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The Perception of the Implicit Curriculum as a Self-Support in building Learners' Cognitive and Socio-Skills

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Abstract

Education has been described as a means of acquiring knowledge and more importantly, a means of developing individual personality. The knowledge acquired is an instrument for behaviour modification. In education system, a programme that anchor the acquisition of knowledge is the curriculum. The curriculum is the planned and organised programme for an intended learning outcome. This curriculum is of two type, the planned and the unplanned curriculum. They can as well be known as the explicit or unhidden and implicit or hidden curriculum. The planned curriculum contains content for academic development. A lot of teachers concentrate on the explicit curriculum in producing students presenting them to the society. Education without character will only make a futile effort towards any achievement. The society count on the school in giving wholistic education to the students and equip them with social skills. Social skills are skills that enable students to interact, make interpersonal interaction, control physical and emotional disorder, ability to take right and proper approach to issues, decency, appropriate response in communication. Having social skills enable individual to excel both in academic and other area of life. Acquisition of social skills can be reinforced through the active use of the implicit curriculum. The implicit curriculum has been played down in schools and many students, parents and even teachers see it as punitive measure making the implicit curriculum relevant is very germane in supporting and reinforcing the social skills.

Keywords: 1 Education,2 curriculum,3 implicit curriculum, 4explicit curriculum, 5social skills,6 socio-cultural context.

Introduction

It has been the agitation of the international countries to make education a means of achieving co-existence among various groups all over the world. Education can be described as a process of imparting knowledge, skills and attitude to the learners with the purpose of ensuring total development of the learner. Shweta Iyer (2020) explains that Education makes us better citizens by teaching us how to conduct ourselves through life by following rules and regulations and giving us a sense of conscience. The universal declaration of human right stated that, the purpose of education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human right and fundamental freedom (UNESCO, 2010). Education is a process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another (Shodhganga, 2011). It is a means whereby an individual is being socialised into the society. It is used to integrate learners into the society thereby making them good citizens.

Education means acquiring deeper knowledge which one can apply to daily life for sustainability. A society that takes education very seriously is likely to have minimal rates of crime and anti-social behaviour making it possible to develop technologically, economically and politically. The school is a great institution where educational opportunities are being provided for children. It is a place where students are prepared for life challenges. Otewa (2016) noted that, the process of education through schooling has two major purposes they are for cognitive development and character formation which involves the construction of thought processes, such as; remembering, problem-solving and decision making from childhood through adolescence (Ken, 2020). It is very useful in transforming the children into adult and integrating them into the society. The character formation is equally important in that it enables the students to acquire life experiences to face many challenges that they might encounter within the city. The character formation is embedded in education process in order to achieve a life skill. Teachers have the chance to establish positive values such as; humility, empathy, passion for teaching, leadership and other qualities in their students. To achieve all these, there is need for classroom interaction that will lead to acquisition of experiences. An essential programme planned to achieve this education is the curriculum.

What is curriculum?

Curriculum is a familiar word in the school system. Curriculum is a plan programme of the teaching and learning activities involving both the teacher and the learners and the learning environment. It is planned activities that is arranged towards the development and acquisition of education within the school setting in order to develop the individual learners and the society. Bobbitt (1918) gave the definition of curriculum as the course of deeds and experiences through which children grow up into adults and get along for success in the society. Which means it is a package in which experiences are wrapped to lead the children to become useful adults. It is a means of achieving process in teaching and

learning. Unesco(1998) defined curriculum as the set of activities that are geared towards the achievement of educational goals. It is an activity that mirrors into the society and plan towards what it wants to achieve through education.

In the view of Fafunwa(2004) curriculum is the total environment in which education takes place which includes the child, the teacher, the subject and the psychological environment. It can as well be referred to as prescribed course of learning which students need to fulfil in order to pass a certain level of education and prepare them for a successful life. Curriculum is the experience that the learner has under the guidance of the school. The totality of what the school intended to teach through which they can acquire knowledge and skills. Curriculum consist of continuous chain of activities needed to translate educational goals into concrete activities, materials, observable change in behaviour (Osarenren, 2018).

