

Perception of Teachers on the Use of Hidden Curriculum in Classroom Management to Meet the Psychosocial Needs of Learners in Middle Primary School in Migwani, Kitui County, Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perception of teachers on the use of hidden curriculum in classroom management to meet the psychosocial needs of learners in middle primary school in Migwani, Kitui county, Kenya. Formal curriculum broadly aligns with organized, institutionalized learning models such as learning seen in schools, whilst informal learning describes the everyday learning that people experience throughout their lives, and which can go easily unrecognized. The hidden curriculum is widely acknowledged as a blend of both formal and informal educational elements, deriving its unique characteristics from their interaction. A non-formal curriculum can work alongside the formal curriculum and can possess some characteristics of formal systems, such as following institutionalized frameworks, policies and outlined rules which help to teach ethics and morals to the students. This study used Stratified and purposive sampling to select the sample for the study. The sample comprised of 116 class teachers of class 4 and 5. The target population was 473 teachers in 63 public primary schools in Migwani sub-county. Data was collected by use of class teacher perception questionnaire. The reliability coefficient of the instruments was accepted at 0.89 using Cronbach alpha coefficient. The objective of the study was to assess class teacher management skills in the classroom context to meet psychosocial needs of learners. Factors such as: Teachers positive attitude, teachers' perception of learner's psychological needs, and teacher's professional ethics, were found out to influence ways in which psychological needs of learners were met in a class. The study recommended that there is need for class teachers to Clearly articulate classroom norms, behaviors, and expectations to ensure all students understand the implicit aspects of the learning environment. Finally, the study saw it fitting for teachers to implement structured class meetings which can provide a platform for students to express their thoughts and concerns, fostering a sense of community and belonging. This approach will not only address immediate psychosocial needs but also equips students with essential life skills.

Keywords: *Hidden curriculum, classroom, psychosocial needs, teacher's roles, pedagogy, school community*

1.0 Background of the study

The Hidden curriculum has been defined as implicit curriculum that expresses attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors, which are conveyed indirectly by words and actions in a learning environment (Wear, 2011). On the other hand, formal curriculum has been termed as organized and governed by a well-defined set of rules or features of a written program also known as the written, explicit or official curriculum (Alnajjar, 2021). The difference between the two

curriculums is the fact that the latter is unstructured and less organized. According to Moroye (2010) a curriculum supports the national education policies and the extent to which schools plan and philosophizes formal curriculum to meeting the specific goals, aims and objectives of learning. Sager (2013) noted that the hidden curriculum has been regarded as the most influential of all other forms of curriculum due to emphasis on learning through real experiences, ideas and values. The perception of teachers on the use of hidden curriculum in teaching attitudinal, affective and character domains in education has been depicted as critical in the implementation of the curriculum in schools. Teachers can play an important role in development of education practices for themselves and the learner's when they are aware of hidden curriculum and know how it can be used in the school. On the other hand, because of the implicit nature of hidden curriculum it can be complex to use in a school when its characters are misunderstood or neglected by teachers who do not use this type of curriculum effectively and positively (Moore, 2015).

From a global phenomenon teachers perceive the hidden curriculum in primary schools differently in every country. Jerald (2020) found out that in developed countries teachers view the hidden curriculum from a multicultural context where; prejudice, complexity of various cultural norms, and different ideologies of learners make it complex for it's positive use in schools. In the United States of America (USA) teachers emphasize school structure and policies to teach good behavior such as passivity, punctuality, respect for authority, and working hard, as means to maintain status quo, dominant culture and prevailing socio-economic hierarchy (Lake, 2011). The aforesaid structures are accepted as normal in facilitating placement of gifted pupils, special education, groupings within classes and discipline.

The perception of the teachers on the hidden curriculum in the country is however influenced by the negative uses in the education system to reproduce a dominant culture and servility among the poor (Dessell, 2010). Similar concerns of perception of teachers on hidden curriculum are experienced in China education system. To avoid cultural biases and corrupt authority, the hidden curriculum is emphasized for superior attitudes among administrators and teachers to influence informal interactions among learners for lifetime human relationships (Tin-Yau Lo, 2012). According to Giray, Asuncion, Mak, Edem, Gumalin, Jacob, and Lucero, (2023) the positive lessons, students implicitly imbibed on the value of being compassionate and acquired behaviors and attitudes that are healthy for the development of their personality. Conversely, on

the negative lessons, teachers were reported to act as a cause of academic discord and they also were reported to have a lack of sympathy toward student circumstances.

