issues, and social experiences before and after participating in co-curricular activities at Virginia Commonwealth University. The results indicated that students became more receptive to ideas and more accepting of people from different backgrounds. They approached studies more seriously in subsequent years than they had in their first year (Bayntun, 2018). Students who participate in

co-curricular activities generally benefit from the many opportunities afforded them. Benefits of participating in co-curricular activities included having better grades, having higher standardized test scores and higher educational attainment, attending school more regularly, and having higher a higher self-concept (Padden and Humphries, 2020).

Padden and Humphries, (2020) in his study “difficulties faced by deaf students and their interaction partners during interaction in inclusive secondary classroom” found inclusion of the deaf and hard of hearing students in regular school will provide better chance of daily interaction with their hearing peers and class teachers (Arora, 2019).

Bayntun, (2018) in his book “alone in the mainstream” stated that students with hearing impairment face various problems during extra-curricular activities. They suffered from lack of friendships and experienced lack of access to daily discussions and conversations with hearing friends which results in solicit or excluded the conscious, deliberate promotion of bridging social capital among deaf youth is one of the most critical needs in deaf education today (Punch and Hyde, 2016). Feldman et al., (2018) and Feldman-Farb and Matjasko (2012) systematically examined 88 studies on co-curricular involvement, all published by 2012. Findings from these preeminent literature reviews suggest that co-curricular involvement during secondary school is indeed associated with enhanced academic and social functioning, which in some cases continues into the postsecondary setting.

The literature also reveals that participation in co-curricular activities has a positive impact on psychological factors related to academic attitude and behavioral outcomes, such as academic persistence (Feldman and Matjasko, 2018). Sports have

been a strong influence in Deaf culture and DHH communities for decades, and they continue to play a role in the lives of DHH youth today (Feldman and Matjasko, 2018).

For deaf students to effectively participate in co-curricular activities, sign language is very vital. Oppong et al. (2016) explored deaf students' perceptions about the quality of Sign Language interpreting service rendered to them in a public tertiary institution in Ghana. The study focused on deaf students who use Sign Language interpreting services. A descriptive survey design was adopted to elicit from respondents their views about the quality of Sign Language interpreting services rendered to them. A 15-item questionnaire that employed a four-point Likert scale was the instrument used to gather data for the study. Out of a target population of 34 respondents, 23 were randomly sampled for the study. Among other findings, the study revealed that the quality of Sign Language interpreting services was a major issue of concern to deaf students and those who use interpreting services in teaching and learning.

The study recommended that the institution must take steps to ensure that interpreting as a general programme of study is introduced and implemented in the curriculum to train qualified interpreters for the deaf students. Also, the institution should employ and retain experienced Sign Language interpreters, and provide them with the needed support to carry on their duties. The gap in Oppong et al. (2016) to be filled by the current study is that, Oppong et al. concentrated only on the perceptions of deaf students on the quality of Sign Language interpreting but did not find out the academic and social experiences of the deaf students.

Bayntun (2018), opined that parents more than anyone else, provide the needed support to the special needs child. Padden and Humphries (2020), further stated that the family is the only constant in the child's life and as a result serves as advocates and case managers for the student with hearing impairment. These authors also noted that the families help inculcate in their children functional skills that will educate them to cope with adult responsibilities.

Easterbrooks and Estes (2020), stated that professionals who are concerned about the long-term employment for individuals with hearing impairment need to identify a range of support that will enhance each individual's success in the community and employment. Punch and Hyde (2016), also suggested that school counsellors at the elementary level can work collaboratively with teachers to help increase students' awareness of their abilities and interests that may transfer to future career opportunities.

Teachers of individuals with hearing impairment can benefit from exposure to current literature on meeting the needs of these students. This literature emphasizes the need for teachers to plan their materials well, have clear goals and objectives, teach to their objectives, and assess students directly and frequently. Since individuals with hearing impairment experience difficulty in maintaining the skills and knowledge they have acquired, they require frequent opportunities to practice new academic and functional skills. Not only must curriculum focus on skills that these individuals need to use frequently in school, at home, and in the community but teaching functional skills in the natural contexts in which they are performed is necessary. It is important to also note that, curriculum in units and segregated or residential settings for students with

hearing impairment do not seem to be consistent (Ladd, 2017). further suggested that rather than the more appropriate curriculum combining literacy and numeracy with functional academics and life skills training discussed earlier, programmes for these children focused more on behavioural control and containment and moral behaviour. Curriculum orientation, although guided by the need for the children to acquire skills in self-reliance among others, are largely dependent on the goals and orientations of religious, private, or other organizations in terms of funding (Quaye, 2023).

Individuals with hearing impairment do best in learning environments where visual aids such as charts, pictures, and graphs are used. These visual tools are also useful for helping students to understand what behaviours are expected of them. Using charts to map students' progress is very effective. Charts can also be used as a means of providing positive reinforcement for appropriate, on-task behaviour in conjunction with a token economy. Individuals with hearing impairment require immediate feedback in order to make a connection between their answers, behaviours, or questions and the teacher's responses.

There has been a growing feeling that, teacher education training courses are not effective in turning out efficient teachers, especially in teaching children with diverse needs (Mutua et al., 2001).

Individuals with hearing impairment may find it difficult to study in school when separated from their family. This is the reason why there are growing needs for teachers who would have the desire and the qualification to teach these individuals to be able to qualify as a teacher for individual with hearing impairment. The teacher

needs to obtain such qualification or equal teaching experience about the job. Some of the requirements involve a degree in sign language, psychotherapy, social science, applied psychology, master's degree in education or alternative licensure programme for special education can also be accepted in this teaching job and allied field of expertise.

Hearing disability has been a major challenge globally and is considered to be a threat to quality education in developing countries. Of all the disabilities that occur worldwide, deafness remains the most disabling condition with the highest rate for age-standardized disability (Murray et al., 2015). Congenital hearing loss has a global prevalence of about 1 per 1000 live births in developed countries, with a much higher rate in the developing world, as high as 6 per 1000 in sub-Saharan Africa (Olusanya et al., 2014). The inability of a child to hear can affect the child's cognitive development, including delayed speech development that eventually makes the child socially isolated.

Although there are many organizations engaged in disabilities welfare, however, disabled people like deaf students still faced with challenges and constraints in terms of education. Most persons with hearing loss in Ghana encounter challenges such as attitudes, stigma and myths held by society, inadequate specialist teachers, shortage of specialized teaching and learning resources and assistive devices and inadequate funding by the central governments (Quaye, 2023).

Ghana is one of the countries which adapted the Dakar Framework which re-affirmed their commitment to achieving Education for All by the year 2015 (Hayford, 2013). In this regard, deaf students need more attention in many areas because they have

limited access to information. It is the government of Ghana policy that all children regardless of their disability will have access to quality education. Despite inclusive system practiced in Ghana, deaf students are best placed in special educational settings.