The essence of Curriculum is to train the learners towards the realisation of educational goals. It enables the students to imbibe their cultural heritage in order to contribute meaningfully to the development of the society. It includes all the planned and unplanned learning experiences that students undergo while in school. This means that there are some learning experience that are not planned. The planned Curriculum is the type that is intentionally arranged for formal education to take place. It is the type of curriculum that is deliberately arranged to include the objectives, the contents to be taught, the learning experiences, methods and means of evaluation.

Curriculum is planned to guide the teachers in interpreting the nation's philosophy of education by drawing the contents in which the teachers and the learners will be engaged in, for learning to take place in the classroom and guarantee the continuous learning after classroom situation. Also, Unesco(2010) sees the planned Curriculum as the programme objectives, content, learning experiences, resources and assessment offered by a school. It contains all activities that guide the teaching and learning including mode of instruction of a particular educational level. The planned curriculum has to take place within the stipulated hours and period of learning in the school system. This planned Curriculum is also known as overt or explicit Curriculum. Lean (1998) explained an implicit curriculum as one that has been carefully designed, pilot tested by teachers and students, and then presented or published in the form of curriculum materials for teachers and learners. It provides uniformity in learning and many times in the assessment of learning outcomes. However, the explicit curriculum alone is not enough to build up learners and be incorporate into the society apart from acquiring education through classroom interaction, it can also be acquired outside the classroom experience, the implicit curriculum is also required.

The Implicit Curriculum and Cognitive development

The implicit curriculum can as well be referred to as the hidden curriculum. It is also known as the unofficial or informal curriculum. It is a non-documented programme to guide learning. This type of curriculum refers to as the learning experience adopted from other agencies outside the formal school setting such as peers, parents, media and community (UK Essays, 2016). Stefan Bouteller (2020) defines the hidden curriculum as the lesson that are taught informally and usually unintentionally in a school system. It includes behaviours, perspectives and attitude that students pick up while they are at school.

Merfat(2015) explained the hidden curriculum as the unspoken or implicit values, behaviours procedure and norms that exist in the educational setting, added that it is one of the ways to impact education in schools. An implicit curriculum is one that is crafted within the thinking processes of individual teachers but not written or published. It is an unintended learning that usually take place in the school setting. The character formation is mainly introduced to the students through the implicit curriculum. Otewa(2016)explained that through the hidden curriculum, several hidden and imposed messages are passed to the students unknowingly from the teachers and parents and the school administrators. Even though the implicit Curriculum is part of the school routine, it is not guided, not formal and not documented. It manifests in form of values, moral lessons. Tony (2019) stated that a hidden curriculum is a side effect of an education, “lesson which are learned but not openly intended” such as transmission of norms, values and beliefs conveyed in the classroom and the social environment. It is a general process by which children learn to conform and adopt to the expectations of the society (Uk essays 2016). It constitutes value that students are expected to learn to be able to conform with the society.

This is based on the premise that it is in the school that habit formation and regulation is entrenched. Enotes (2020) views school as important because it teaches us about the world around us and prepare us with the tools, we will need for future success in the job market. Enote(2020) further stressed that, outside of the classroom, students also learn valuable lessons at school, such as; social skills, behaviour, work ethic, working for people they don't like and gaining a sense of personal achievement. Learning goes on either the children are in the school or not. Anderson(2011) viewed the implicit Curriculum as a development socialization from the unwritten rules that we were never taught but just seen or knew. These rules include social regulation , self-regulation, social development, building character trait, good parenting, teaching verbal and physical aggression ability to exhibit good language and friendship skills, coping with stress and other pattern of good living which involves controlling ones thought and emotion , controlling ones temperament , taking right decision at the appropriate time rather than being irrational which may be very harmful to oneself and the society if not curtailed. All these mixes together to form good character. Ezuhaku Cubukcu(2012) noted that the importance of good character for the students is to provide them a necessary skill in order to overcome multiple challenges and issues within the social environment.