In Sweden, Anaya (2023) researched the ethical competences that Swedish teachers want their pupils to learn in school. Through focus groups, the author concluded, first, that teachers hold a vast knowledge of ethics education, as shown in previous studies conducted in the Swedish despite the positive teacher-pupil relations, critiques towards classroom management and a lack of teacher authority, which affect its school climate, have been made. According to Gunio (2021) a hidden curriculum contributes to overall, development of personal attributes such as attitudes and behaviors that develop personality from interactions of the people in the school environment. Particularly, learners learn values like responsibility, communication, and risk taking, despite these values not being exemplified in the explicit curriculum.

Consistently, the use of the hidden curriculum in the education has been seen as way to provide a means for social mobility in maintaining current patterns of inequality among the rich and poor which have nothing to do with pupil's development (Wear, 2011). For instance, in the United Kingdom (UK) the hidden curriculum reinforces the positions of those with higher cultural capital, and serves to maintain status through cultural taste, knowledge, patterns of speech, clothing, proper etiquette, social class, and racial backgrounds as the ability to succeed in the educational system (Cubukcu, 2018). In Australia, teachers view the hidden curriculum as partnership in learning between schools and parents for improved social integration and behavior among pupils in post-school environments such as work and home (Lake, 2011). Teachers in Canada transmit the core values of the nation through hidden curriculum, in teaching learners' conformity to law, respect for authority which prepare them to enter the workplace and the world at large (Noah, 2012). Nonetheless, the perception of teachers on hidden curriculum and practices in developed countries has shown positive outcomes among learners in characteristics such as; integration to dominant culture, social life and maintenance of social order and culture (Hashemi, Fallahi, Aojinejad, & Samavi, 2011).

In the African countries, learners are compelled to absorb an academic curriculum buttered with side-effects that program them into possessing attitudes that are detrimental to their mere survival. They are offered an education that seeks to primarily limit and orient African political, economic and social aspirations away from a common political and economic life and towards a

separated, rurally oriented, ethnically based life (Omondi and Doto, 2023). The teacher's roles in a school exceed beyond teaching, to role modeling, acting morally and making decisions that are right for others and themselves in a school environment. According to Jerald, (2020) through the Hidden curriculum, students learn about punctuality, respect for authority, and the importance of teamwork. These are not explicitly taught but are learnt through daily routines and interactions.

The school environment, rules, and regulations also contribute to shaping students' discipline. Another study done by Omondi and Doto (2023) established that strategies such as guidance and counseling of teachers to behave well and conduct themselves with respect should be encouraged by school heads. Newly recruited teachers, both male and female, may continue university-era dressing habits that are not aligned with professional standards. School heads should remind them of the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) Code of Conduct and Ethics, which emphasizes the importance of appropriate attire and professional behavior. This guidance will help teachers understand that their behavior and appearance serve as implicit lessons for students, contributing to the hidden curriculum. As a result of dressing professionally, teachers model the standards expected in the educational environment. According to Craig (2020) Through the hidden curriculum role modeling becomes part of curriculum learnt but not openly intended and students internalize values such as; responsibility, punctuality, respect for authority, and the importance of teamwork among others.

Hashemi et al (2018) Challenges certain factors in African education such as; overemphasis on cognitive achievements, the financial burdens associated with free primary education, and teachers' limited understanding of the hidden curriculum have led to ineffective curriculum implementation in schools. Additionally, curriculum experts often overlook these issues, further hindering educational progress. For instance, in primary schools of Malawi, times set aside for use of social activities and social clubs is used for tuition, time or personal study, and off time for teachers (Lochan, 2012). Such practices increase the disuse of hidden curriculum in schools and disregard of its structure in influencing social development needs of learner's in middle primary classes. Jerald (2020), points out that hidden curriculum is based on recognition that students learn lessons in school that may not be part of the formal curriculum. For example, how students interact with their peers, teachers and other adults; how they should perceive different races, groups or classes of people and what ideas and behaviors are considered acceptable or unacceptable.