Mills (2018) defined special Education as a specially designed institution which meet the unique needs of an exceptional child. The author argued that meeting the unique needs of children involves the use of specialized trained teachers and other facilities critical to their survival. In view of this, teachers have a great task in providing quality services to children who are deaf. Having a hearing-impaired child who is happy and well-adjusted is the goal of the teacher.

These call for a greater commitment on the part of teachers handling deaf students. A great deal of repetition is needed while teaching deaf students in order to grasp the teachers' intended goals and the academic standard. Teachers need to encourage deaf students, guide and counsel them, use a variety of motivating techniques, get deaf students involved in activities, make the physical environment attractive whilst teaching.

In Ghana and other countries, teachers teaching deaf students in special schools for the deaf are well trained. However, students in special schools for the deaf consistently fall behind their hearing peers in terms of academic performance (Stinson, 2021).

Educational Quality Improvement Programme (EQUIP, 2006), in their study titled Building human capacity among at risk youth with Hearing-Impairment through academic support targeted at persons with hearing-impairment in Kenya, Ghana,

Tanzania, Zambia, Uganda, Malawi, Namibia, Democratic Republic of Congo revealed that academic performance for deaf students has faced a downward trend in recent times.

Alshutwi, Ahmad and Lee (2020) researched into the emerging factors affecting academic performance of learners who are deaf at grade twelve examination levels in Kenya. Findings of the study revealed that, performance of candidates with hearing loss has been acutely poor. For instance, in 2013 and 2014, Chileshe Chepela Special Secondary School for the deaf in Kenya was ranked at 48.60 % and 36.36% respectively in terms of the number of candidates who obtained school certificates. Therefore, majority of deaf students ended up being destitute after completing school. Most of them tend to have no aspirations to go to institutions of higher learning due to poor academic results.

Past examination result from West African Examination Council in Ghana indicates that performance of students with deafness is very low as compared to their hearing colleagues (Offei, 2003). Henner, Pagliaro, Sullivan and Hoffmeister (2021) revealed that the deaf students have consistently trailed behind their hearing counterparts in academic performances. The authors further pointed out the inappropriate language of instruction as the key issue, which must be strongly and urgently addressed. Marsal and LaRock, (2020) added that academic performance of deaf students in problem solving tasks and word problems, English Language and Integrated Science falls below that of their hearing counterparts. Awuah (2019) indicated that deaf students in Ghana use features of Ghanaian sign language in written English expressions which negatively affect their academic performance.

Research has been conducted on the consistent poor academic performance of deaf students but all revealed teaching methods, communication modes, and curriculum factors as the major challenges (Awuah, 2019; Henner et. al. 2021).

Despite all measures the governments of Ghana had put into place to provide quality education for all school going age children irrespective of any disability, deaf students continue to underperform. Teachers play importance role in the quality of education offered in schools. Teacher resource is one of the most important inputs into the education system. Therefore, in terms of student performance, efficient management and utilization of teachers is critical to the quality of learning outcomes (Tran, 2021).

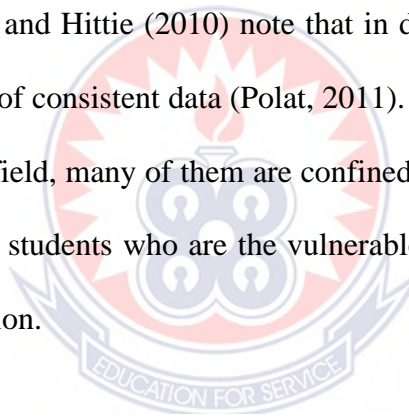
Teacher qualification and experience, knowledge of the subject matter, instructional time and the right use of teaching learning materials have great influence on learning. Marsal and LaRock (2020) observed that teachers need to know relevant teaching and learning material and have them at hand, in order to select the right relevant knowledge for each level of students and translate them appropriately to the developmental levels of students.

During the researcher's internship programme in December 2018 at Sekondi School for the deaf, at a PTA meeting, the researcher witnessed a heated debate between teachers and parents as to who was to be blamed for the consistent poor results of deaf students in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). Whiles teachers were with the view that parents do not provide their wards with the needed support to learn; parents on the other hand were blaming teachers of not having the adequate requisite skills in teaching deaf students. Besides, as a Special Educational Needs Coordinator in the Nzema East municipality, parents of deaf students often asked

why the poor performance by their deaf children in the special schools as compared to their children in the regular schools.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

This chapter reviewed related literature on the research topic, considered some concepts and theories in relation to the topic. It was apparent that many of the studies conducted in this field of study were becoming outdated as such a need for current studies in the area. Another reason for conducting the current study was that very few studies focusing on students with disabilities especially those with hearing impairments have been carried in the Ghanaian context. Commenting on such a situation, Peterson and Hittie (2010) note that in disability related challenges there seems to be a lack of consistent data (Polat, 2011). Apart from the fact that there are few studies in the field, many of them are confined to teachers and teaching method at the exclusion of students who are the vulnerable ones in sports in terms of their levels of participation.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter described the procedure for conducting the study. It explained the various research methods used to generate and analyse the data relating to the study. Issues covered included: the research paradigm, research approach, research design, population, sample size and sampling technique, trustworthiness of the interview, data collection procedure, method of data analysis, and ethical issues.

#### **3.1 Research Paradigm**

The study was underpinned by constructivist research paradigm. The researcher adopted the paradigm because constructivists believe that the social world is not an absolute unit with absolute reality as postulated by the positivists, but rather, the social world is characterized by multiple realities. In this regard, the constructivists maintain that researchers must allow participants to share their subjective opinions of their realities (Creswell and Creswell, 2017).

According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), the main thrust of constructivism as a research paradigm is to deal with the “how” of research. Thus, the concern of constructivist is “how” well in exploring deaf students’ views on influence of co-curricular activities on their social life and academic success in a Ghanaian university context.

#### **3.2 Research Approach**

The study employed a qualitative research approach to explore deaf students’ views on the influence of co-curricular activities on their social and academic life at

AAMUSTED (Marsal and LaRock, 2020). Qualitative research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researcher's interviews, observe, or describe the views of participants on a phenomenon (George, 2021).

Qualitative research deals with the exploratory field visits focusing on in-depth understanding of the social world through detail examination of participants' perceptions and how they subjectively make sense of their contextual experiences (Bazeley, 2015; Cohen et al., 2011; Harris et al, 2017). The aim of qualitative research is to collect naturally occurring data by entering the life world of the participants (Burt, 2015). In such research, the researcher becomes immersed in the everyday life of the setting chosen for the study, and seeks participants' perspectives and meanings through ongoing interaction (Cohen et al., 2011). One of the major limitations of the qualitative methods is that the data is limited to a small sample of the population.

### **3.3 Research Design**

Intrinsic Case study research design was used in this study as a method of collecting information by conducting interviews. This was because the researcher studied in the context of AAMUSTED deaf students' views on the influence of co-curricular activities on their social and academic success. The design assisted the researcher to collecting information about the students' attitudes, opinions, or habits about the influence of co-curricular activities on their lives (Cropley, 2019). According to O'Leary (2014), a research design is a plan or guide for data collection and interpretation, with sets of rules that enable the researcher to conceptualize and observe the problem under study. This is the structure of the research which holds together all of the elements in the research project. It shows how all of the major parts

of the research work together to address the central research questions. Therefore, it is a conceptual structure within which the research is conducted. It constitutes the blueprint for collection, measurement and analysis of data (McCombes, 2019).