Shailoj(2017) believed that these values are guiding principles of life and that they are responsible for all round development of an individual. These traits needed to be developed early in one's life. Values are used to characterise societies and individuals to trace change overtime and to explain the motivational bases of attitudes and behaviour (Olaogun, 2012) of which if parents or adult in the society fails to prepare the children for their role in the society, it can bring negative rules into such society. These values otherwise known as conforming conduct is to be understood within the context of collective life (Olaogun, 2012). The rules can be learnt from the parent but if in the contemporary society nowadays, parents are mostly preoccupied, the society now turn to the school to shape the children and present them filtered to the society. Developing our values is very important for future fulfilment. Social skills are an integral value in all functioning societies. Communicating properly with others, demonstrating good manners, expressing personal needs and being considerate of feelings are all important components of

solid social skills (Ken Stay, 2020). In view of this, the school should be the best place to assist learners in character regulations. The hidden curriculum equally assists in developing and insight which is very important in overcoming obstacles, it shapes the students and support the thinking ability of the learners it compliments the explicit curriculum in achieving virile learning experience to make the learners acquire requisites such as culture and values that will make them conform with the societal expectation and standard.

Karl Thompson (2019) highlights certain components of the hidden curriculum to include;

- Respecting the authority
- Respect for other pupils
- Punctuality
- Aspiring to achieve
- Having a work ethic

It also includes making effort to be great, developing leadership trait and other expected behaviour. All these are foundations for academic success.

Cognitive skills are brain-based skills which are needed in acquisition of knowledge, manipulation of information, and reasoning. Cognitive skills are the core skills your brain uses to think, read, learn, remember, reason and pay attention and they play an important part in processing information (Learning Rx 2021).

These skills are very important for learners in problem-solving, store and receive information when needed. The skill is very important in achieving academic excellence for learning to take place, learners should be able to generate ideas, expatiate the ideas. It is equally important in building wholistic learner.

The implicit curriculum is more appropriate in achieving this, it helps in cognitive development through these learners are able to process information, give adequate response to information, increase working memory, make quick reasoning and critical thinking, ability to solve individual and class problem, effort to manage emotion, paying attention and understanding facts and be conscious of the environment.

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Statement of the Problem

The researchers observed that, students are faced with many challenges and pressure such as emotional, socio and interpersonal problems. Many of the students exhibit behavioural deficit in terms of socio interaction, at times leading to depression and much more damaged to self and the society. Due to

the perceived decline in the social interaction, many of them cannot demonstrate social skills in public service which happens to be one of the requisites to achieve success in any working place. Apart from this, there is no official method by teachers to impart the implicit Curriculum on the students whereby the students can achieve these skills. This also call for questioning. Many times students only see comments on the report cards such as-Needs to be tolerant, needs to be more studious, she is a truant, desist from loitering about, learn how to work harder, learn how to work without supervision, she is quiet and obedient, needs to be observant, needs close monitoring. These are comments meant for parents to digest. Many of these students still carry these traits to the society and to adulthood because teachers only point out the traits and there is no effort to assist the learners to jettison them. When an individual is unable to integrate the hidden curriculum, they may be bullied.

What is social skill?

Social skills are activities that many human beings engaged on a daily basis. A social skill is any competence facilitating interaction and communication with others where social rules and relationship are created (Wikipedia). Hansperg (2011) referred to social skill as soft skills, personal and abilities and that they are crucial success factors at work. Social skills entail the ability of learners to build positive relationship with peers and it also encompasses the ability to communicate proficiently, involve in problem solving, make decisions, managing self and guide and cherish relationship with friends, relatives and others. Career development (2019) noted that social skills are essential in building both personal and professional relationship. Nasp (2002) explained that good social skills are critical to successful functioning in life and that they enable us to know what to say, how to make good choices and how to believe in diverse situations. Nasp (2002) stated that, it is important that educators and parents reinforce this casual learning with direct and indirect instruction. It is an avenue for the child to be able to develop healthy interaction in all the daily activities exhibiting good behaviour, making everybody relevant by having feelings to others, making relevant consultation to discussion.