In Kenya, a study by Omondi, and Doto, (2023) pointed out that, students learn about punctuality, respect for authority, and the importance of teamwork through daily routines and interactions through the hidden curriculum. The school environment, rules, and regulations also contribute to shaping students' discipline. Therefore, students observe how their teachers interact with others, demonstrate empathy, maintain discipline, and replicate those actions to gain respect and develop their own moral compass. This implies that, the high agreement from both students and teachers underscores the influence of teachers' conduct on students, indicating that students actively observe and imitate their teachers' behavior as a part of the hidden curriculum (Anaya, 2023).

To ignore the use of hidden curriculum in a school will negatively affect learners who already are disadvantaged in the society, such as students who experience difficulties with executive functions such as critical thinking and decision making, as well as those with active and engaged parents or guardians who are not able to provide the support and scaffolding for student success. Bunyi (2013) reported such factors as over loaded formal curriculum, requirements of highly competitive examinations, teachers' lack of knowledge, lack of learning resources and higher training as impediments that have led to neglect of the hidden curriculum. Other factors that contribute to the neglect of this form of curriculum have been brought about by; limited learning opportunities in schools, overcrowded classrooms, insufficient learning materials and under-qualified teachers (Ministry of Education, 2015). Therefore, learning of norms, values and social skills have been replaced by the obsession of realizing high mean scores with little regard to the ethical means employed.

The classroom remains a crucial environment for implementing the hidden curriculum in schools. As Collie et al. (2012) suggest, the classroom is a microcosm within the school, where social norms and moral beliefs are subtly transmitted through socialization. Various classroom activities interact in complex ways to create a setting that fosters both the psychological and social development of learners. A teacher's relationship with students—both academically and personally—plays a key role in shaping a positive classroom environment (Alsubaie, 2015). However, this process unfolds gradually, depending on the teacher's ability to recognize and address student needs, actively listen to them, and effectively utilize the hidden curriculum to meet those needs (Çubukcu, 2013). The affective domain encompasses essential areas of competence

for middle primary learners, such as attitude formation, value development, psychosocial skills, and interpersonal abilities, which are not always explicitly structured within the formal curriculum. Teachers in middle primary classes often face significant psychosocial challenges among students, including poor academic performance, absenteeism, high dropout rates, early engagement in sexual activity, substance abuse, weak critical thinking and problem-solving skills, strained interpersonal relationships, stress, and anxiety. Given these concerns, this study aimed to assess the perception of teachers on use of hidden curriculum in classroom management to meet the psychosocial needs of middle primary school learners in Migwani Sub-County, Kitui County.

1.2 Research Objective

This study was guided by the following objective: -

To assess the perception of teachers on use of hidden curriculum in classroom management to meet the psychosocial needs of middle primary school learners in Migwani Sub-County, Kitui County.

Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study used the critical hidden curriculum theory. The key theorists Apple 1982 defined the hidden curriculum as the concept of hegemony that shapes the school system and produces cultures that are vital for the socialization of students (Jerrald, 2010). This is a contemporary perspective held by theorists such as; (Giroux 1993; Apple 1982; Maclaren; 1990). Under this theory, the hidden curriculum establishes implicit boundaries that students internalize through daily activities, encompassing norms, cultures, rules, and social interactions. Theoretical concepts such as hegemony, democracy, gender, and power suggest that schools function as systems that perpetuate dominance, exploitation, and inequality across different social contexts (Collie, Shapka, and Perry, 2011).

