



Research Article

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Examining the Impacts of Extra-School Activities on Beninese Learners' Academic Achievements

Amadou Salami*

Department of English, Faculty of Letters, Languages, Arts and Communications (FLLAC) Université d'Abomey-Calavi (UAC) Bénin

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Abstract: The present study explores the impacts of extra-school activities on Beninese learners' academic achievements. Questionnaires were administered to both teachers and learners. Similarly, interviews were conducted among learners involved in such activities. The data obtained from the different instruments have been quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed and discussed in order to draw out relevant conclusions. The major findings of the study have revealed that extra-school activities are profitable to the learners who are very conscious of their future. In this perspective, students' investments out-of-school have a positive impact on certain educational outcomes as supported by this study. The findings also led to suggestions to authorities at different levels as well as parents, teachers and learners.

Keywords: Extra-School Activities, Academic Achievements, Impacts, Learners.

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INTRODUCTION

Education occupies an important place in the development of great nations. Organizing teaching and learning activities is a complex task. Teachers and students devote efforts in this process in order to reach some objectives but in my country, some factors influence greatly their work. The question of extra-school activities in Benin secondary schools is not a new concern in educational system. According to Coladarci & Cobb (1996), extra school activities are found at all levels of a school system, especially in secondary schools.

Some studies have revealed that more than half of teenagers attending school participate in some sort of activities (Layne, 1994). Other studies have examined how participation in such activities can impact the learners' academic achievement. According to Gardner *et al.* (2008), theory and research on positive youth development emphasizes the transition of human development, and suggest that cultivating positive, supportive relationships with people and social institutions encourages healthy development.

This study aims at clarifying the impacts of non-school activities on learners' performance at school. It intend to find out the different impacts extra school activities have on the school work of students so as to suggest solutions likely to help them mainly to cope with school subjects and extra school activities successfully.

As one of the purposes of this study is to identify the effects of extra school activities on learners' performance, the following questions are formulated:

- Why are students involved in extra school activities?
- What are the impacts of extra school activities on their academic performance?

LITERATURE REVIEW**Definition and Implications of Extra-school Activities**

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, Extra-school activities are those activities which do not have anything to do with school. They are practiced outside school, and represent the additional activities performed by students but are not taken into account for school work. Extra-school activities differ also from extracurricular activities. The latter are those activities practiced outside the regular courses of school but which can contribute to the academic achievement of learners because they provide real opportunities of practising classroom activities learners might not have mastered or understood. Activities such as: music, sport, drama, student newspaper, etc. are examples of extracurricular activities. They supplement learners with useful information or knowledge, helpful for their school performance. By practising extra-curricular activities, students acquire experience in leadership, teamwork, organization, analytical thinking, problem solving, time

management, etc. Roughly, extracurricular activities allow students to discover their talents.

In this research work, extra school activities stand for any job or employment learners may perform in order to earn some money since the purpose of this study is to examine the effect of secondary school students' employment on academic achievement. For instance in Florida, according to Cosden *et al.* (2004); & Darling *et al.* (2005), 55% to 80% of learners are employed while attending school, quoted by Gilman (2001). Their high percentages have led some researchers to believe that students who work suffer from decreased or poor performance. However, others feel that employment can have a positive effect if it is performed in the proper proportion.

Prior Writers and their Opinion on the Concept of Extra-school Activities

The question of what prompts students to take on a part-time job while they are still at school has been investigated in a number of previous research studies which revealed various reasons.

Among those reasons Bentley & O'Neil (1984); & Millard. (1930) quoted by Guest & Schneider (2003) in his report on the effects of part-time work on students, thought of the wish to earn money and students' desire for independence. Indeed, they thought that the financial independence of the youth could increase their personal autonomy, gained as result of spending time away from the normal constraints of family and school. The other reason they expressed is the acquisition of experience which could help those students in the future, particularly in getting a job. In the America context, Marsh & Kleitman (1986), cited by Guest & Schneider (2003) in the same report, exposed the negative side of working students. They argued the case that teenage work had detrimental consequences that resulted in anti-social behaviour (for example increased use of alcohol and tobacco, and criminal activity such as theft from employers), undermined family relationships, and promoted poor attitudes among young people. All that contributed to academic performance.

