

## Cultural Diversity Inclusion and Implementation of Co-Curricular Activities in Primary Schools in Garowe District in Puntland, Somalia

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** Putland has a diverse cultural landscape, which has resulted in variations in the level of importance attributed to co-curricular activities. This study investigated the influence of cultural diversity inclusion on the implementation of co-curricular activities in primary schools in Garowe District in Puntland.

**Methods:** The study used a descriptive survey design. The target population comprised 39 head teachers, 383 teachers, and 20,088 pupils totaling 20,510 subjects. The sample size was 250 however only 195 respondents participated comprising 7 head teachers, 32 teachers, and 156 pupils. Three sampling techniques namely: stratified sampling procedure, purposive sampling, and simple random sampling were used to select the respondents. Data was gathered using semi-structured questionnaires and interviews. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was analyzed according to themes derived from the study objectives.

**Results:** Students exhibit a predominantly favorable disposition towards the inclusion of cultural diversity; however, a considerable number may not engage actively in activities with peers from varied cultural backgrounds. Most students view the incorporation of cultural diversity favorably, highlighting its contribution to enhancing co-curricular experiences and fostering mutual respect. A considerable number of educators recognize that the inclusion of cultural diversity positively impacts the execution of co-curricular activities, while also acknowledging the challenges posed by cultural differences. Headteachers generally view the inclusion of cultural diversity in activities favorably, despite certain challenges. Proactive measures are implemented to integrate diverse cultural elements.

**Conclusion:** Although there are favorable attitudes toward the inclusion of cultural diversity, challenges concerning active participation persist. Policies must be established to cultivate a supportive atmosphere that incorporates diverse cultural aspects within co-curricular activities. This may entail fostering intercultural comprehension and respect via initiatives like cultural exchange programs, diversity workshops, and inclusive event planning protocols for educational institutions.

**Keywords:** *Cultural diversity inclusion, implementation of co-curricular activities, primary schools, Garowe District*

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## 1. Introduction

Examples of co-curricular activities (CCA) include school sports, mathematics and chess clubs, talent shows, debates, mock trials, writing competitions, and theatrical productions. Bashir (2012) identifies behaviors exhibited by students that are not typically appropriate for a classroom environment. The phrase "ordinary curriculum of educational institutions" denotes the fundamental academic courses and subjects that constitute the primary emphasis of a student's education. This generally encompasses subjects such as mathematics, science, language arts, history, and other fundamental academic disciplines. These subjects constitute the formal curriculum, and students are mandated to study them as part of their education. Co-curricular activities (CCA) conducted in secondary schools in Puntland State of Somalia encompass sports, athletics, literary pursuits such as poetry recitation, and academic competitions. This study seeks to evaluate the socio-cultural and educator-related factors affecting the execution of co-curricular activities in primary schools within the Garowe District of Puntland, Somalia.

The global implementation of co-curricular activities in primary schools is often influenced by socio-cultural factors, including religious beliefs and cultural practices. Indicators of this influence include the selection of co-curricular activities for boys and girls, restrictions on participation due to religious and cultural barriers, the prevalence of religious conflicts, and the involvement of parents and the community. In China, Confucian principles have historically prioritized academic excellence and rigorous learning, which may hinder the integration of co-curricular activities (Li & Hu, 2018). Conversely, it is important to highlight that in the Middle East, particularly in countries like Saudi Arabia, conservative religious beliefs have led to restrictions on certain co-curricular activities, especially those deemed contrary to Islamic principles (Al-Tawil, 2016). The United States displays a varied cultural landscape, leading to differences in the significance assigned to co-curricular activities. Educational institutions with a substantial immigrant student population may need to develop strategies to incorporate activities that recognize and represent their varied cultural heritages (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018).

In China, socio-cultural and educator-related factors such as social inclusivity, community involvement, and gender dynamics are crucial to the education system. Li and Luo (2019) conducted a study that underscored the impact of Confucian values on pedagogical approaches, particularly regarding teacher authority and rote memorization. Modernization efforts are challenging these traditional dynamics (Zhang & Wang, 2020), resulting in a heightened emphasis on student-centered learning and critical thinking skills. The interaction between these cultural values and educational reforms establishes a distinctive environment for educators and learners in China. The education system in Mexico is defined by socio-cultural dynamics that are deeply embedded in indigenous traditions and Spanish colonial heritage. Pérez-García and Moreno-Murcia (2018) examine the significance of cultural responsiveness in Mexican classrooms, highlighting the necessity for teachers to exhibit cultural sensitivity. Moreover, social inequalities and economic disparities significantly influence educational outcomes in Mexico, underscoring the importance of addressing socio-economic factors in teacher training and policy formulation.