Sager (2013) notes that, in theory, democracy is seen as a means of liberation for both teachers and students. Resisting the deskilling of teachers through a standardized curriculum is essential, as it allows for innovation in ideas and learning experiences. Through democracy, the theory purports that hidden curriculum can improve communities in learning where the vision of

purposes extends beyond improving school climate, enhancing students' self-esteem, or lessening the harshness of social inequities to the possibilities of changing the conditions that created them (Soland, 2015). Further, concerns on gender, power, and hegemony as studied by Collie et al (2011) show that schools mediate legitimate individuals' understanding of power in society; by providing new possibilities through the hidden curriculum where all members of the school system deserve equal and fair treatment. The hidden curriculum, therefore, in this theory invites learners to shed the passive role of knowledge consumers and assume the active role of meaning makers (Sager, 2013). The theory recognizes that people acquire knowledge by using external sources and engaging in complex activities that require them to construct their own knowledge (Dassel, 2010). The critical theory is relevant to this study because it deals with teacher's consciousness of hidden curriculum in the school and possible curriculum structures that provide various ways and uses of adopting the hidden curriculum in a school.

Key elements of the theory—such as resistance to the deskilling of teachers, hegemony, gender equality, and democracy—can drive reforms in implementing the hidden curriculum in schools. Further, teachers can leverage aspects of the hidden curriculum, including school culture, classroom context, and school climate, to address the psychosocial needs of middle school learners. The theory introduces innovative perspectives on utilizing the hidden curriculum to tackle issues like teacher deskilling, hegemony, gender equality, and democracy within the school setting. Such considerations aim to bridge gaps left unaddressed by previous functional and liberal theories of the hidden curriculum.

2.0 Empirical Review

Class teacher management skills on the classroom context in meeting social needs.

Concerning the classroom context, Debbie (2015) asserts that the hidden curriculum begins within individual classrooms and gradually extends to the broader school community. This highlights the importance of the classroom environment in understanding how the hidden curriculum operates. Findings from the study identified key classroom management strategies employed by teachers, including actively listening to learners' concerns, establishing clear written class rules, using charts for visual reinforcement, fostering unity among students, and ensuring fair treatment for all learners. Cubucku (2013) found that, in many African schools, the psychosocial

domain of learning has been largely overlooked as a risk management strategy. Teachers tend to prioritize students' psychosocial needs only when crises affect learners' families and communities, with responses shaped by the nature, severity, duration, and consequences of the crisis. However, during regular school routines, essential teacher responsibilities—such as supervising students inside and outside the classroom, monitoring interactions during breaks, addressing clique formation and student isolation, developing social skills, and identifying and addressing behavioral issues at an early stage—are often neglected. Despite this, when crises do arise, there are notable attempts by the teachers to respond effectively to students' psychosocial needs (Rosen, 2015).

According to Livingstone (2010) it is the role of teachers to build the motivation of learners in the classroom by granting respect and a friendly atmosphere that considers their self-esteem needs and sense of belonging and love needs. Other components in teacher-pupil interaction involve; a responsive, supportive, caring, and respectful environment which can be used to meet the psychosocial needs of the learners. When teachers are aware of the impact the hidden curriculum can have in teaching, they can purposely use it to influence intentional results like psychosocial competencies which in most cases cannot be fully taught through the formal curriculum. The above-mentioned activities have been reported by Brown (2015) to build relationships with learners and teachers in the development of a positive school culture that promotes excellence and harmony.

Factors that Influence ways in which psychological needs of learners are met in Classroom

A report by Create (2015) in Nigeria showed that, teachers often succumb to the idea that they are in school to teach as prescribed by the formal curriculum, as school policies and rules do not state ways of socializing the learners to values, moral and social skills. On the other hand, South Africa has been reported to face multicultural diversity in middle primary where ethnicity and dominant culture challenge the active use of hidden curriculum in public schools (Beachum, McCray, Yawn, & Obiakor, 2013). Edmund (2013) noted that teachers in Ghana teachers had much concern for the well-being of their learners however, formalized instruction for academic achievement relinquished the intended roles by teachers like nurturing of pupils social lives.

In Kenya, Mutie and Ndambuki (2011) observed that teachers primarily view the purpose of learning as delivering subject content, often overlooking informal teaching methods that are

equally crucial in achieving educational goals. To enhance the role of classroom culture, Naeem (2012) suggested that teachers should incorporate moral and social messages into regular classroom meetings, as these interactions significantly influence how students' needs are addressed within the classroom context. Otewa (2016) highlighted the importance of support from all stakeholders in the Kenyan education system in recognizing the benefits of the hidden curriculum in middle primary classes, ultimately contributing to the well-being of learners. Similarly, Gorard (2011) reported that most teachers consider the school's psychological environment to be of high value, as it fosters social interactions between teachers and students, encouraging the expression of opinions and requests for help. Effective teacher-student interactions should include responsiveness, support, care, and respect, all of which contribute to meeting learners' psychological needs. According to Livingstone (2010), teachers play a critical role in building students' motivation by fostering a respectful and friendly atmosphere that nurtures their self-esteem, sense of belonging, and emotional well-being.