### **3.4 Population**

The population for the study was made up of (13) deaf students, (5 males and 8 females) at the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development. A population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. It is an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). Marschark et al. (2019) defined population as the big set from which a sample could be drawn. Rubin and Babbie (2011) noted that, the target population refers to the individual, objects or members of a group of people that qualify by meeting the set criteria for inclusion in a study for reported results, findings and inferences.

### **3.5 Sample Size**

The sample size for the study was (13) deaf students. Ten level 200 students, made up of eight females and Two males who are deaf and on different programmes. Thus, one ICT, two construction and eight fashion deaf students on regular, then two level 400 male students one on distance programme reading construction education and the other as regular student in mechanical who are also deaf. The sample constitutes the individuals who are actually studied and is selected from the target population (Tahadoost, 2016).

### **3.6 Sampling Techniques**

The researcher employed the use of census sampling to select these respondents. The researcher chose this group because they have been in the institution more than a year and had witnessed and participated in a number of co-curricular activities on campus and are the hearing-impaired students in AMMUSTED who are the group of interest very appropriate for the study. Due to the small size of the population, a census rather than a sample was used for the study. In many research studies, access to the entire population is almost impossible. However, the results from a study with a carefully selected sample will reflect very closely to the entire population (Creswell, 2018) but in this instance all the target population were used to represent the whole so as to obtain an accurate result and avoid being biased. Creswell (2018) asserted that, census sampling is used when all members of the population are studied and this ensures a better coverage.

### **3.7 Instrument for Data Collection**

A semi-structured interview guide was used to gather data for the study.

#### **3.7.1 Semi-Structured Interview Guide**

In order to explore individual opinions and gain deeper insight into the situation (Skovdal and Cornish, 2015), an individual in-depth, face-to-face semi-structured sign interview was conducted by the researcher. In accordance with suggestions in the qualitative research literature (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2019; Wolcott, 2015), the researcher began the interviews with a semi-structured thematic guide. The researcher started with general open-ended questions based on the themes and then gradually probed deeper with more specific questions based on participant responses.

The researcher started with general open-ended questions based on the themes; Types of Co-Curricular Activities Students Participate in, Influence of Co-Curricular Activities on Social Life and Effect of Co-Curricular Activities on Academic Life. In all, interviews were conducted for all the participants. Each interview took place at a time and place chosen by the participant. The interviews lasted for an average of 50 minutes with each participant. Interviews are advantageous since it enables researchers to gain in-depth information concerning the problem under investigation (Cresswell, 2018).

### **3.8 Trustworthiness of the Interviews**

It is noted that in research, the research instrument is the researcher herself; thus, if the researcher's questions and biases are unchecked, they may jeopardize the data's trustworthiness (Creswell, 2018). According to Creswell (2018), to establish the trustworthiness of the study it is important to address factors that ensure that the findings are credible, transferrable, dependable and confirmable.

#### **3.8.1 Credibility**

Credibility refers to the degree to which the research is valuable, consistent and convincing. This is achieved through utilizing the triangulation method. Triangulation is defined as “the use of more than one method or source of data in the study of social phenomenon so that findings may be cross-checked” (Bryman, 2012, p. 717). However, triangulation was not possible in the study, because it would have been time consuming and requires more resources. Other methods were used to ensure that the findings are credible. The researcher compared the obtained data with literature, and also by participant validation method, that is, providing the findings to

participants for corroboration purposes (Bryman, 2012). The researcher presented the findings to participants. The participants agreed with the findings of the study and indicated that they related to the responses given. The researcher used open-ended questions in order to avoid being biased throughout the data collection process.

### **3.8.2 Transferability**

Transferability refers to the extent that research findings are transferable to a different situation or population than that of the initial study (Rallis and Rossman, 2014). In ensuring transferability, the researcher provided thick descriptions of the participants to enable other people to judge whether the findings could be transferable to another context. Dependability is concerned with consistency of the data, which indicates whether the findings would be consistent if the study were repeated with the same subjects in similar context (Tom, 2017). Therefore, the researcher kept the audio tapes, field work notes and transcripts of the data collected to show that proper procedure had been followed.

### **3.8.3 Confirmability**

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings are solely from participants and free from personal biases, motivation and interests of the researcher (Creswell, 2018). In ensuring confirmability, the researcher remained unbiased during data collection by not using her own prior ideas to predict the possible answers given out by the respondents thus, being reflexive. According Kusi (2012), reflexivity refers to the researcher being aware of the expectations, hopes and attitudes she brings with her the field; this is done to avoid the researcher influencing the participants'

responses. Further, it helps the researcher not to influence the findings with her values.

### **3.8.4 Dependability**

Dependability corresponds to reliability of findings in qualitative research (Kusi, 2012). According to Guba and Lincoln (1985), dependability “seeks means for taking into account both factors of instability and factors of phenomenal or design induced changes”; this means taking note of the changes in data and those made by the researcher during the process of data analysis (p. 299). In other words, it means description of the research process, to allow for replication (Creswell & Creswell, 2017), even though the intent is not to generate the same results (Tom, 2017). Ensuring dependability of the study implies that the researcher would take cognizance of the extent to which necessary research ethics and practices are observed (Tom, 2017). To ensure dependability, interpretive researchers must provide adequate details about their phenomenon of interest and the social context in which it is embedded in order to allow readers to independently authenticate their interpretive inferences (Creswell, 2018).

In this study, dependability was established through the establishment of appropriate enquiry decision. This included review of interviewer bias to resist early closure and at the same time prevent the provision of unreliable data due to boredom on the part of the respondents because of prolonged interview sessions. In addition, information from literature assisted the researcher to develop questions that elicit appropriate responses to answer the research questions that are formulated to guide the study. There was a systematic data collection procedure that reached the point of saturation,

the extensive documentation of the data (transcriptions of interview narratives), methods and decisions in the memo are steps in proving the dependability of the data. Thesis supervisors assessed the work to find out whether or not the findings, interpretations and conclusions are supported by the data. Additionally, to achieve dependability for the study, the researcher needs to provide detailed description of the research process vis-à-vis the design, data gathering and methods used (Tom, 2017). In view of this, the researcher planned in clear terms the instruments to be used for data collection, and the method and general design for the study at the beginning of this chapter.

### **3.9 Data Collection Procedures**

After permission was sought from heads of the various departments, whose students participated in the study, with an introductory letter from the Department of Special Education, the instruments were self-administered to the target respondents. It was believed that the administration of the instrument by the researcher in person would result in more co-operation than if others were asked to collect the data. The researcher pleaded for their co-operation once more and took the opportunity to remind them about the purpose of the study and reassured them that information gathered from them would be very confidential. Since the researcher was dealing with severe and profound hearing loss students on the influence of co-curricular activities on the social and academic life, an audiological assessment would be needed to have indept knowledge about the participants on the degree of hearing loss which would be discussed in chapter two.