In Africa, specifically in Nigeria, socio-cultural and teacher-related dynamics are influenced by a rich tapestry of ethnic groups and languages. Ogunyemi and Abosede (2019) discuss the importance of indigenous languages and culture in the curriculum. Teachers play a crucial role in promoting cultural diversity and integration. Additionally, socio-economic challenges influence teacher quality and availability, with implications for educational equity (Ajayi &

Ayodele, 2017). Ghana's educational system is influenced by the socio-cultural dynamics of its various ethnic groups. Research by Amoako-Sakyi and Mensah (2018) highlights the need for teachers to be culturally competent and aware of local customs and traditions. The role of the teacher in addressing issues of gender and equity in education is also a significant concern in Ghana (UNICEF, 2019). Tanzania and Kenya, two East African nations, share some commonalities in their socio-cultural and teacher-related dynamics. Studies by Machira and Okwany (2020); and Kimaro et al. (2018) in Kenya and Tanzania respectively, emphasize the role of community involvement in the education system, with teachers acting as liaisons between schools and local communities. Both countries face challenges related to teacher shortages, leading to the importance of teacher training and development in addressing these issues.

The incorporation of co-curricular activities in primary schools in Mogadishu, Somalia, is subject to the influence of diverse socio-cultural factors such as cultural values and norms; socialization; and social identity within this deeply religious and culturally heterogeneous nation. The influence of religious beliefs, particularly Islam, is a prominent factor in shaping the educational environment (Sidow, 2022). The prioritization of traditional religious education within families can potentially create conflicts with specific co-curricular activities (Sidow, 2022). In regions of Somalia with many cultural diversities, and limited resources, educational institutions may experience deficiencies in essential materials and infrastructure (Mohamud, 2020). To support cultural diversity, it is crucial to engage the local community and collaborate with external organizations, which can serve as a means to address and overcome limitations on cultural diversity issues (Mohamud, 2020). By integrating collaborative endeavors, schools can enhance the comprehensiveness and sustainability of a co-curricular program, facilitating cultural participation, raising cultural awareness, and promoting the celebration of cultural diversity.

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

The researcher concludes that there is insufficient research and inadequate guidelines for the implementation of co-curricular activities in elementary schools in Garowe District, necessitating focused attention and further investigation, which impedes the holistic development of students beyond their academic curriculum. Despite existing research on co-curricular activities, there is a paucity of evidence that specifically addresses the issues encountered within the geographical scope of this study, namely Garowe District. Previous research by Miller (2017), Del-Castillo (2022), and Omae (2017) has examined comparable themes across different contexts; however, none have investigated the distinct socio-cultural and educational challenges associated with the implementation of co-curricular activities in the Garowe District. This deficiency necessitates localized research that thoroughly examines the impact of cultural diversity inclusion in this particular context.

The paucity of information regarding the socio-cultural and educator-related factors affecting the execution of co-curricular activities in primary schools within Garowe District, Puntland, Somalia, indicates a research gap. To address this gap, it is essential to conduct region-specific research that enhances comprehension of how these factors interact and affect the efficacy of co-curricular activities in primary schools within Garowe District. In particular, this study examined the influence of cultural diversity inclusion on the implementation of co-curricular activities in primary schools in Garowe District in Puntland.

## 1.2 Research Objective

- i. Determine the influence of cultural diversity inclusion on the implementation of co-curricular activities in primary schools in Garowe District in Puntland.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

The research was informed by the Social Constructivism theory, formulated by Lev Vygotsky in the early 20th century in the Soviet Union (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's contributions to social constructivism, chiefly articulated in his pivotal work "Mind in Society," have significantly impacted educational psychology and the comprehension of cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978).

Social Constructivism is a pedagogical theory that underscores the significance of social interactions in the formation of knowledge. Vygotsky (1978) posits that learning is a social process in which individuals partake in collaborative activities, exchange experiences, and actively engage in their education. The theory asserts that knowledge is collaboratively created through interpersonal interactions and that the social context significantly influences cognitive development.

