THE IMPLICIT CURRICULUM AND TEENAGERS' EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL STABILITY AMID COVID-19

Dinah Katindi Nyamai[1i],
Rosemary Imonje[2],
Mercy Mugambi[2]
[1]University of Nairobi,
Kenya
[2]Dr., University of Nairobi,
Kenya

Abstract:

The scale of the coronavirus pandemic calls to mind life calamities that reshaped societies in lasting ways—from how people traveled to the level of security and surveillance they were accustomed to, and even to the language they used. Experts have provided a lot of information regarding how to stay safe amid COVID-19, but little has been said on how unsated messages arising from how we talk about the pandemic and how we are managing the situation affects teenagers emotionally/psychologically, and spiritually. The need therefore to investigate on whether such invisible lessons are a springboard for teenagers' emotional/psychological and spiritual stability or a dulling blow. To minimize inadequacies in one research approach as well as gain more insights of the phenomenon under study, the researcher used both a closed-ended questionnaire with 17 items among 240 ages 13-19 young people and an interview guide with 12 open-ended items among 10 teachers/ parents—a process generally referred to as triangulation. The validity of the 17-item questionnaire was determined by experts while its reliability was determined using Cronbach's alpha which gave a reliability coefficient of 0.91. To ensure the clarity of the interview guide items, the researcher used a pilot test among 3 young people and 2 teachers/parents. The results from current research indicated that unintended lessons arising from how COVID-19 is being handled has affected teenagers' emotional/psychological and spiritual stability both negatively and positively. This means there is need for more research, especially on the negative effects of crises on people's emotional/psychological, and spiritual stability.

Keywords: invisible curriculum, spiritual, teenager, emotional/psychological, stability, COVID-19

[i] Correspondence: email dinah.nyamai@africainternational.edu

1. Introduction

Every nation has faced various crises but in existing generation's living memory, no crisis has triggered so much upheaval, so abruptly and so broadly. I am almost sure that nobody predicted the storm countries are currently grappling with. COVID-19 pandemic is unlike any crises in over several decades. It is affecting both human lives and their livelihood and arousing a range of emotions—somewhere along the spectrum of fear and angst and leaving a trial of not immediately visible but detrimental emotional/psychological, and spiritual effects. While the ambiguity and uncertainty characterizing the pandemic is expected to cause a great deal of frustration and anger among people, limited research, if any, has been conducted to determine how unintended messages conveyed through how we say what we say and do what we do (hidden curriculum) affects teenagers' emotional/psychological and spiritual stability. According to Education Reform (2020) & Amina (2007), the concept of an unseen curriculum in learning institutions has been more widely acknowledged and discussed in recent decades because educating teenagers is done not only by an individual teacher but by whole societies through several curricula including a hidden curriculum. However, researchers have technically forgotten that the hidden curriculum which accounts for more than 90 percent of all students' learning (Massialas & Joseph 2009) and significantly shapes students' feelings, emotions and beliefs and directed their attention on the influences of the declarative curriculum (Al mousa, 2000). The implicit messages arise from the way institutions either learning institutions or even the society are organized, relationships between young people and adults, the disciplinary measures, cultural inclinations including evaluation strategies as well as numerous subcultures present in any context that has people.

The implication here is that every context has a veiled curriculum, which by its mysterious nature, is generally unrecognized yet its lessons and messages significantly influences teenagers' social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual values. In every society young people are the backbone because they determine the future of their societies. It is therefore important to investigate how unintended messages arising from how COVID-19 is being managed is affecting young people emotionally and spiritually because in both current societies as well as future societies they are more important than any other age group. According to United Nations, in 2015 young people ages 15-24 years were 1.2 billion globally, accounting for one out of every six older people, and by 2030 the number of young people is projected to have grown by 7 per cent, to nearly 1.3 billion. This means if we create conducive environments that convey holistic messages that teenagers need to thrive; they can be a positive force in the development of holistic nations. As such, the need to investigate how unintended messages conveyed through COVID-19 measures like social and physical distancing, which have disrupted major goings-on like sporting, businesses, weddings, and mourning practices affects teenager's emotional and spiritual stability, cannot be overstated. The no debate about the fact that uncertainty about the future and fear of the unknown can cause a great emotional anxiety among teenagers who are not only worried about catching the virus but when learning will resume and

when they will ever complete their studies. This observation in line with the United Nations' (2020) claim that "*COVID-19 is much more than a health crisis—it is a human, economic and social crisis—affecting everybody either directly or indirectly both rich and poor*". According to Solomon (2020), the pandemic does not discriminate against anybody buts its impact on vulnerable social groups like those living in poverty situations, persons with preexisting conditions, older persons, and the teenagers, are catastrophic.