The researcher visited the university clinic with the introductory letter, sought permission from the doctor in-charge to pick their hearing assessment conducted on them by the university to attach them at the appendix but could not be found in the medical record book this was with the reason that all those records were not in the system again. The researcher gathered all the participants and grouped them for the interview and informed them on the days for the interview, thus, Friday for the first group and Saturday for the second group. Two days were used for the interview. Due to the population size, the interview could not be organised at once for all. So, the researcher decided to group them by using focus group method for both deaf and hard of hearing students. Semi-structured interview was used as a tool to interview the participants; the two groups were formed with respondents in one group and seven in the other group. In all 13 students were participated in the focus group interview. The interview guide provided the opportunity for the researcher to directly interact with the respondents and as such, obtained direct answers to the questions. This actually helped provide satisfactory answers to the research questions.

The face-to face interview was presented as enabling a “special insight” into subjectivity, lived experiences (Yin, 2011). To ensure that ethical issues were not violated, before each interview, I alerted them and to describe the purpose about the purpose of the interview and gave an overview of the research being conducted. I also sought permission from interviewees to record the interview with my phone and to take notes and assured them of anonymity and the fact that the recordings and the notes will be destroyed as soon as the research is over.

At the beginning and throughout the interview, I stressed the importance of confidentiality to the participants and that made them feel at ease to talk to me in confidence. The items in the interview were into three sections thus section A, B, and C based on the research questions. Sign language was used to elicit response from participants so, the service of interpreter was necessary. On the days of the interview, one interpreter and the researcher conducted the interview. The researcher read the interview questions whilst the interpreter signed for response from participants. All response from participants based on the interview questions were written down on a clean sheet of paper by the interpreter. Interview conducted on each focus group lasted for two hours. The first group was interviewed on Friday evening after normal lectures around 5:30pm and the second group on Saturday morning around 10:00am in one of the lecture rooms at the faculty. The participants were given the opportunity to express their thought in a very relaxed and comfortable manner using sign language. During the interview, expressions of participants were translated into exact English by the interpreter. After the interview, the interpreter handed over all the responses from the participants related to the interview conducted to the researcher. Participants were videoed during the interview for onward transcription from sign language to written language for analysis of data and their consent was sought.

### **3. 11 Method of Data Analysis**

The interview was analysed by first watching the videoed interview in sign language. Data analysed was derived from the various themes formed under the research questions. Verbatim responses of participants in terms of sign language were also used where necessary but were translated into exact English. The data collected was

transcribed through the interview. After transcription, the researcher organised the collected data according to the themes in the research questions. To ensure that the data collected are organised in a visually clear way, the researcher input the research questions into a table and assigned data according to each research question. Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 were used to code interview data gathered from the participants for groupings to identify the various themes that came up from the research questions and patterns based on responses of the participants. Data analysis refers to the process of examining what has been collected in a survey or experiment and making deductions and references (Muijs, 2014).

### **3.13 Ethical Considerations**

To begin, permission was sought from the authorities of the institution, especially the Central administration of the University. The participants were then rightly informed about the study, taking into consideration their voluntary participation right to informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality. This study ensured that the privacy of respondents was upheld. With the assurance given to the respondents that all information provided would be treated with the strictest level of confidentiality, the respondents were not asked to provide their names in the administration of the instruments.

#### **Voluntary Participation**

Voluntary participation means that participants were never forced to take part in the study. Participants were informed that participation in the study was completely voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. The participant information sheet was given to participants prior to the interviews.

### **Informed Consent**

According to Creswell (2018), researchers are expected to obtain consent from all those who are directly involved in the research, before collecting data. The aim of informed consent is to show respect to the participants and make them feel free to make independent decisions without fear of negative consequences. The researcher ensured that participants had access to relevant information prior to signing the consent form. The participants were asked to sign consent forms for the interview and for tape recording of the interview.

### **Anonymity and Confidentiality**

Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were informed that only the researcher and her supervisor would have access to the recordings and the transcripts. Anonymity was ensured so that participants cannot be identified with the responses. The researcher used pseudonyms instead of the participants' or organizations' real names. The participants were also informed that neither their names nor their departments would be mentioned in the research report. All data were collected and kept on an encrypted, password-protected device and secured for only the supervisor and the researcher's access. No audio or video recordings included identifiers, and all files were reviewed in isolated environments.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the data collected from the respondents to address the research questions. It is divided into three sections: A, B, and C. Section A cover the demographic information of the respondents, while Sections B and C present the analysis and discussion of the research questions, based on the themes that emerged during the data analysis respectfully.

#### 4.2 Section A: Demography of Respondents

**Table 4.1: Demographic Information of Respondents**

Demography	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	5	38.5
	Female	8	61.5
Age (in years)	Less than 20 years	1	7.7
	21-30 years	9	69.2
	31 years and above	3	23.1
Level	200	9	69.2
	300	3	23.1
	400	1	7.7

**Source:** Researcher's Fieldwork Data (2022)

The demographic data presented in Table 4.1 provides an insightful overview of the participants involved in the study. Out of the 13 students who took part, the majority were female, comprising 61.5% (n=8), while the remaining 38.5% (n=5) were male. This relatively balanced gender distribution suggests that the study's findings are unlikely to be biased towards one gender, thereby enhancing the reliability and generalisability of the results across both male and female students.

In terms of age distribution, the data further reveals distinct groupings among the participants. A significant majority, 69.2% (n=9), fell within the 21 to 30-year age bracket. Only a small proportion, 7.7% (n=1), were under 20 years old, while the remaining 23.1% (n=3) were aged 31 years and above. This demographic trend indicates that the study's findings will predominantly reflect the experiences and perspectives of young adults in their twenties, which is an important consideration when interpreting the results.

Moreover, analysing the academic levels of the students provides additional context regarding the study population. Most of the deaf students were enrolled at Level 200, representing 69.2% (n=9) of the sample. Students at Level 300 accounted for 23.1% (n=3), while the smallest group, 7.7% (n=1), was at Level 400. This distribution highlights that the majority of the students are at an intermediate stage in their studies, which may influence their engagement with the subject matter under investigation.

Overall, the demographic characteristics of the study participants, including gender, age, and academic level, suggest a diverse yet fairly balanced sample.

### **4.3 Section B: Analysis of Research Questions**

#### **4.3.1 Research Question One: What are the types of Co-Curricular Activities Deaf Students Participate in?**

The primary objective of this research question is to identify and describe the various types of co-curricular activities which deaf students at AAMUSTED are involved. Co-curricular activities play a significant role in the holistic development of students by providing opportunities to enhance skills beyond the classroom. Based on thematic analysis of the participants' responses, three main themes emerged that highlight the range of activities: 1-Academic Co-Curricular Activities, 2-Physical Co-Curricular Activities, and 3-Religious Co-Curricular Activities.