Numerous authors have contributed to the discussion on social constructivism. Bruner (1986) elaborated on Vygotsky's concepts, emphasizing the significance of language in cognitive development. Dewey (1938) concurred with social constructivism, highlighting the importance of experience and problem-solving in the learning process. Furthermore, Piaget (1970) elucidated the cognitive development dimensions of social constructivism, recognizing the significance of social interactions in intellectual advancement.

Notwithstanding its importance, social constructivism has encountered criticism and obstacles. Critics contend that it overemphasizes social interactions, possibly overlooking individual cognitive processes (Matthews, 1994). The theory has faced criticism for its cultural bias, as it predominantly relies on Western perspectives (Cole, 1996). The challenges also encompass difficulties in universally applying the theory due to cultural variations and diverse educational contexts (Matthews, 1994).

The significance of social constructivism in the examination of co-curricular activities in primary schools within Garowe District, Puntland, resides in its capacity to offer a theoretical framework for comprehending the socio-cultural dynamics that shape educational practices. The study examines the impact of religious beliefs, cultural practices, teacher qualifications, cultural diversity, and gender on the execution of co-curricular activities, aligning with the fundamental tenets of social constructivism, which underscores the importance of social interactions in shaping educational experiences and outcomes. The theory informs the investigation of the fundamental reasons and motivations influencing the dynamics of co-curricular activities within this particular cultural and educational framework.

### 2.2 Empirical Review

Nagaraju (2022) conducted a study examining the inclusion of cultural diversity in primary schools across three districts of Telangana State. The research illuminated the indicators of cultural participation, cultural awareness, and the commemoration of cultural diversity within these educational institutions. Research indicated that schools with constraints in financial resources and infrastructure nevertheless exhibited commendable levels of cultural engagement. Students participated in diverse cultural activities, cultivating an atmosphere that recognized and valued various cultural backgrounds. There is a necessity to isolate and identify

specific indicators of cultural participation, particularly emphasizing the depth of understanding demonstrated by students concerning diverse cultures within their school community. This study sought to fill this gap by rigorously examining and elucidating the aspect of cultural awareness, thereby augmenting the current knowledge base.

The study by Giri (2023) focused on extracurricular activities in secondary schools, highlighting the importance of teacher expertise in promoting cultural diversity and inclusion. The research indicated that educators with specialized training in specific activities were more proficient in mentoring students, leading to enhanced skill development and increased enthusiasm. This, consequently, fostered a celebration of cultural diversity by showcasing various talents and skills within the educational environment. The study recognized positive levels of cultural participation but failed to comprehensively examine the extent of students' understanding of the diverse cultures present in their school community. This research explored how teacher expertise affects cultural awareness and its contribution to overall cultural participation.

Sani (2019) investigation examined the availability of facilities and equipment in Nigerian secondary schools. The study primarily focused on physical resources, but it also addressed the integration of cultural diversity incidentally. The inadequate availability of physical facilities and equipment has hindered the implementation of co-curricular activities, potentially limiting opportunities for cultural engagement and celebrations. The study conducted in Nigeria examined the integration of cultural diversity in secondary schools but did not explicitly address cultural awareness or the extent of engagement with various cultural elements. This study addressed this gap by investigating the relationship between infrastructure, cultural awareness, and the level of engagement in primary schools in the Garowe District.

Chen et al. (2019) investigated resource allocation in universities concerning co-curricular activities, emphasizing the significance of financial investment. The study indicated that institutional financial support significantly contributes to the sustainability of co-curricular activities, potentially encompassing cultural events and celebrations, despite not explicitly addressing cultural diversity. Nevertheless, the study did not explore particular indicators of cultural participation, awareness, or celebration. This study examined the impact of financial commitments on cultural aspects within primary schools.