For Guest & Schneider (2003), part-time employment during any year at school does not have an adverse effect on their school performance in that year. There was evidence, however, that year 11 students who worked longer hours were slightly less likely to complete school than those who did not work. The author found that students who have part-time jobs do not put at risk their likelihood of success at school, provided they do not work long hours. He concluded that students who have part-time jobs gain knowledge of the labour market and develop skills and contacts which provide them with some advantages in that labour market, at least in the early years after leaving school. His opinion is that having a part-time job while

at school is one of the ways in which a young person can achieve a smoother transition into later full-time employment. Dealing with the advantage of extra school activities, Guest & Schneider (2003) observes:

Compared with students who had a part-time job while at school, students-workers did better in the post-school labour market. They were both significantly less likely to be unemployed when aged 19 and significantly more likely to experience shorter periods of unemployment in their early years after leaving school and in some instances, more likely to earn slightly higher hourly wages.

This clearly shows that working while at school is profitable to students. Guest & Schneider (2003) concluded that the examination of the effects of part-time work on school students proved that the majority perceive their jobs very positively, that is to say they believe that the experience will help them to get a job later on, and are largely unconcerned about any detrimental impact on their school work.

Nevertheless, the practice of extra activities by learners implies absenteeism which is becoming the concern of every member of society since it has negative consequences at both the individual and social level. For instance, the studies by Bowen (2005) cited by Newman & Severino (2011) have established that students who attend classes more regularly seem to be more successful in their studies than those who frequently absent themselves.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection

The study has employed both quantitative and qualitative methodologies (mixed methodology). A quantitative approach is adopted in order to allow me to gather more precise and quantifiable information on the practice or not of extra-school activities by students simultaneously with school activities. Likewise, the qualitative methodology is also appropriate to this study because it allows me to get the data directly from the subjects themselves by sitting with the respondents so as to hear their views, voices, perceptions and expectations in detail. The main instrument that has been used to solicit for information is the questionnaire. Two kinds of questionnaires have been used for data collection. Interviews are also held with some students.

Target Population

The targeted groups involved in this study are the actors of our secondary schools in Benin and particularly those of Adjohoun Secondary school. Since the research focuses on the impacts of the extra school activities on students' performance on the one hand, and on the other hand, the learners of 2nde, 1ère, and Tle and teachers who teach students in those classes. As to the teachers, it has been addressed not only those working in Adjohoun Secondary School, but also those

of Azowlissè and Akpadanou Secondary Schools. Finally, the administrative staffs of Adjohoun Secondary School are approached in order to get figures related to abandonment of students and students' results on three years' time.

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

Questionnaires

To achieve the objective of this study, teachers and students have been addressed as they are the main actors involved respectively in the teaching and learning process in Benin. Seventy-six (76) teachers and one hundred and twenty-two (122) learners have been addressed.

Interview with Students

Different groups of learners were met for discussion at their respective place where they practice their jobs. They were asked questions designed to draw their attention and responses on the topics related to this study. Responders were allowed to answer in their own words rather than having to choose from predetermined options, as it is usually the case for survey techniques.

Collection of Students' Annual Results on Three Years' time (from 2013-2015)

In order to check the accuracy of the results obtained from teachers and students, the collection of students' annual results has also been initiated on three years' time from 2013 to 2015. Those students are first of all selected according to criteria such as: having spent at least three years continuously in CEG Adjohoun and having attended *Terminale* in 2015-2016 scholar year. The identities of those students are kept anonymously.

Then, an investigation has been made on whether they practice extra-school activities or not. Here, I get two samples of students' annual results:

- The first sample for the students who do not practise any extra-school activity,
- The second sample for the students who are really involved in extra-school activities, that is to say students who cannot do without extra-school activities.

The objective here is to appreciate how extra-school activities impact learners' performance in class.