Ways in which class teachers respond to psychosocial needs of learners in middle classes.

Naeem (2014) suggested that teachers should structure their lessons and organize classrooms in ways that effectively support the diverse needs of learners in elementary schools. Another study by Brown (2015) emphasized the importance of teachers' responses to discipline issues, classroom management strategies, and class rituals, noting that these factors are critical in fostering a positive classroom atmosphere that supports students' social and psychological well-being. Classroom activities are inherently interdependent and function in various ways to create an environment that nurtures students' psychological and social development. Establishing strong teacher-student rapport, both academically and personally, which is essential for creating a supportive learning space (Alsubaie, 2015). Furthermore, when teachers integrate hidden curriculum strategies into classroom management, they have the opportunity to align school values with daily classroom practices, reinforcing a cohesive learning environment (Hamlin, 2016).

Cubucku (2013) found that, in recent years, the psychosocial domain of learning has been increasingly neglected as a risk management strategy in most African schools. According to Rosen (2015) in African countries, most primary school teachers tend to maintain a rigid separation between instruction and student welfare. In Ghana, for instance, teachers often attach ethical complexities to their profession when responding empathetically to students' non-academic

concerns (Edmund, 2013). To avoid controversy, the teachers believe their sole duty is to teach, restricting classroom time to the formal curriculum (Alsubaie, 2018). Such perceptions can contribute to a negative classroom environment, which fosters bullying, undesirable behaviors, and coercive disciplinary approaches that alienate students from their teachers. Other challenges such as overcrowding, lack of teacher motivation, and poor classroom management further deprive students of holistic learning experiences (Collie et al., 2012).

In Kenya, the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) has made it difficult to closely monitor teaching and learning methods. The Ministry of Education (2015) reported that poor infrastructure, understaffing, untrained teachers, and large class sizes hinder effective classroom management, significantly affecting learners' psychosocial needs. These conditions contribute to the psychosocial difficulties faced by middle primary students while simultaneously demotivating teachers, making it harder to implement effective classroom management strategies. Since the inception of FPE, Migwani Sub-County middle primary schools have recorded a 51% dropout rate, 40% involvement in drug abuse, and 68% absenteeism (MOE, 2018). These challenges not only harm students but also cause distress among teachers, who often lack the resources and strategies necessary to address the issues effectively.

The Psychosocial needs of Learners in Middle Classes.

According to the Montessori approach to learning, children aged 6–12 should be encouraged to "auto-educate" themselves, fostering critical skills necessary for growth, development, and survival (MEST, 2015). However, this can only be achieved when teachers understand their learners' needs and are willing to create an appropriate learning environment that allows for flexibility in teaching methods and assessment. The neglect of the hidden curriculum has led to numerous challenges among middle primary learners, many of which they are unable to navigate on their own. In Kenya, the World Bank (2014) reported concerning statistics in middle primary schools, including an 11% dropout rate in Class 5, 90% illiteracy levels, 23% school attendance, and a 66% retention rate. These challenges, among others, not only negatively impact learners but also place significant strain on teachers, who often lack the necessary resources and strategies to address them effectively.

Classroom management strategies, such as clear written class rules and the use of visual aids like charts, were identified by class teachers as essential in addressing the social needs of learners. Additionally, factors such as teachers' positive attitudes, their perception of learners' psychological needs, and adherence to professional ethics were found to influence how psychological needs were met in the classroom. Teachers' understanding, empathetic responses, and encouragement for students to share their challenges were highlighted as key ways in which educators support learners' psychosocial well-being. In Migwani Sub-County, common psychosocial needs among middle primary learners included safety, recognition, and communication skills. Addressing these needs through effective classroom strategies and the integration of the hidden curriculum is essential in fostering a supportive and holistic learning environment.