### **3. Methodology**

The study utilized a descriptive research survey design, selected for its appropriateness in examining the socio-cultural factors that affect the implementation of co-curricular activities. The study was conducted in the Garowe District of the Nugal Region. The target population comprised 39 headteachers, 383 teachers, and 20,088 primary pupils, totaling 20,510 subjects from 39 primary schools, specifically standard seven pupils. The sample size was 250 however only 195 respondents participated comprising 7 head teachers, 32 teachers, and 156 pupils. Three sampling techniques namely: stratified sampling procedure, purposive sampling, and simple random sampling were used to select the respondents. Data was gathered using semi-structured questionnaires and interviews. The collected data was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 and analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics. The data was then presented using tables. Qualitative data was analyzed according to themes derived from the study.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

The data presented in Table 1 shows results from pupils on the influence of cultural diversity inclusion on the implementation of co-curricular activities in primary schools within the Garowe District in Puntland. The table provides insights into the perspectives of pupils regarding the incorporation of cultural diversity in these activities.

**Table 1: Cultural Diversity Inclusion and Implementation of Co-Curricular Activities (Pupils)**

Statements	Category	Frequency	Percentage
The pupils were asked if the co-curricular activities should include pupils from different cultural backgrounds	Yes	126	80.769%
	No	30	19.231%
<b>Total</b>		<b>156</b>	<b>100.000%</b>
The pupils were asked if they had the opportunity to participate in co-curricular activities with pupils from different cultural backgrounds	Yes	92	58.974%
	No	64	41.026%
<b>Total</b>		<b>156</b>	<b>100.000%</b>
The pupils were asked if they believed that including cultural diversity in co-curricular activities positively influences their overall experience.	Yes	98	62.821%
	No	58	37.179%
<b>Total</b>		<b>156</b>	<b>100.000%</b>

First, when asked whether co-curricular activities should involve pupils from different cultural backgrounds, the majority of respondents, constituting 80.769% (126 pupils), responded affirmatively. Conversely, 19.231% (30 pupils) expressed a negative view towards this idea. This indicates a notable inclination towards cultural diversity inclusion among the surveyed pupils.

Secondly, when inquired about their actual participation in co-curricular activities with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds, 58.974% (92 pupils) responded positively, while 41.026% (64 pupils) reported otherwise. Despite a majority affirming their participation, the proportion of those not involved suggests a significant portion of pupils potentially missing out on the opportunity to engage with diverse cultural perspectives.

Lastly, when asked whether including cultural diversity in co-curricular activities positively impacts their overall experience, 62.821% (98 pupils) responded positively, whereas 37.179% (58 pupils) expressed a contrary opinion. This suggests a prevailing belief among the surveyed pupils that cultural diversity inclusion enhances the quality of their co-curricular experiences.

The data illustrates a generally positive attitude towards cultural diversity inclusion in co-curricular activities among primary school pupils in the Garowe District in Puntland. However, there remains a noteworthy proportion of pupils who either do not participate in activities with diverse peers or do not perceive the positive influence of cultural diversity on their experiences. These findings highlight potential areas for improvement in ensuring equitable participation and maximizing the benefits of cultural diversity in the school environment.

Nagaraju's study (2022) found encouraging levels of cultural participation in primary schools, despite limitations in financial resources and infrastructure. Similarly, the findings from the survey conducted in Garowe District indicate a generally positive attitude towards cultural diversity inclusion among the surveyed pupils. This alignment suggests that, despite resource

constraints, schools can still foster an environment where different cultural backgrounds are acknowledged and appreciated through co-curricular activities.

However, the survey results also reveal that a significant portion of pupils reported not participating in activities with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds. This finding contrasts with the emphasis placed on cultural participation in both Nagaraju's (2022) and Giri's (2023) studies. Giri's study highlighted the role of teacher expertise in fostering cultural diversity inclusion, suggesting that teachers with specialized training can influence higher levels of skill development and enthusiasm among students. It's plausible that the lack of participation among some pupils could be attributed to a lack of guidance or opportunities provided by teachers to engage with diverse cultural perspectives.

Furthermore, while the majority of surveyed pupils in Garowe District perceived cultural diversity inclusion positively, a notable proportion expressed a contrary opinion. This finding contrasts with the overall positive attitudes observed in the literature reviewed, such as in Sani's (2019) study, which incidentally addressed cultural diversity integration and found that insufficient physical resources posed barriers to cultural engagement. It's possible that the discrepancy in perceptions among the surveyed pupils could be influenced by various factors, including individual experiences, cultural backgrounds, or differing levels of exposure to cultural diversity.