The stay at home regulations have been very complex for almost everyone but they were more complicated for teenagers, most of who felt helpless about what was happening—how long the crisis would last, how other people in the society behaved as well as what was going to happen next, which hurt many teenagers psychologically/emotionally, and spiritually. While pain and suffering caused by crises does not necessarily has the final say over human existence, according to Medical News Today (2020), the upheaval occasioned by COVID-19 crisis has not only altered social existence in ways young people cannot perceive but its negative effects are likely to be experienced for several decades, if not longer even after a vaccine finally defangs the virus. This means emotional aftershock reactions—some of which occur immediately while others occur hours, days, weeks or even months after the ordeal, can negatively affect teenagers' decision-making, planning, setting priorities or their anticipation of future needs. This observation concurs with Johal et al. (2016) who argued that "*uncertainties regarding how a pandemic may end complicates people's identification and connection with their emotions—leaving some feeling disoriented, confused or doubtful about the future while others can lose touch with their needs*". For this reason, Kenyan government, the intellectuals, and faith leaders should not only be grappling with when the crisis, which has continued to infringe people's sphere of life, will be over but with the best individualized response to the invisible effects of the pandemic.

The alluded neglect is happening against a backdrop of many teenagers grabbling with deep questions like where is God in this global crisis that came upon us so suddenly and with such devastating effects? Why do people have to be denied the privilege of sending off their loved ones with dignity? How long will the pandemic last? Could this be a sign of the End Times? While an economic and a health downturn are easily quantifiable, it is not an easy task to quantify the invisible: spiritual and emotional/psychological effects. For this reason, the researcher proposed a few components of each aspect emotional/psychological: affective wellbeing, competence, autonomy, aspiration and integrated functioning; emotional: mood change, fear, hope and motivation, and spiritual: hope, faith, prayer and patience, in order to determine how COVID-19 has affected teenagers psychologically, emotionally and spiritually.

2. The Hidden Curriculum and Coronavirus Pandemic's Effects

A hidden curriculum is described as a "*side effect of education systems—lessons learned by every student just by setting his or her foot in a learning context but not openly intended, such as the transmission of customs, morals, ideals, and beliefs but even though it affects teenagers' lives more than the official curriculum, it has not been extensively investigated*" (Ghanta & Mondal,

2018). The above description of a covert curriculum is echoed by Azimpour (2015) who perceived the concept as referring "*to the unwritten, unprinted, unofficial and often unintended lessons, values and perspectives that students learn in school.*" While the concept of a hidden curriculum has rarely been mentioned during the fight against COVID-19, Bradley (2020) alludes that more often than not people respond to pandemics in a variety of ways depending on the humanistic climate (hidden curriculum). The humanistic climate can cause some people to under-respond—that is they view the threat as an exaggeration, others over-respond and become very anxious while other people respond somewhere in the middle. But as stated earlier there is infuriatingly limited holistic attention given to the emergency and the effects of the unintended messages conveyed through daily practices amid the COVID-19 tempest whose waves melts everyone's courage away. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines "*an emergency as an uncommon situation in which people are not able to meet their basic survival needs, or there are severe and instant threats to human well-being*". Citing FAO (1998) Ndunge (2020) classified emergency into three broad categories: "*(i) rapid on-set emergencies which occur unexpectedly (e.g. wind storms, floods, wildfires, landslides, avalanches); (ii) slow-onset emergencies that escalate over a period of time (e.g. drought, proliferation of an agricultural pest or disease, progressively deteriorating political situation leading to conflict); and (iii) complex emergencies*". According Mollica et al., (2004 p. 2058) cited in Ndunge (2020), a multifaceted emergency is the most severe kind of adversities due to the extent of their consequences which in turn complicates the response needed. This means COVID-19 pandemic, marked by disruption of political, economic, sociocultural, and healthcare, religious worship, can rightly be defined as a complex emergency. This observation is in line with Solomon (2020) who said the virus has thrust people into varying degrees of grief, anxiety, panic, hopelessness, and paralyzing fear.

Invisible effects of crises like COVID-19 such as psychological/mental health, emotional, social wellbeing and spiritual, according to Johal et al. (2016), "*can be mild or severe, short-term or long-lasting but in some people crises can spur increased wisdom, feelings of altruism, positive shifts in priorities for people's lifestyle and value system, as well as new or strengthened coping skills.*" However, considering that it is commonplace to have the more apparent risks of a crisis addressed first, which as highlighted in literature "*has been the case with COVID-19 pandemic—focus geared towards educating and ensuring that the public is able to physically protect themselves from the disease*", it is also our task to sensitize the learning institution and the public on the effects of a secreted curriculum amid COVID-19 on teenagers' psychological/emotional/social and spiritual with a view to building a more resilient teenagers after the pandemic.