##### **Theme 1-Academic Co-Curricular Activities**

Four of the thirteen students expressed engagement in academic-related co-curricular activities. These included participation in STEM days, school cadet programmes, and creative clubs such as fashion design groups. For example, a student noted their involvement in games and sports alongside joining fashion groups where they designed exhibition items. Another indicated active participation in STEM events and sports festivals, while one student proudly shared their leadership role within the school cadet unit. Specifically, student 4 said that:

*“I love to participate in games and sports at all times. At other times, I join certain fashion groups and design many items for exhibition”.*

Student 10 also mentioned:

*"I only participate in STEM days, sportsfest, fun runs inside the school".*

Student 1 equally shared:

*"I have joined the school cadet and they have made me one of their executives".*

This theme reflects how deaf students embrace activities that complement their academic interests while also fostering creativity and leadership skills.

### **Theme 2: Physical co-curricular activities**

Physical co-curricular activities was the second theme. Physical activities contextualized under this theme as sports were the most frequently mentioned category, with five students highlighting their involvement in various athletic events. Several students participate competitively in team sports such as volleyball and football, representing the school in external competitions. Others engage in sports festivals and interdepartmental contests ranging from running to javelin throw. Even students who do not actively participate revealed enjoyment in spectating sports activities during school events, indicating an appreciation and interest in physical activities regardless of participation level. Some of the verbatim quotes were;

*"I participate in the volleyball team as the middle blocker and I always represent the school against other school" (Student 3).*

Students 11 added that:

*"During sportsfest, I participate in interdepartmental scorer competition".*

While Student 13 shared:

*"As for me, I partake in almost every sporting activity within the school, those activities are interesting".*

Student 7 Said:

*"I enjoy watching athletics such as running and javelin throw during hall and SRC week but I do not participate".*

And Student 9 disclosed:

*"To me, what I really enjoy doing in this school is joining the football team and the volley ball team".*

This theme indicates that deaf students regardless of their hearing difficulty enjoy passive or active participants in sporting activities on campus.

### **Theme 3: Religious Co-Curricular Activities**

Participation in religious groups formed the third theme, where students spoke about their involvement in faith-based gatherings and activities. While some students join these groups with friends despite being naturally shy, others are motivated by their religious commitments and personal beliefs.

For instance, Students 5 Said that:

*“Though I am a shy type but I join my friends when they are going to meet as a religious group”.*

Student 6 also said:

*“ I am a Muslim so join more of our religious activities because I don't sleeping on campus”.*

This theme suggests that religious co-curricular activities provide a supportive community space that fosters belonging and personal growth beyond academic and physical dimensions.

#### **4.3.2 Research Question Two: How do Co-Curricular Activities Influence the Social Life of Deaf Students?**

The core intention of this research question was to explore how participation in co-curricular activities impacts the social lives of deaf students at AAMUSTED. Co-curricular involvement is often linked to social development, and understanding this influence provides insight into how such activities contribute to the students' sense of community, interpersonal skills, and overall social well-being. Analysis of the students' responses revealed three key themes: Enhancing Social Skills and Relationships, Sense of Belonging, and Personal Competence.

##### **Theme 1: Enhancing Social skills and relationship**

Many participants articulated that engaging in co-curricular activities helped improve their social skills and ability to build meaningful relationships. One student observed that peers who do not participate in such activities tend to isolate themselves, which

motivated them to be actively involved in order to stay sociable. Others shared that participation enabled them to learn beyond the classroom and develop their self-image through interactions with new people

According to Students 6:

*"I and my friends maintain healthy socialization when participating in co-curricular activities. I have observed that people that do not engage in sporting activities or any game always isolate themselves. Due to this, I always partake in these activities at school and it had made me sociable".*

Student 8 also said that:

*"My social skills improved. I also learned different things outside the academic classroom".*

Students 11 also shared that:

*My lifestyle was developed as I met new people along the way. I also improved my self-image".*

Student 5 equally added:

*"Yes. By communicating, by socializing, and by doing similar activities, our bonds were strengthened and improved".*

The shared experiences of Students' 8, 11 and 5 indicate that deaf students engagement in co-curricular activities bring improvement in peer-to-peer relationship and stronger

bonds formed among participants' highlight how co-curricular activities serve as platforms for socialisation and personal growth for deaf students.

## **Theme 2: Sense of Belonging**

Another important influence of co-curricular activities is the development of a strong sense of belonging. Several students reported feelings of enjoyment and increased activity levels due to their involvement, which helped them meet new people and establish lasting friendships. Responsibility roles within clubs further enhanced self-confidence and reinforced their connection to the school community. This deduction can be seen in the following students' responses.

Student 12 mentioned that:

*"I experience enjoyment when I do those activities which have helped me become active and also made me meet new people".*

Student 1 also shared:

*"Being involved and getting responsibility in the club gave me a huge sense of belonging. It definitely helped my self-confidence".*

Student 13 added:

*"The friends I have made through church activities and programmes are the best friends I have ever had. We are more like a family' and 'What I like most is the sense of family within the church".*

While Student 7 also emphasised:

*"Yes. Because during STEM week, we train every day on the various games and we get closer to each other while it lasts".*

Based on the interpretation of students' responses, it can be inferred that religious group participation similarly fostered a family-like environment, providing emotional support and a deep sense of inclusion. These experiences reveal that co-curricular engagements are crucial for deaf students in creating a supportive social identity.

### **Theme 3: personal competence**

Participation also facilitated the enhancement of personal competence among deaf students. Through collaborative group work and shared interests such as modelling, sports, and sign language communication, students developed new skills and coping strategies. The mutual support available in various clubs contributed to both academic and personal guidance, strengthening individual confidence and competence.

*"I met new friends which to me has enhanced my talent in modelling, and I enjoyed them" (Student 4).*

*"I learned new strategies when coping with other people" (Student 3).*

*"Yes. Since we worked in groups together and not just outside the school, we formed a sense of belonging among each member" (Student 10).*

*"We're all great friends and we met doing the same thing we all love" such as chatting in sign language and gisting (Student 9).*

*“I also like how no matter what club you are in you always have someone there for you, whether it’s about your course or personal life there is always someone around to talk to or give you guidelines”*  
(Student 2).

This theme underscores the role of co-curricular activities in building self-efficacy and interpersonal abilities.

#### **4.3.3 Research Question Three: How do Co-Curricular Activities Influence the Academic life of Deaf Students?**

The core aim of this research question was to explore and understand the effects of co-curricular activities on the academic life of deaf students at AAMUSTED. Co-curricular participation is often recognized not only for its co-curricular benefits but also for its potential to enhance academic performance and personal development. Analysis of the data yielded four prominent themes: Good Time Management Practice, Collaborative Learning and Social Interaction, Personal Growth and Self-Development, and Cognitive Development Skills.

##### **Theme 1: Good time management practice**

Several students indicated that involvement in co-curricular activities positively influenced their ability to manage time effectively. One participant explained that balancing these activities alongside academic work improved their organizational and management skills, which they view as valuable life skills. Another student noted increased punctuality and regularity in attending lectures due to the discipline gained from training schedules.