In the open-ended questions on recounting experiences where cultural diversity significantly influenced co-curricular activities, respondents shared anecdotes reflecting the rich tapestry of perspectives within their school community. Many (80.679%) described instances where cultural traditions were celebrated through performances, festivals, or themed events, fostering a sense of inclusivity and appreciation for diversity. Additionally, participants highlighted the educational value of cross-cultural exchanges, where exposure to different customs and traditions enriched their understanding of global perspectives. Overall, the majority of interviewees emphasized the role of cultural diversity in enhancing the vibrancy and depth of co-curricular experiences, promoting mutual respect and understanding among peers.

In the open-ended responses, participants (80.679%) shared experiences where cultural diversity significantly influenced co-curricular activities, aligning with the emphasis on cultural celebration and appreciation found in the literature. Many described instances where cultural traditions were celebrated through performances or festivals, echoing the findings of Nagaraju's (2022) study regarding cultural participation in educational institutions.

Table 2 shows a set of data from teachers on whether schools actively promote cultural diversity within co-curricular activities.

**Table 2: Cultural Diversity Inclusion and Implementation of Co-Curricular Activities (Teachers)**

Statements	Category	Frequency	Percentage
The participants were asked if their school actively promotes cultural diversity within co-curricular activities.	Yes	23	71.875%
	No	9	28.125%
<b>Total</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>100.000%</b>
The participants were asked to rate the influence of cultural diversity inclusion on co-curricular activities in their school.	Strongly Negative	2	6.250%
	Slightly Negative	4	12.500%
	Neutral	3	9.375%
	Slightly Positive	9	28.125%
	Strong Positive	14	43.750%
<b>Total</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>100.000%</b>
The participants were asked if they believed that including diverse cultural elements enhances the overall co-curricular experience for students.	Yes	22	68.750%
	No	10	31.250%
<b>Total</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>100.000%</b>

Out of the 32 participants surveyed, 23 (71.875%) responded affirmatively, indicating that their schools do actively promote cultural diversity. Conversely, 9 participants (28.125%) reported that their schools do not actively promote cultural diversity within co-curricular activities.

Moving on, participants were asked to rate the influence of cultural diversity inclusion on co-curricular activities in their respective schools. The responses were categorized into five options: Strongly Negative, Slightly Negative, Neutral, Slightly Positive, and Strongly Positive. The data show that 14 participants (43.750%) rated the influence as Strongly Positive, while 9 participants (28.125%) rated it as Slightly Positive. Additionally, 3 participants (9.375%) indicated a Neutral influence, 4 participants (12.500%) noted a Slightly Negative influence and 2 participants (6.250%) reported a Strongly Negative influence. This suggests that a majority of participants perceive cultural diversity inclusion as positively impacting co-curricular activities.

Finally, participants were asked whether they believed that including diverse cultural elements enhances the overall co-curricular experience for students. Majority of 22 participants (68.750%) responded affirmatively, indicating that they believe including diverse cultural elements does enhance the overall co-curricular experience. Conversely, 10 participants (31.250%) responded negatively, expressing doubt about the enhancement of the co-curricular experience through the inclusion of diverse cultural elements.

The data illustrates that a significant portion of participants perceive cultural diversity inclusion positively influences the implementation of co-curricular activities in primary schools within the Garowe District in Puntland.

The findings from the study on cultural diversity inclusion in primary schools within the Garowe District in Puntland align with and expand upon the literature reviewed in several ways.

Firstly, Nagaraju's (2022) study emphasized the presence of cultural participation and celebration within primary schools, even in settings with limitations in financial resources and infrastructure. The findings from the current study corroborate this, as a majority of participants reported that their schools actively promote cultural diversity within co-curricular activities. This suggests that despite potential challenges, schools are making efforts to foster cultural inclusion.

Additionally, Giri's (2023) research highlighted the importance of teacher expertise in guiding students and fostering cultural diversity inclusion. While the current study did not directly investigate the role of teacher expertise, the positive perceptions of cultural diversity inclusion reported by participants may reflect the influence of knowledgeable and supportive educators in creating inclusive environments.

Moreover, Ogunseemi et al.'s (2021) study touched upon the potential benefits of technological access in enhancing cultural participation through virtual events and workshops. Although the current study did not explicitly explore the use of digital platforms, the positive perceptions of cultural diversity inclusion reported by participants may indicate that schools are leveraging technological means to enrich co-curricular activities.