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Presentation and Analysis of Teachers' Findings

Table 1. Reasons for students' frequent absence from school

Reasons	Health Problems	Expulsion	Unauthorized Absence	Others	Total
Frequency	05	06	62	03	76
Percentage	06.57%	07.89%	81.57%	03.95%	100%

Table1 indicates that more than 80% of the teachers are conscious that learners miss classes without asking for permission.

Table 2. Impacts of extra-school activities on learners' academic performance

Impacts	Positive	Negative	No Answer	Total
Teachers' responses	00	68	08	76
Percentage	00%	89.47%	10.53%	100%

None of the teachers suspect a certain positive impact of extra-school activities on academic learners' work. About 90% of the teachers think of a negative

impact of such activities on their learners' performance in class.

Table 3. Preventing students from practicing extra-school activities

	YES	No	No Answers	Total
Teachers' Responses	17	51	8	76
Percentage	22.37%	67.10%	10.53%	100%

Table 3 indicates that about 67% of the teachers think students should not be prevented from practicing such activities while about 22% think they should.

Presentation and Analysis of Learners' Findings

Table 4. Number of Informants According to Age and Gender

Age categories	Boys	Girls	Total
Less than 15	03 (02.45%)	00 (00%)	03 (02.45%)
From 15 to 20	39 (31.96%)	10 (08.19%)	49 (40.16%)
From 20 to 25	47 (38.52%)	19 (15.57%)	66 (54.09%)
More than 25	04 (03.27%)	00 (00%)	04 (03.27%)
Total	93 (76.22%)	29 (23.77%)	122 (100%)

Table 4 shows that the majority of informants, which is 94.25% are between 15 and 25 years old. This clearly indicates that the great number of students who

responded to the questionnaires is over 18 years old, 57.36% of them are from 20 years old.

Table 5. Number of informants practicing or not extra-school activities according to their age

	Yes	No	Total
Less than 15	03 (02.45%)	00 (00%)	03 (02.45%)
From 15 to 20	29 (23.77%)	20 (16.39%)	49 (40.16%)
From 20 to 25	50 (40.98%)	16 (13.11%)	66 (54.09%)
More than 25	04 (03.27%)	00 (00%)	04 (03.27%)
Total	86 (70.49%)	29 (29.50%)	122 (100%)

Table 5 reveals that 86 informants out of the 122 considered are involved in extra-school activities;

54.09% among them are aged between 20 to 25 years old.

Table 6. Number of Informants Practising or Not Extra-School Activities According to Gender

	Yes	No	Total
Boys	82 (67.21%)	11 (9.02%)	93 (76.23%)
Girls	20 (16.39%)	09 (07.37%)	29 (23.77%)
Total	102 (83.66%)	20 (16.39%)	122 (100%)

Table 6 indicates that according to gender, boys are more engaged in extra-school activities than

girls are. Indeed, 67.21% of the participants in extra-school activities are boys against only 16.39% of girls.

Table 7. Extra-School Activities Practiced By Students

Extra-school activities	Farming	Selling	Fishing	Quarry Work	Mason Assistance	Others	Total
Frequency	21	09	11	52	05	04	102
Percentages (%)	20.59	08.82	10.78	50.98	04.90%	03.92	100

Table 7 indicates that among the variety of extra-school activities, the majority of learners are mainly involved in quarry work followed by farming, fishing and selling. This can be explained by the important number of quarries in Adjohoun commune

(the quarries of Agbakon, Allanzounmè, Anamè, Assrossa, Zogodo, Tovègbamè, Goutin, Abatto, Démè, Fanvi, Gbagodo...). The table also reveals that among an overall number of 122 respondents, 20 are not involved in extra-school activities.

Table 8. Relationship between Parents’ Occupation and the Practice of Extra-School Activities by Students

Parents’ Occupation	Number of students practicing extra-school activities	Number of students not practicing extra-school activities	Total
Farmer, fisherman	31 (91.17%)	03 (08.82%)	34 (100%)
Craftsman, trader	34 (87.17%)	05 (12.82%)	39 (100%)
Civil servant	06 (60%)	04 (40%)	10 (100%)
Others	31 (79.48%)	08 (20.51%)	39 (100%)
Total	102 (67.21%)	20 (9.02%)	122 (100%)

Table 8 attempts to show whether parents’ occupations have something to do with students’ involvement in extra-school activities. As a matter of

fact, more than 90% of the respondents practicing extra-school activities have as parents, workers who are not civil servants.