In accordance to Montessori approach of learning, in ages 6-12 years' learners should be trained to "auto-educate" themselves, thus developing the critical skills necessary to grow, develop and survive in life (MEST, 2015). However, this can only happen once the teachers are aware of the learners needs and are ready and willing to prepare an appropriate learning environment with the freedom to design their own methodology of teaching and assessment. The negative outcomes of abandonment of hidden curriculum have created numerous challenges among middle primary learners which they are not able to deal with alone. In Kenya the (World Bank, 2014) reported that in the middle primary schools, there were 11% drop out in class 5, 90% illiteracy levels in middle primary classes, 23% school attendance and 66% retention rates. These challenges among others cause harm to the learners and distress to teachers who in most cases have few resources and strategies of dealing with them.

Class teachers perceived clear written class rules, use of charts in class as important factors in class management in meeting social needs of learner. Factors like: Teachers positive attitude, teachers' perception of learners psychological needs, and teacher's professional ethics, were found out to influence ways in which psychological needs of learners were met in a class. Teachers understanding, teacher's emphatic response, teacher's encouragement to learners to share their challenges, were found out as ways in which teachers respond to learner's psychosocial needs in a class. While the Common psychosocial needs in Migwani Sub-County among learners in middle primary schools were: safety needs, recognition, and communication skills.

3.0 Research Methodology

The study employed a descriptive research design which is fact-finding research, suitable to describe the variables as they are in order to offer a detailed understanding of the matter being investigated; the researcher was able to present the findings as representative of the population (Creswell, 2015). The sample comprised of 116 class teachers of class 4 and 5 in public primary schools in Migwani Sub-County, Kitui County, Kenya. Stratified and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the sample; data was collected by use of class teacher perception questionnaire (TPQ). The data collected was analyzed by use of descriptive statistic where frequency tables and percentages were used to analyze data, chi-square was used for hypothesis testing with use of statistical analysis software-SPSS version 23.

4.0 Results and Discussion

The objective of this study was to assess the perception of teachers on use of hidden curriculum in classroom management to meet the psychosocial needs of middle primary school learners in Migwani Sub-County, Kitui County. To achieve this objective a research questions were developed; How do class teacher management skills impact the classroom context in meeting social needs in middle primary schools in Migwani Sub-County, Kitui County, Kenya. The reliability coefficient of the instruments was accepted at 0.89 using Cronbach alpha coefficient. The Findings of the study showed that class teacher focused on the following skills to manage their classes: listen to learner's concerns (88.5%), clear written class rules (80.7%), emphasis of unity of class members (79.8%), and proper channels of communication (77.1%) class ceremonies (79.8%). Factors like teacher's positive attitude, teachers' perception of learners psychological needs, and teacher's professional ethics, were found out to influence ways in which psychological needs of learners were met in a class. below indicate that the majority (43.0%) of respondents fall within 40 – 45 years, followed by teachers who are above 45 years (39.5%). The study however, established that young teachers falling between age 30-35 (14.9%) years while 22-25 were the minority (2.6%).

Table 1Teacher management skills on the classroom context in meeting social needs of learners

The use of teacher management on the classroom context in meeting social needs of learners

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree	
	Mo	%	Mod	%	Mo	%	Mode	%
de	e	de						
Learners concerns are listened to influences teacher management in classroom in meeting learners social needs	1	0.9	9	7.8	3	2.6	101	88.5
Written clear class rules influences teacher management in classroom in meeting learners social needs	5	4.3	12	10.5	5	4.3	92	80.7
Class discussion groups influences teacher management in classroom in meeting learners social needs	9	7.8	31	27.1	3	2.6	72	63.1
Positive approach to discipline issues influences teacher management in classroom in meeting learners social needs	5	4.3	22	19.2	9	7.8	78	68.4
Fair treatment of all learners influences teacher management in classroom in meeting learners social needs	17	14.9	14	12.2	10	8.7	73	64.0
Use of charts in class influences teacher management in classroom in meeting learners social needs	8	7.0	11	9.6	18	15.7	77	67.5
Class ceremonies influences teacher management in classroom in meeting learners social needs	6	5.2	13	11.4	4	4.3	91	79.8
Proper channels of communication influences teacher management in classroom in meeting learners social needs	8	7.0	12	10.5	6	5.2	88	77.1
Use of positive language influences teacher management in classroom in meeting learners social needs	8	7.0	9	7.8	10	8.7	87	76.3
Emphasis of unity of class members influences teacher	8	7.0	9	7.8	6	5.2	91	79.8