Based on the open-ended question on exploring the impact of cultural diversity inclusion on co-curricular activities, a consensus emerged among the interviewees regarding both the positive and negative effects. Many teachers highlighted instances where embracing cultural diversity enriched extracurricular initiatives, fostering a sense of unity and understanding among students from different backgrounds. For example, collaborative multicultural events and performances were cited as opportunities for students to learn from one another's traditions and customs. However, challenges related to cultural differences were also acknowledged, with some teachers recounting instances of miscommunication or misunderstandings during collaborative projects, underscoring the need for sensitivity and cultural competence in navigating diverse contexts.

However, despite the predominantly positive perceptions of cultural diversity inclusion, the findings also reflect some challenges, echoing Liu's (2018) emphasis on potential conflicts in community partnerships. Participants in the current study mentioned instances of miscommunication or misunderstandings during collaborative projects, highlighting the importance of cultural competence in navigating diverse contexts. This suggests that while efforts are being made to promote cultural diversity, there is still room for improvement in fostering understanding and collaboration among students from different backgrounds.

The data presented in Table 3 examines the influence of cultural diversity inclusion on the implementation of co-curricular activities in primary schools within the Garowe District in Puntland. The analysis focuses on responses from head teachers, providing insights into their perspectives on this crucial aspect of education.

**Table 3: Cultural Diversity Inclusion and Implementation of Co-Curricular Activities (Head-Teachers)**

Statements	Category	Frequency	Percentage
The participants were asked if the inclusion of culturally diverse elements enhances the implementation of co-curricular activities in their school.	Yes	5	71.429%
	No	2	28.571%
<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>100.000%</b>
The participants were asked if they have encountered any challenges related to cultural diversity inclusion that affect the implementation of co-curricular activities in their school.	Yes	5	71.429%
	No	2	28.571%
<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>100.000%</b>
The participants were asked if they actively encourage and support the incorporation of diverse cultural elements in co-curricular activities in their school.	Yes	6	85.714%
	No	1	14.286%
<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>100.000%</b>

Regarding the enhancement of co-curricular activities through the inclusion of culturally diverse elements, 71.429% of head teachers responded affirmatively, while 28.571% expressed disagreement. This suggests that a significant majority of head teachers perceive cultural diversity inclusion as beneficial to the implementation of co-curricular activities in their schools. This positive perception could indicate an awareness of the enrichment and educational value that diverse cultural elements bring to these activities.

The participants were asked if they have encountered any challenges related to cultural diversity inclusion that affect the implementation of co-curricular activities in their school, 71.429% of head-teachers reported encountering such challenges, while 28.571% stated otherwise. This indicates that while a notable portion of head teachers face obstacles related to cultural diversity inclusion, a majority do not perceive these challenges as significant impediments to implementing co-curricular activities.

Furthermore, the data reveals that the majority of head teachers (85.714%) actively encourage and support the incorporation of diverse cultural elements in co-curricular activities, while only a minority (14.286%) do not. This demonstrates a strong commitment among head teachers to promote cultural diversity inclusion within their schools' extracurricular programs. Such proactive efforts likely contribute to creating an inclusive and enriching educational environment that celebrates diversity and fosters cross-cultural understanding among students.

In conclusion, the analysis of head teachers' responses highlights a generally positive attitude toward cultural diversity inclusion in the implementation of co-curricular activities in primary schools in the Garowe District in Puntland. While some challenges exist, the majority of head teachers recognize the value of incorporating diverse cultural elements and actively support such initiatives, underscoring the importance of embracing cultural diversity in educational settings.

The findings from the study conducted in the Garowe District in Puntland align with and extend upon several themes observed in the literature review on cultural diversity inclusion and co-curricular activities.

Firstly, the positive perception among head teachers regarding the enhancement of co-curricular activities through the inclusion of culturally diverse elements echoes the sentiment expressed in the literature. Nagaraju (2022) and Giri (2023) both highlighted the benefits of cultural diversity inclusion in enriching extracurricular programs. The majority agreement among head teachers (71.429%) in favor of cultural diversity inclusion suggests a recognition of the educational value and enrichment that diverse cultural elements bring to these activities, in line with the findings of previous research.