Table 9. Period when Extra-School Activities are Practiced by Students

	Holidays, weekends	Schooldays	Total
Number of students practiced extra-school activities	94	08	102
Percentages	92.15%	07.84%	100%

Table 9 gives an idea about the period when extra-school activities are practiced by students. Indeed, more than three-fourth of the informants practise these

activities during their free times (holidays and weekends).

Table 10. Students’ Management of their Earnings

	Food	Clothing	Schooling	Others	Total
Frequency of students investigating	12	15	70	05	102
Percentages	11.76%	14.70%	68.62%	04.90%	100%

Here, one can see that about 70% of the learners practicing extra-school activities spend their earnings on schooling.

Table 11. Students’ Abandonment of School for Extra-School Activities

	In favour	Against	Total
Student’s wish to abandon school for extra-school activities later on	13	89	102
Percentages	12.74%	87.25%	100%

Table 11 shows that the large majority of respondents do not wish to give up school in favour of extra-school activities later.

Table 12. Students under parents’ responsibility and their practice of extra-school activities

Living with parents	Practice of extra-school activities		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	58 (47.54%)	16 (13.11%)	74 (60.66%)
No	44 (36.06%)	04 (03.28%)	48 (39.34%)
Total	102 (63.60%)	20 (13.39%)	122 (100%)

Table 12 indicates that more than half of the students living with their parents practise extra-school activities whereas 4 students don't live with their

parents and they do not practise extra-school activities either.

Presentation and Analysis of Students' Annual Results

Table 13. Proportion of Students above the Average Mark in Each Group

	No extra-school activities			Extra-school activities		
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Number of students above the average mark	26	20	08	28	15	10
Total number of students	30	30	30	30	30	30
Percentage of students above the average mark	87%	67%	27%	93%	50%	33%

Table 13 indicates that during 2013-2014 and 2015-2016, the students practicing extra-school activities have worked more than those who do not practise extra-school activities. But this is not the same in 2014-2015 when the students who are not involved in extra-school activities have worked more than the other category, that is those who not involved in extra-school activities.

Presentation and Analysis of Answer from the Interviews

During this study, some interviews are also conducted with some students apart from the questionnaire addressed to the learners. The students interviewed are those referred to as focus groups. As a matter of fact, the interviews actually take interest in only three (03) of the major activities practiced by students. This is partly due to the rate at which they are practiced and also to the significant number of students engaged in them. These activities are quarry work, farming and selling. Selling is the activity often practiced by female students. However, few male students also sell or help their parents in the selling. Those students sell, among many others, fish, fruits, medicines, food in the shops, the markets, public places and also along the roads.

By and large, the common reason why learners are involved in such activities is to earn money. The revenue from these activities help the students face the different expenses their schooling necessitates; making them stay longer in the domain of education. The revenue also helps them cater for their personal needs like breakfast, clothing etc. Some students-workers even went further to confess that also have to take care of their girlfriends or wives, and sometimes their old parents. Although the learners are conscious that these activities play an important role in their lives, they can't help admitting that they have to go through some inconveniences.

In fact, some unpleasant events can happen unexpectedly causing damage and injury to the learners involved in these kinds of activities like car accidents, injuries from machetes, snake bite and others. Some

health problems also occur during the practice of these activities. They are due to dust, and the charging of heavy loads leading to the damage of the spinal column.

They are also special problems depending on the activity practiced relating to trading. The girls who go to Nigeria and Togo (Lomé) to purchase goods are sometimes victims of theft or have their products seized by the customs' office. As far as farm work is concerned, the terms of agreement are not always respected by the person asking for the service once the work is done.

INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

Interpretation of Data Collected from Teachers

Out of 76 teachers who answered the questionnaires, 62 recognize that not all the students who are absent from class have health problems, or are expelled by the accountant for school fees (Table 1). Teachers further admitted that some students, the percentage of which is 81.57%, miss deliberately classes for extra-school activities. Although teachers are conscious that students' absenteeism negatively affects their performance (Table 2), they also admitted that without those activities; the students-workers cannot further their studies (Table 3).

Interpretation of Data Collected from Learners

The informants include boys as well as girls between 15 up to more than 25 years old. The great number of them is over 18 years old. (See tables 4; 5; 11). According to Boko (2009), this is the period when young people are physically and psychologically ready to take responsibilities. It is clear that those students are conscious of what they are doing. Another reality is that among the students involved in those extra-school activities, they are more boys than girls are (Table 6). This is indeed in harmony with our socio-cultural realities, which force boys to take responsibilities.

As for girls, their low proportion (16.39%) engaged in extra-school activities can be explained by the fact that the majority of them are involved in such activities with their mothers whom they help. So, they do not consider that they are really involved in extra-

school activities since they earn nothing out of them. The government’s policy of freeing girls’ education or school fees (from 6€ to 1€) is welcome to mitigate the impact of this discrimination on girls.

A variety of extra-school activities are practiced (Table 7) at different periods mainly during holidays (Table 9). Here, holidays should be understood as non-school moments. This answer given by students is in contradiction with teachers’ opinions. For the latter; students miss class deliberately for extra-school activities anytime and anyhow (Table).

One has to recognize that there is a relationship between the social conditions of the parents, and the involvement or not of their children in those activities (Tables 8; 11; 12). Whatever the extra-school activities practised may be, the most determinant factor is the amount of money earned.

As a matter of fact, the different students involved in extra-school activities do not use the money the same way though the activities may be the same (Table 10). Some are so much interested in the amount of money earned that they are willing to abandon for those activities (Table 11). The reason for this is that they are hopeless as far as school is concerned, mostly when they see their senior brothers and sisters at home without job though graduated.

Interpretation of Students’ Annual Results

A comparative analysis of learners’ annual results shows that learners involved in extra-school activities performed better than those who did not in 2013-2014 2015-2016. This can be explained by the

fact that those learners, conscious of their needy situation, use their revenue to satisfy their needs and invest in their education. They believe that once they finish their education, they can get better jobs. This shows that they feel really concerned with their success. This additional motivation favours students’ better performance as explained by Kochhar (2012): “*All learners learn more when they involve not merely their heads but their heart also*”. Those students do not want to continue experiencing this suffering for a long time. But in 2014-2015, the learners who are not engaged in any extra-school activity performed better than those who are engaged in those kinds of jobs. This means that in one way or another, extra-school activities influence the academic performance of the participants.

When examining table 13 (section 4.1.3), one is tempted to say that the learners engaged in extra-school activities perform better than those who did not. And a careful analysis reveals that the numbers of learners having above the average mark in either rank is slightly the same. In addition, it is worth mentioning that the best learners are in the rank of those students who are engaged in extra-school activities because while practising those jobs, they acquire knowledge and skills which allow them to be more competitive than those who are not involved in extra-school activities. This competitiveness can be illustrated by the higher number of the learners engaged in extra-school activities who succeeded in 2015-2016 national exam in CEG Adjohoun, the school under study. Indeed, 20% of them succeeded in the national exam against 13.32% in the rank of the learners who are not involved in extra-school activities (Table 14).

Table 14. Influence of extra-school activities on success for 2016 national exam

	Extra-school Activities	
	No	Yes
Success for 2015-2016 national exam	04	06
Total number of students	30	30
Percentage	13.32%	20%

On the whole, it can be therefore confirmed, as indicated table 13 that students involved in extra-school activities or not have almost the same results quantitatively speaking. As far as quality is concerned, students engaged in extra-school activities are generally the best.

DISCUSSION

This study has brought about five findings which are worth mentioning.

Learners’ Living Conditions

Among those findings; it has put forth some of the suspicious that I had about learners’ living

conditions. Clearly, it has revealed that learners have crucial problems of support which are the causes of their engagement in extra-school activities. Learners are engaged in a wide range of extra-school activities. It has also disclosed that a learner does not practise only a specific extra-school activity but any extra-school activity at hand provided he can earn money. They are so conscious that 68.62% of them invest in their schooling the revenue of their effort; which is laudable.