Student 4 stated that:

*“It has been a great learning experience for me which has complemented my academic experience in the school and has helped to boost learning skills, management skills, organizational skills and a whole range of life skills which stand the test of time”.*

Student 9 equally added that:

*"Yes. It has made me more regular and punctual at lectures and my time managing skill is practiced better since I train and study".*

This theme underscores how co-curricular engagements foster essential time management habits that contribute to academic success.

## **Theme 2: collaborative learning and social interaction**

Participation in group-based activities allowed students to learn collaboratively, which in turn enhanced their academic understanding. Students shared that working with peers during co-curricular engagements helped them cope better with group work, leading to improved academic performance. This indicates that social interaction through co-curricular activities not only builds relationships but also facilitates deeper academic comprehension and teamwork skills as evidently stated the following responses:

*"Yes. Because, it helped me to learn in groups which has certainly affected my academic performances" (Student 5).*

Student 13 added as:

*"When in group activities, I manage to cope with other people so to get a better understanding om what is being done in groups".*

### **Theme 3: Personal Growth and Self- development**

Co-curricular activities provided opportunities for personal advancement beyond academics. Students expressed that these activities helped them develop their talents and skills, allowing them to become the best versions of themselves. One student mentioned how new learnings and skills from co-curricular participation were transferrable to classroom learning, demonstrating the complementarity between academic and co-curricular experiences.

Student 1 Said:

*"Yes. Because through these kinds of activities, I can develop to be the best version of myself".*

Student 7 added:

*"These activities enhance my talent. I bring those new learning's' and new skills inside the classroom and I tend to use it academically".*

This theme highlights the role of co-curricular involvement in fostering self-confidence and holistic personal development.

#### **Theme 4: Cognitive Development Skills**

Engagement in co-curricular activities also stimulated cognitive growth. Students reported that participation refreshed their minds and motivated them to study more effectively. The activities encouraged conceptual thinking and problem-solving abilities, which were beneficial in addressing academic challenges.

*“After participating in the activities, it refreshes my mind to study more” (Student 2).*

*“It helps me to think conceptually in order to find solutions to my academic works” (Student 10).*

The responses from students reflect how co-curricular engagements contribute to sharpening mental processes and enhancing intellectual ability.

Generally, the responses under the four themes also indicate that deaf students’ engagement in co-curricular activities have positive influence on their academic life.

### **Discussion of Results**

#### **4.4.1 Research Question One: What are the types of Co-Curricular Activities Deaf Students Participate in?**

The findings of this study reveal that deaf students at AAMUSTED participate in a variety of co-curricular activities, broadly categorised into academic co-curricular activities, physical co-curricular activities, and religious co-curricular activities. These

themes reflect the students' diverse interests and the inclusive nature of co-curricular programmes within the institution.

The first theme, academic co-curricular activities, encompasses involvement in STEM-related events, school cadet programmes, and creative groups such as fashion design. For instance, one student shared, "I love to participate in games and sports at all times. At other times, I join certain fashion groups and design many items for exhibition" (Student 4), while another noted active participation in STEM days and sports festivals (Student 10). Leadership roles, like the executive position held by Student 1 in the school cadet, further illustrate how these activities foster creativity and leadership skills alongside academic interests. In line with these findings, Daniyal et al. (2012) classify co-curricular activities into formal and non-formal types, where formal activities include sports, games, and fashion shows—similar to those described by the students. Easterbrooks and Estes, (2020) suggest that both types have different effects on academic performance but contribute significantly to students' overall development. Moreover, the literature emphasises that co-curricular activities such as sports, drama, music, and various clubs form an essential part of the educational experience (Leung et al., 2011).

The second theme, physical co-curricular activities, was the most frequently mentioned category. Several students reported active participation in competitive sports such as volleyball and football, with one student highlighting their role as a middle blocker representing the school (Student 3). Others partake in interdepartmental sports competitions and enjoy watching athletic events, indicating strong interest whether as active participants or spectators. This broad engagement demonstrates that

deaf students appreciate and benefit from both passive and active involvement in physical activities despite their hearing challenges.

Supporting this, the present study aligns with Creswell (2018) and Leung et al. (2011), who argue that co-curricular activities are student-centred, allowing spontaneous interests to determine participation and experiences. Activities such as sports and games inherently enhance responsibility, social integration, and physical well-being, which are critical for holistic student development.

The third theme, religious co-curricular activities, highlights the role of faith-based groups in fostering a sense of community and personal growth. Students mentioned engaging in religious activities with friends, even when naturally shy, and expressed how these groups created supportive networks. For example, one student said, “Though I am a shy type but I join my friends when they are going to meet as a religious group”.

This theme further supports Pakhwara’s (2017) description of co-curricular activities, which includes celebrations of festivals and organisation of exhibitions that provide opportunities for students to develop socially and spiritually. Such informal co-curricular engagements offer students a platform beyond academics where they can experience belonging and nurture their personal values.

Overall, the findings show that co-curricular activities at AAMUSTED encompass a wide range of formal and informal involvements, which, according to the literature, are more student-centred than traditional classroom settings (Leung et al., 2011). Students have the chance to assume responsible leadership positions and engage in activities motivated by their immediate interests and needs, with teacher-supervisors

acting as mentors rather than instructors (Stevens et al., 2021). These opportunities are vital for the holistic development of deaf students, allowing them to grow academically, socially, and personally in supportive environments.

#### **4.4.2 Question Two: How do Co-Curricular Activities Influence the Social Life of Deaf Students?**

The narratives from all thirteen participants indicate that co-curricular activities significantly influence the social lives of deaf students by enhancing their social skills, fostering a sense of belonging, and developing personal competence. These findings reveal that participation in these activities promotes positive social health and contributes to the holistic wellbeing of deaf students at AAMUSTED.

The first theme, enhancing social skills and relationships, illustrates that engagement in co-curricular activities helps deaf students improve their ability to socialise and build meaningful relationships. As one student observed, those not involved in sporting or group activities often isolate themselves, while active participation supports healthy social interaction. Others emphasised how these activities improved their self-image and lifestyle through meeting new people and strengthening peer bonds (Students 5, 8, and 11). These accounts demonstrate the central role that co-curricular involvements play in providing a platform for socialisation and personal growth for deaf students.

This aligns closely with Wasal and Mohammad's (2014) assertion that co-curricular activities cater to the cultural, social, and aesthetic development of children, promoting vitality and enthusiasm that help students become useful members of society. Furthermore, Muhammad et al. (2011) highlight that recreational programmes

and co-curricular involvements are crucial for nurturing a healthy mind and body, especially for students with special needs.