However, the literature review also acknowledged challenges related to cultural diversity inclusion in co-curricular activities. While 42.857% of head teachers reported encountering challenges in this regard, a notable majority (57.143%) did not perceive these challenges as significant impediments to implementing co-curricular activities. This finding contrasts somewhat with the emphasis placed on challenges in previous studies. Sani's (2019) study highlighted how limitations in physical resources can hinder cultural engagement and festivities, while Ogunseemi et al. (2021) discussed potential challenges associated with the use of digital platforms for cultural participation. The deviation in findings could stem from contextual differences, such as varying levels of access to resources and infrastructure across different educational settings.

Furthermore, the proactive efforts of head teachers in actively encouraging and supporting the incorporation of diverse cultural elements in co-curricular activities resonate with the importance attributed to teacher expertise in fostering cultural diversity inclusion, as noted by Giri (2023). The majority agreement (85.714%) among head teachers in this aspect suggests a strong commitment to promoting cultural diversity within extracurricular programs, aligning with the findings of previous research.

In the open-ended question in terms of cultural diversity inclusion, the majority of interviewees emphasized the intrinsic value of embracing and celebrating differences within the co-curricular framework. Headteachers spoke passionately about the transformative power of multiculturalism in fostering empathy, understanding, and global citizenship among students. Examples were shared of initiatives aimed at promoting cultural exchange, such as international-themed events, language clubs, and heritage showcases, which not only honored diverse backgrounds but also promoted cross-cultural dialogue and cooperation. Moreover, interviewees highlighted the importance of incorporating culturally relevant content and perspectives into extracurricular activities, ensuring that all students feel represented and empowered to contribute their unique identities to the school community.

The open-ended responses from interviewees further underscore the intrinsic value of embracing and celebrating cultural differences within the co-curricular framework. This emphasis on multiculturalism as a tool for fostering empathy, understanding, and global citizenship among students reflects the broader themes of cultural awareness and appreciation highlighted in the literature review. Additionally, the examples shared by interviewees of initiatives aimed at promoting cultural exchange and representation resonate with the importance attributed to cultural participation and celebration in educational settings, as discussed by Nagaraju (2022) and Giri (2023).

### ***Qualitative Data Analysis***

In this thematic analysis of the interviews conducted in Garowe District, a prevailing sentiment emerged regarding the strategies and initiatives implemented by education authorities to foster cultural diversity participation in primary schools. The majority of respondents expressed a recognition of the importance of cultural diversity in the educational environment and

highlighted various measures taken to promote it. Among these initiatives were curriculum modifications to incorporate diverse cultural content, organizing cultural festivals and events, inviting guest speakers from different cultural backgrounds, and facilitating intercultural exchange programs. Overall, the respondents applauded the efforts of education authorities in Garowe District to embrace cultural diversity and create inclusive learning spaces where students from various backgrounds feel valued and represented.

The influence of cultural norms on students' involvement in co-curricular activities in Garowe District reflects findings from previous studies (Hafeez, 2018; Ashfaq, 2021). Traditional roles assigned to children and societal expectations, particularly regarding gender stereotypes, have been identified as factors that may discourage participation in certain activities. However, the potential for cultural celebrations and local traditions to be integrated into co-curricular activities presents an opportunity for fostering pride and identity among students, aligning with the literature's emphasis on cultural diversity inclusion.

The initiatives implemented by education authorities in Garowe District to foster cultural diversity participation in primary schools align with recommendations from the literature (Nagaraju, 2022; Giri, 2023). Curriculum modifications, cultural festivals, and intercultural exchange programs reflect a concerted effort to create inclusive learning spaces. These initiatives represent promising opportunities for enhancing cultural awareness and appreciation among students.

## 5. Conclusion

The study reveals a predominantly favorable disposition towards the inclusion of cultural diversity among students, notwithstanding certain challenges concerning active engagement among peers from varied backgrounds. The majority of students, educators, and principals view the incorporation of cultural diversity as enhancing co-curricular activities and fostering mutual respect. This highlights the significance of cultivating a supportive atmosphere that incorporates diverse cultural elements in co-curricular activities.

## 6. Recommendations

Fostering a Supportive Environment for Cultural Diversity: Although there are favorable attitudes towards the inclusion of cultural diversity, challenges concerning active participation persist. Policies must be established to cultivate a supportive atmosphere that incorporates diverse cultural aspects within co-curricular activities. This may entail fostering intercultural comprehension and respect via initiatives like cultural exchange programs, diversity workshops, and inclusive event planning protocols for educational institutions.

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