management in classroom in
meeting learners social needs
Regular class teacher meetings
influences teacher management
in classroom in meeting
learners social needs

13 11.4 13 11.4 6 5.2 82 71.9

The findings of the study indicate that there was basic use of management skills in classrooms within Migwani Sub-County, which contrasts with more systematic approaches often seen in other educational settings. According to Debbie (2015), the hidden curriculum begins within each individual classroom and can diffuse into the wider school community; a reversal of this concept can also be employed to achieve similar outcomes. Effective enforcement of psychosocial skills among learners enhances social relationships, academic achievement, communication skills, and conflict resolution, while simultaneously preventing problem behaviors such as violence, drug abuse, and school dropout (Sager, 2013). To enhance classroom culture,

From the findings it was revealed that the most employed classroom management strategies in Migwani Sub-County involve actively listening to learners' concerns (88.5%), implementing clear written class rules (80.7%), and fostering unity among class members (79.8%). Furthermore, establishing proper channels of communication (77.1%) and organizing class ceremonies (79.8%) were recognized as essential practices that contribute to a positive classroom environment. However, there was evidence of limited utilization of techniques such as regular teacher meetings (71.9%), class discussion groups (63.1%), a positive approach to discipline (68.4%), and fair treatment of all class members (64.0%). These findings suggest that while foundational strategies are in place, they may not encompass the range of effective classroom management practices necessary to meet the social needs of middle primary learners comprehensively. According to Naeem (2014) suggests that teachers convey moral and social messages during regular class meetings, utilize rewards, celebrations, rituals, and appropriate disciplinary measures.

The importance of the above management techniques cannot be overstated. By prioritizing the listening of learners' concerns and establishing clear rules, teachers create an environment where students feel valued and understood, significantly enhancing emotional well-being (Anaya, 2023). Therefore, presence of clear communication channels and shared class rituals further strengthens community bonds, which are vital for fostering a positive school culture. Moreover,

the study highlighted several factors that critically influence how teachers address the psychological needs of their students. A remarkable 90.3% of teachers recognize that their positive attitude is fundamental in meeting these needs, aligning with the understanding that a supportive and encouraging demeanor can significantly impact a child's psychological health. Effective responses to learners' psychosocial needs also include the teachers' understanding of these needs, their empathetic responses, and their encouragement for students to share their challenges.

As noted by Emmer, Edmund, Edward, and Sabornie (2014), leveraging the hidden curriculum requires teachers to structure their lessons and organize classrooms in ways that optimally support the needs of elementary learners. The identified neglect in addressing learners' psychosocial needs has resulted in chaos within the educational process and numerous challenges. Therefore, the role of teachers in meeting these needs must extend beyond formal curriculum delivery; they should engage with students as individuals. Mirk (2012) emphasizes that the character of teachers and their interactions with students significantly enhance opportunities to model and impart social and psychological competencies. In conclusion, while the study emphasized the importance of listening to learners, implementing clear rules, and utilizing visual aids in managing classrooms, it also highlights a need for a more comprehensive approach. Implementing positive attitudes and understanding the psychological needs of students is essential in ensuring that the psychosocial challenges faced by learners are effectively addressed.

Recommendations

The study recommended that there is a need for class teachers to Clearly articulate classroom norms, behaviors, and expectations to ensure all students understand the implicit aspects of the learning environment. Finally, the study saw it fitting for teachers to implement structured class meetings which can provide a platform for students to express their thoughts and concerns, fostering a sense of community and belonging. Regular class meetings can help students develop social skills, enhance peer relationships, and create a supportive classroom environment. This approach not only addresses immediate psychosocial needs but also equips students with essential life skills.

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