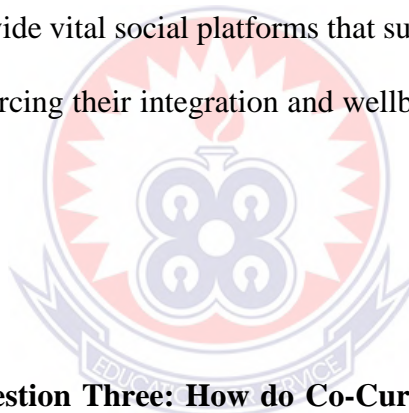
The second theme, sense of belonging, emphasises that involvement in co-curricular groups fosters feelings of enjoyment, connection, and responsibility, enhancing students' self-confidence and reinforcing their integration into the school community. The students' testimonies reflect how participation made them more active and brought them closer to peers, creating supportive 'family-like' environments, particularly in religious groups (Students 1, 7, 12, and 13). This sense of belonging is critical in developing social identity and emotional support networks.

These findings resonate with Khan and Iqbal's (2014) view that co-curricular activities provide students with a personal sense of belonging and integration within the school community, fostering feelings of accomplishment and high self-esteem. Similarly, Leung et al. (2011) report that co-curricular involvement increases receptivity to diverse ideas and acceptance of people from different backgrounds, highlighting its importance in nurturing inclusive social environments.

The third theme, personal competence, highlights how co-curricular activities contribute to the development of new skills and coping strategies through collaborative group work and shared interests such as modelling, sports, and sign language communication. Participants noted how these experiences increased their confidence and provided both academic and personal guidance (Students 2, 3, 4, 9, and 10). The mutual support found within clubs and groups nurtures self-efficacy and strengthens interpersonal abilities, empowering deaf students to navigate social and academic challenges more effectively.

Koehnke et al, (2022) supports this by demonstrating that social skills intervention programmes improve assertive behaviour, emotional adjustment, and self-image among deaf students. She emphasises the importance of focusing on social-emotional development to enable better adjustment and positive personality growth. Co-curricular activities, by promoting enthusiasm, team spirit, and positive thinking, clearly contribute to these desirable outcomes.

In conclusion, the impact of co-curricular activities on the social lives of deaf students at AAMUSTED is multifaceted. They not only enhance social skills and relationships but also foster a strong sense of belonging and personal competence. These activities provide vital social platforms that support the holistic development of deaf students, reinforcing their integration and wellbeing within the school and wider community.



#### **4.4.3 Research Question Three: How do Co-Curricular Activities Influence the Academic life of Deaf Students?**

The findings from the study clearly indicate that deaf students who actively participate in co-curricular activities at AAMUSTED derive numerous academic benefits. These include higher grades, improved test scores, increased regularity in class attendance, and greater academic self-confidence. Students reported that involvement in these activities refreshed their minds and motivated them to study more, while also enhancing their talents through interaction with peers possessing diverse learning abilities. For example, one student remarked that balancing co-

curricular commitments with academic work developed their organisational and management skills, which are valuable life skills that endure beyond school. Others highlighted improved punctuality and regularity in attending lectures due to the discipline learned through training schedules.

The theme of good time management practice underscores the critical role that co-curricular activities play in fostering essential habits that support academic success. This finding aligns closely with previous research, which finds that students involved in co-curricular pursuits display better attendance and higher-Grade Point Averages (Stephens and Schaben, 2002; Daniyal et al., 2012).

The theme of collaborative learning and social interaction revealed that group activities within co-curricular settings enhance students' academic understanding by promoting cooperation and peer learning. Students expressed that learning in groups during co-curricular participation helped them grasp academic content more effectively. Such social engagement facilitates teamwork skills that are transferable to academic contexts, enriching overall learning experiences.

Literature corroborates these findings, as co-curricular activities have been shown to facilitate intellectual, social, emotional, and moral development (Khan & Iqbal, 2014). Moreover, Guest and Schneider (2003) reported positive associations between co-curricular involvement and improved academic performance, supporting the view that these activities are instrumental in student development.

Regarding personal growth and self-development, students noted that these activities helped them develop their talents and self-confidence, ultimately aiding in becoming the best versions of themselves. The complementarity between skills gained

through co-curricular participation and academic achievement reflects the holistic development that such involvement encourages.

The theme of cognitive development skills further emphasises that co-curricular activities stimulate intellectual growth by refreshing students' minds and encouraging conceptual thinking and problem-solving necessary to tackle academic challenges. This cognitive stimulation supports higher-order thinking and academic resilience.

These overall positive academic outcomes resonate with findings from numerous studies. For instance, Koehnke et al, (2022) observed that co-curricular participation is linked to higher educational attainment and self-concept. Habib et al. (2011) emphasised the importance of recreational programmes for healthy mind and body development among deaf students. Stevens et al. (2021) found that co-curricular involvement improves competencies, aspirations, and attention levels in students, while Adeyemo (2010) noted that children engaged in such activities tend to be more academically successful than those who do not.

Reviewing broader literature, Feldman and Matjasko (2018), as well as Feldman-Farb and Matjasko (2012), synthesised evidence showing that co-curricular involvement in secondary education is associated with enhanced academic and social functioning, effects that sometimes extend into higher education. Additionally, Blomfield and Barber (2020) demonstrated the role of co-curricular activities in developing leadership skills, integrity, and community engagement, which are closely tied to academic motivation and success. Rozita (2020) similarly found that physical activities promote social skills and self-esteem, contributing indirectly to academic

achievement.

Finally, the findings support the assertions of Kariyana et al. (2017) and Mwaura et al. (2017), who highlight the positive associations between co-curricular participation and academic achievement, as well as the programme's capacity to provide psychosocial benefits essential for holistic student development.

In sum, the academic success of deaf students at AAMUSTED is closely intertwined with their engagement in co-curricular activities. These activities not only improve time management and collaborative skills but also promote personal growth, cognitive development, and increased self-confidence—all vital components that positively influence academic performance and attainment.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study and its key findings, conclusions, recommendations based on the findings, and other suggested areas to be studied.

#### 5.1 Summary of the Study

This study determined deaf students' views on influence of co-curricular activities on their social and academic life at AAMUSTED.

Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Outline the types of co-curricular activities deaf students participate in.
2. Explore the influence of co-curricular activities on the social life of deaf students.
3. Investigate how co-curricular activities would influence the academic life of deaf students.

The study adopted the Astin's (1999) theory of student participation. Constructivist paradigm rooted in qualitative method approach was employed for the study. The study adopted case study research design. The target population for the study was level 200, 300 and 400 deaf students at AAMUSTED. Census sampling was used for the study. The qualitative data was thematically analysed.

## 5.2 Summary of Key Findings

A number of significant findings were established by the study. Concerning the types of co-curricular activities deaf students at AAMUSTED engage in, the data revealed that they engage in sports and games, football, volleyball as physical activities, religious activities, such as participating in Christian and Islamic programmes. Finally, the interview revealed that some of them do engage in academic co-curricular activities such as garment making, fashion show and many others, also partake in activities organised by their political parties.

Regarding how co-curricular activities influence the social life of deaf students at AAMUSTED, the data established that, it makes deaf students develop personal competence and their personality, it provides them with a personal sense of belonging. Finally, the activities were found to enhance their social skills and relationship and also promote their emotional adjustment, social adjustment, socialization and self-image.

