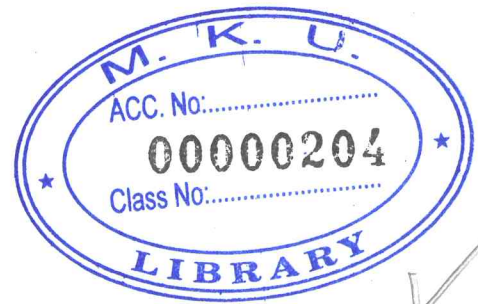


INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF STUDENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN
SPORTS ON THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN UASIN GISHU COUNTY, KENYA

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ELD/E/MED/411/01767



A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN
EDUCATIONAL PLANNING, MANAGEMENT AND
ADMINISTRATION OF MOUNT KENYA
UNIVERSITY

Mount Kenya University
LIBRARY
P.O. BOX 342-01000, THIKA

OCTOBER, 2013



LR10253 K57 2013

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effect of students' involvement in sports on their academic performance in secondary schools in Uasin Gishu County in Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to: identify the extent to which students are involved in various types of sports; assess students' perception of the effect of their involvement in sports on their academic performance; find out teachers' perception on the effect of students' involvement in sports on academic performance; determine key factors affecting students' involvement in sports; and, establish the relationship between students' involvement in sports and their academic performance in secondary schools in Uasin Gishu County. This study was guided by functionalist theory advanced by Robert Merton (2001). The study adopted a descriptive research design approach. The target population consisted of 10,907 respondents from 47 secondary schools within Uasin Gishu County which included head teachers, teachers and students. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select schools. The basis of stratification was school type. Purposive sampling technique was used to select head teachers and teachers. Reid and Boore's formula (1993) was used in establishing students' sample. The students were then selected using stratified random sampling technique; the basis being form level. Data was generated from the open and closed-ended questionnaires and interview schedules. Supervisors assisted in ensuring content and face validity of the items in data collection instruments by scrutinizing them. Results of the pilot study were used to compute Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The items were considered reliable since they all scored above 0.7. Qualitative data were analyzed descriptively in form of frequency counts and percentages. Karl Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was computed to establish the level of significance of correlation between students' involvement in sports and their academic performance. Analyzed data were presented in form of tables, graphs and charts. The study established that ball games, athletics, field events and physical fitness were more popular sporting activities among students; teachers and students had positive perceptions regarding students' involvement in sports and their academic performance; and, the key factors affecting students' involvement in sports were inspiration from national and international role models. A strong correlation that was significant was found ($r(2) = .897, p < .01$) between students' involvement in sports and their academic performance. There is need for the Ministry of Education to ensure that schools are well equipped with sporting facilities to provide a variety of sports to students. This will help nurture their talents and careers and help them achieve more academically as well.