Influence of Parents’ Occupations

Other causes are parents’ occupations and family living together or not. A non-negligible finding of this research work is that the majority of learners engaged in extra-school activities are not often with

their parents. Among the 19 girls aged less than 25 years old, many do not live either with their parents or with their relatives but alone or with others who are not mentioned with precision. This has prompted me out of curiosity to learn that some of them are mothers or mothers to be, living with their husbands. Out of curiosity, I have also learned that 3 out of the 4 boys aged more than 25 years old are fathers. There may also be fathers, fathers to be, mothers and mothers and mothers to be among the learners aged from 20 to 25 whom I have no information about. This raises the problem of being both student and parent in our educational system; a situation which cannot be easily overcome by any learner who has to cater both for himself and his off springs. This situation seems also uncommon and it represents a non-negligible reason why some of our learners are compelled to practise exaggeratedly extra-school activities on the prejudice of their school work, which prevents them from achieving academically.

For younger learners who do not have marital problems, the majority of them work on weekends (Saturdays and Sundays). Most of them do not exaggerate with extra-school activities and their scores are encouraging. Among the 06 learners who practise extra-school activities and who succeeded in 2016 mock exam, 04 are such students.

Risk Associated with Extra-school Activities

Once those learners are engaged in extra-school activities, if they do not act with reason, they are subjected to any kinds of consequences among which: the risks related to those jobs, absenteeism, bad marks, low school performance, poor school achievement, unbounded ambitions, theft, school abandonment, and the development of vices.

This study has also revealed that not only boys, but also girls are involved in extra-school activities and sometimes at a surprising scale. The example of the girls travelling to Nigeria and Togo to purchase goods is an edifying one.

Influence of Comparison Indicator Used

The results reveal that the relationship between academic achievement and extra-school activities depends on the indicator used. On the one hand, if we consider the percentage of students above the average mark, there is almost no difference between the group practicing extra-school activities and the one that does not. On the other hand, if we consider the average marks, students engaged in extra-school activities have the best average marks. This result is supported by the percentage of students who succeeded in 2016 mock exam.

Teacher's Ignorance about the Impact of Extra-school Activities on Students

The results show that teachers are not aware of any positive impact of extra-school activities on learners' class work. Thus, 89.47% of teachers responded that extra-school activities have negative effects and 10.57% gave no answer. Despite this, table 3 indicates that about 67% of the teachers think students should not be prevented from practicing such activities against 22% who think the opposite. This testifies of how ignorant teachers are as far as learners' involvement in extra-school activities is concerned.

On the whole, a moderate practice of extra-school activities is beneficial to learners whereas an exaggerated practice of such jobs is harmful to them. Since these learners are sometimes compelled to practise extra-school activities, they should practise them moderately in order to balance their school works with them. This will surely guarantee their future and prompt the development of our country, mostly in the era of "the rupture" and "the new departure".

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions to Teachers and School Authorities

Teachers play non-negligible parts in the training of learners. In order to succeed in their mission, teachers have to check the presence of learners regularly. This may help them find out those students who eventually skip classes, inform the school general supervisors and call upon their parents if possible. As educators, teachers must pay attention and be interested in each of their learners' life in order to detect earlier their qualities and their defaults. Thus, teachers could find through differential pedagogy the means they can apply to help the weak learners in general and students involved in extra school activities in particular, so as to develop their qualities and correct their flaws. Students need regular guidance and counseling services as well as career support so that they can be able to cope with school life and all that goes with it. I hope that this support may make a difference.

Teachers also have to sensitize learners by comparing the merits of education to the risks the go through in carrying out extra school activities. Furthermore, the administrations of CEG Adjohoun should organize workshops or conferences in order to sensitize both parents and learners on the danger of students' abusive practice of extra school activities.

There should be a school policy compelling students to work out home works and assignments at school before going back home. Therefore, there is a need for a compulsory period for doing homework and assignment in the evening or immediately after school so that learners have a chance to get their school work done before any other thing.