The interview also indicated that co-curricular activities have a lot of influence on deaf students' academic life by improving their social interaction and collaboration. Participants who were involved in the activities mostly gained personal growth and self-development. It also made certain deaf students to have cognitive development skills as a result of learning new things and meeting new people all their three domains are developed. It drew some students closer to members within the society and also teaches them how to love one another. Finally, the findings the data revealed, included; making students to attend lectures regularly, punctually and also strengthens their classroom learning. The interview shown that certain students benefit from the activities by assisting them with their management skills which in turn helps them

manage issues concerning their academic lives. It also refreshes the minds of some students to study more and also enhances the talents of some of them as a result of communicating with people with varied learning abilities. Conclusively, as the students work in groups, some students learn from their peers.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

There are different outlooks of what is considered as co-curricular activities. Examples include activities such as dances, team sports, and performing arts, intramurals, and academic clubs. Different levels of activity involvement and participation may positively impact future success for those who participate; individuals who render their wholehearted contribution towards the performance of co-curricular activities do achieve success and sometimes even opt for that activity as their career or profession. Previous literature and the results of this study indicate that participation in co-curricular activities affects academic success and student social life. Designing the students' experience in schools to include participation in co-curricular activities is a worthwhile principle. Co-curricular activities are capable to form personal character of a student. Among the expected individual development through co-curricular activities are cultivating leadership qualities, building and shaping a healthy personality and ultimately form a disciplined generation. Co-curricular activities are also capable of forming a positive personality and develop a sense of responsibility. Involvement in societies, clubs and other activities will develop social skills, mingle and friendly relation as well as able to create public relations that can be utilized in the future society.

And, it complements the academic activities in attainment of education's main goal of bringing change in student's behavior. Co-curricular activities do not obstruct in academic output rather it facilitates in increasing their knowledge and develops competitive spirit that foster students resolve in examinations. Students taking part in co-curricular activities mostly carry healthy habits and appreciable potential of social adjustment.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The following recommendations were made based on the conclusions drawn from the study.

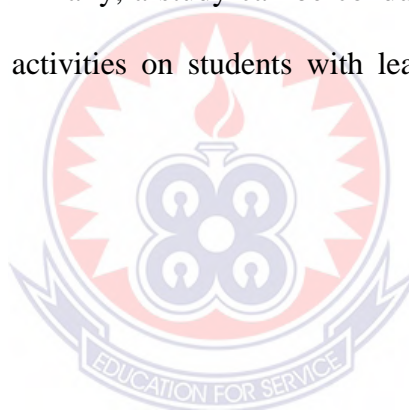
1. Deaf students should be encouraged by sign language interpreters to actively engage in a diverse range of co-curricular activities, including academic clubs, sports, and religious groups, as these provide valuable opportunities for skill development, social bonding, and personal competence.
2. Students should be supported and motivated by AAMUSTED sports authorities to use co-curricular platforms to enhance their social skills, build meaningful relationships, and foster a strong sense of belonging, which contributes positively to both their social well-being and academic motivation.
3. AAMUSTED should design and implement inclusive co-curricular programmes like peer competitions between deaf and hearing students that deliberately integrate deaf students with their hearing peers to promote social inclusion and equal participation.
4. AAMUSTED should broaden its co-curricular activities by including more sporting activities creative academic clubs tailored to deaf students' interests and abilities, thereby fostering leadership, creativity, and confidence.

5. Institutional support such as sign language interpreters, accessible facilities, and specialized coaching or mentorship should be prioritized to facilitate deaf students' full and effective participation in all activities.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

The following areas should be investigated into:

1. The same study should be delved into but the scope should be extended to enable more generalization of the findings.
2. Another researcher should consider impacts of co-curricular activities on deaf students in other public and private Universities.
3. Finally, a study can be conducted to investigate the effects of co-curricular activities on students with learning disabilities in the Central Region.



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## **APPENDIX A**

### **UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

#### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

#### **DEAF STUDENTS' VIEWS ON THE INFLUENCE OF CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ON THE SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC LIFE AT AKENTEN APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND ENTERPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT, KUMASI**

##### **SECTION I: Types of Co-Curricular Activities Students Participate in**

1. Could you please describe the types of co-curricular activities you engage in at school?

PROBE: Please describe the ones you do engage yourself in at school.

PROBE: Please describe the ones you and your colleague deaf students engage themselves in at school.

PROBE: Please elaborate on the ones your colleague deaf students have shared their views with you that they engage themselves at school.

##### **SECTION II: Influence of Co-Curricular Activities on Social Life**

Generally, how do co-curricular activities influence your social life as a student?

PROBE: Please throw more light on how co-curricular activities had influence your social life likewise your colleagues under these strands.

- A. Communication
- B. Socialization
- C. Self-esteem
- D. Self-image and recognition
- E. Self-efficacy
- F. Personal competences
- G. Sense of belonging

### **SECTION III: Effect of Co-Curricular Activities on Academic Life**

Describe the effects of co-curricular activities on your academic life and that of your colleagues under the following strands.

- A. Enthusiasm in school
- B. High-order thinking
- C. Adjustment in school
- D. Academic performance
- E. Motivation in school
- F. Performance of classroom activities

**THANK YOU**



**APPENDIX B**  
**CODING SCHEME**

Theme (T) Code	Theme	Description	Sample Quotations
T1_AC	Academic Co-Curricular Activities	Engagementt in academically related co-curricular activities like STEM days, cadet programmes, creative clubs	“I participate in STEM days, sportsfest, fun runs inside the school” (Student 10)
T2_PC	Physical Co-Curricular Activities	Participation in sports and athletics events, both active and as spectators	“I participate in the volleyball team as middle blocker and represent the school” (Student 3)
T3_RC	Religious Co-Curricular Activities	Involvement in faith-based groups and activities fostering community and belonging	“Though shy, I join my friends when they go to religious group meetings” (Student 5)

T4_SS	Enhancing Social Skills & Relationships	Improvement in communication, socialization, and peer relationship-building through activities	“My social skills improved. I learned different things outside the academic classroom” (Student 8)
T5_SB	Sense of Belonging	Development of belonging, self-confidence, and emotional support through group participation	“Being involved gave me a huge sense of belonging and helped my self-confidence” (Student 1)
T6_PC	Personal Competence	Growth in personal abilities, teamwork, and coping strategies	“We worked in groups, forming a sense of belonging among each member” (Student 10)
T7_TM	Good Time Management Practice	Acquisition of organizational and punctuality skills through balancing co-curricular and academic work	“It boosted my management skills and punctuality” (Student 4, Student 9)

T8_CL	Collaborative Learning & Social Interaction	Learning with peers during group activities improving academic understanding and teamwork	“Learning in groups has certainly affected my academic performance” (Student 5)
T9_PG	Personal Growth & Self-Development	Enhancement of talents, self-confidence, and holistic development via co-curricular engagement	“Activities helped me develop to be the best version of myself” (Student 1)
T10_CD	Cognitive Development Skills	Improvement of mental processes, problem-solving, and conceptual thinking through co-curricular activities	“The activities refresh my mind and help me think conceptually to solve academic work” (Student 2, Student 10)