Social skills are important because they are the foundation for having positive relationships with others, with your partners, friends and your career (Carmen Jacob 2021). Social skills are highly necessary in developing an individual and getting them prepare for a healthy future. Acquisition of social skills will enable the students to set up standard for themselves and work towards achieving it. It enables the students to build a good and positive relationship among themselves. It establishes relationship that go beyond school environment. Through this, students are able to open up. Social skills play a vital role in the development of personality. It improves an individual way of thinking; it also helps in behaviour modification. It also helps in gaining insight and idea that are useful in remoulding their lives. It is an instrument in reshaping the students to enlightened citizen. Through this, students are able to excel in their academic activities. Robert (2017) noted that when students succeed and grow up to become productive adults, they are ultimately supporting the overall wellbeing of their neighbour and communities. There is need to acquire social skills in order to relate well with other people, for personal growth and for the development of the society. An individual needs to manage his/her emotion, show empathy have self-control and other work skills that will guarantee healthy interaction among peers,

adults and colleagues. It is very important in transforming the children into adult and integrating them into the society. Social emotional skills can help students set goals for themselves and build positive relationship with peers (Mark Greenberg 2017).

All these are where parents are found wanting thing the developmental process of their children. Whitney, Holly and McDonough (2016) noted that, a deficit in these so-called soft skills can make daily living and independent functioning very difficult. The development of social skills lays a critical foundation for later academic achievement as well as related skills (Lynch & Simpson, 2010).

Lending Voice to the Implicit Curriculum to achieve Cognitive and Social Skills.

A well-educated society has lower rates of violence and crime and societies that emphasise accessibly, effective education (Harry 2016). The teaching of the cognitive and social skills can be likened to the teaching of any other academic work except that grades are not attach to it. Schools need to be proactive in promoting social skills. The school needs to instil some activities in the implicit curriculum to teach the social skills and cognitive development of the learners. The school also needs to provide a structured implicit curriculum to guide the students in confronting challenges of life. It is interesting to observe that many teachers have interest in teaching social skill but their problem is what to teach and how to teach it. Otewa (2016) explained that each teacher should have the opportunity to discuss the school hidden curriculum at length, especially in a classroom because this would bring the concerned issue.

Steps in teaching Cognitive and Social Skills

Teachers are required to go through certain steps in incorporating cognitive and social skills along with the implicit curriculum.

Step 1- Teachers need to intimate the students the essence of cognitive skills as well as social skills. Laura Cardler (2019) noted that before you can help students improve their social skill, they need to understand why these skills are important and why they need to acquire, it as a way of improving their behaviour and that they are very critical in achieving goals. This should be done on daily basis.

Step 2- The Teacher need to earmark the particular social skill to be taught and the benefit likewise that of the cognitive skills, for instance it could be facial expression, making eye contact, explain the picture of this particular concept in their mind and how to approach it. The concept can be broken down into learnable units.

Step 3- Teaching cognitive and social skills requires activities. It requires getting feedback from the students. Teachers need to incorporate the use of drama, playlets, to demonstrate the understanding of the skill. The speculation of this skill needs to employ appropriate learning situation such as using drama, role play, story-telling rhetoric question, other lesson guide to achieve this with constant feedback. Students also learn through observation and participation.

Step 4- Teachers should guide the students in practicing the skills extensively with various resources. The teaching of social skill requires intensive teaching.

Teachers' Roles

Teachers are to create a social-skill, wall chart and cognitive skills, such as;

Showing empathy	Neat Appearance
Appreciating others	Talking manner
Admit fault and apologies	Not compromising
Encourage others	Respect for elders
Punctuation	Work habit
Tolerance	Be conscious of environment
Showing ideas	Hardworking
Kindness	Solving problems
Learning to forgive	

- Teachers should be a role model
- They are to guide the learners through observation
- Encourage the lesson of silence
- Emphasise orderliness
- Encourage tolerance
- Give prompt attention to anti-social behaviour

Conclusion

Education is meant for co-existence. Education is an instrument for acquiring knowledge and behaviour modification. Students need to acquire cognitive as well as develop social skills in order to thrive and be successful in their daily endeavour. Activities leading to the acquisition of cognitive social skills can be reinforced through recognition and active participation of teachers and students in the implicit curriculum. Therefore, the implicit curriculum should be harmonised with explicit curriculum in achieving wholistic education.

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