Indeed, all the teachers should be efficiently and well trained, mainly part-time teachers who need to know a lot on the psychology of children.

Suggestions to Learners

Learners must be conscious of the part they must play in their own training. In order to reduce the negative influence of extra school activities on the school work, students must be organized. This means that a learner must:

- not be very interested in the immediate profits deriving from extra school activities;
- be aware that his/her education offers him/her more opportunities in the future than extra school activities do now;
- respect his/her parents, work hard in order to please them, thence benefit their support which is worth deserving;
- not lust after the properties of other learners who dropped out from school and practise *zémidjan* or other jobs;
- be attentive in class and follow the pieces of advice of his/her parents, teachers and other people.

Students should avoid extra school activities which could consume much of their time. They must be prudent and must find other ways of financing their schooling if they want to get benefits from their education later. Learners could practise extra school activities not during school periods but during holidays. They can either save the money which should be spent during school periods or invested in extra school activities which should not consume much of their studying time.

The best students should receive a symbolic amount of money as scholarship at the beginning of each school year. This can promote emulation and discourage learners from practicing hard and time consuming extra school activities.

For the older students who practise extra school activities exaggeratedly, and who are unable to cope with school work, the best solution is to help them attend school where they can learn art in a very short time because craftsmen are also needed in the country. This assistance may come from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or relief services.

Suggestions to Parents

The poor performance of learners in the commune of Adjohoun could be corrected if parents played their part of responsibility towards their children as far as their schooling is concerned. Thus, parents should:

- Provide for their off springs until they finish school. This may reduce their children's absenteeism from school for extra school activities;
- Advise their children to have good friends, and be attentive so that their education can be a sound one;
- Discuss regularly with their children on matters concerning them.

Parents should respond to their children's needs, thence showing that they are responsible. This can be real when they understand that the size of their family should be in accordance with their revenues. Parents should also be educated or sensitized on family planning to make them aware of the advantage of having fewer children. Moreover, parents and children should be encouraged to participate in self-help projects to generate money which could be used towards the children's education.

CONCLUSION

The study has dealt with an important issue our students are concerned with, that of the impacts of extra school activities on learners' academic performance. In fact, the majority of learners in rural secondary schools do not receive appropriate support from their parents. Consequently, they have to practise extra-school activities in order to provide for their own needs. This dissertation, therefore, attempted to show the impacts of extra school activities on learners' academic achievement. The investigations have basically taken into account second cycle learners of CEG Adjohoun as well as teachers from Adjohoun, Azowlissè and Akpadanou Secondary Schools.

In the general introduction to the study, the problems of poverty and that of learners' abandonment of school nowadays have been raised; which is a pity. So, the situation deserves investigating to know its causes and its consequences in order to find out corrective means.

The literature review gave a broad and critical account of studies, books and articles devoted to learners' participation in extra-school activities. Thus, the different methodological instruments implemented in data collection have been presented. Questionnaires, interviews with focused groups have basically been used during the field work. Learners' marks on three years' time (2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016) have also been collected. The data collected were analyzed and the results were discussed. The major findings of the study have proved that extra school activities are profitable to the learners who are very conscious of their future. In other words, the learners who benefit mostly from extra school activities are those who do not exaggerate with those activities and practise them within a reasonable period of time. This is as true as their only wish is to earn the minimum of revenue that is sufficient for their schooling and basic needs. The other aspect of the findings is that those extra school activities learners are involved in are connected with risks, either in quarries, farms or trade for the participants.

In addition, this provides evidence that learners who often practise extra school activities are more likely than their counterpart to be also involved in various kinds of groups, more engaged in their class

work, and overall more optimistic about how their lives will turn out. In this perspective, students' investments out-of-school have a positive impact on certain educational outcomes as supported by this study.

The findings also led to suggestions to authorities at different levels as well as parents, teachers and learners. Those suggestions appear necessary in the sense that they make every actor of the educational system aware of their responsibility. As for the learners, they should know how to cope with their studies and their involvement in extra school activities.

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