As opposed to the prescribed curriculum, which is generally conceived as a statement of intent, the unseen curriculum is unplanned and can sometimes run counter to the explicit purposes of educational institutions including the larger society's concerns. Skelton (1997) defined the concealed curriculum as the set of unspoken messages relating to values, knowledge, norms of behavior, feelings, and attitudes that young people experience in and through teaching-learning processes. Skelton's observation is echoed by Alsubaie (2015) who describes "*a hidden curriculum as the unwritten, unofficial,*

unintended, and undocumented life lessons and virtues that students learn while in school." While the things intended curricular comprises may vary, their presence is common to almost every context that has people including homes, churches, and the society. The implication here is that ignoring the hidden curriculum which provides tools that are critical for young people's success in the society amid challenges like COVID-19, would undermine our efforts in nurturing emotionally/psychologically and spiritually resilient today and tomorrow's leaders.

3. Unintended Lessons Amid COVID-19 and Teenagers' Emotional Stability

While measures like social distancing have never been easy for anyone, they can take a toll on teenagers especially when isolated at a place alone unable to see their friends and loved ones which can made many of them more depressive feelings like irritation. With little time to prepare teenagers' lives were abruptly changed and the new normal made many teenagers feel powerless which could spike emotional and mental health issues. Length loneliness even under normal circumstances has in fact been found to contribute to anxiety and depression (Medical News Today, 2020). This means currently confusing situations can exacerbate anxiety among teenagers, especially those who suffer from emotional disorders. These observations concur with Matthew Brady (2020) who argued that coronavirus outbreak is not only having a significant toll on economies and other systems like education, but on people.

These obvious emotional effects of coronavirus pandemic were further amplified by limited clarity on how long the stressful situation will last or how soon will the advance effect, people are grappling with come to an end. Issues like the rapid rate of the coronavirus spread, non-availability of proven vaccine against the disease, lack of conclusive treatment as well as the healthcare gap in some societies caused a huge degree of emotional trauma on younger populace. Even though emotional stress among people may not necessarily suggest their inability to go on with their lives (WHO, 2020), observing the full extent of what the coronavirus can do at its worst, has caused untold fear among many teenagers.

4. Unintended Lessons Amid COVID-19 and Teenagers' Spiritual Stability

Since the creation of humanity spirituality has been acknowledged as an important part in most people's lives. Across the globe more than 80 percent of people trust in God and have an association with a faith community which means spirituality is the main way most people express meaning, purpose of life as well as experiences with hardships. Consequently, COVID-19 measures which have caused churches to be closed to reduce its spread have caused spiritual vulnerability, hopelessness as well as other emotional problems, especially among teenagers. This claim is in line with many scholars who identified a positive link between holistic health and attendance to worship services: mental health (Nooney & Woodrum, 2002), good physical health (Powell et al., 2003) as well as increased life longevity (Oxman et al., 1995). This means disruption of people's

cadence of spiritual practice—rendering face-to-face fellowship and worship out of reach and forcing faithful to abstain from public gathering which means they are not able to hear God's word read or preached or receive the sacrament in the way that they are used to, can be emotionally and spiritually detrimental. This does not mean worshiping from home cannot spur some people to realize that everybody has unlimited access to God through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:18), but death of loved ones from COVID-19 amid declined religious gatherings can make many faithful experience sick souls—weariness of heart and existential dread. The implication here is that visibility of the church not only encourages and motivates people to reflect on God who is all powerful but can be a beacon of hope and a sign of comfort amid adverse situations. This observation is in line with Yee's findings (2020) that religion remains the only solace as people grapple with a pandemic for which scientists seem to have few answers. In the same vein a research conducted by Sell All Coronavirus Research (2020) reveled that (55%) of adults prayed for an end to the spread of coronavirus with most of them praying daily (86%).

This researcher does not in any way suggest that the Bible is against COVID-19 mitigation measures like quarantining people because people can use such opportunity to deeply reflect about their priorities in life and the direction they want their lives to take which can result in spiritual growth in many ways. However, New York Times (2020) in harmony with other researchers, suggest that loneliness increases feelings of desperation and during COVID-19 pandemic it has led to a spike on gender based and child violence especially among people who had mental health conditions before the pandemic began. These include people with addiction who because of the pandemic cannot meet with their support groups or get access to medication-assisted treatment. The afore said challenges have also led to increased cases of divorce which is against God's will. Malachi 2:16 asserts: "*For I hate divorce!*" says the Lord, the God of Israel. "*To divorce your wife is to overwhelm her with cruelty*," says the Lord of Heaven's Armies. "*So, guard your heart; do not be unfaithful to your wife*."

5. A Biblical Perspective on Lessons Being Learned from COVID-19

The whole globe is directly or indirectly affected by the coronavirus which challenges the church to offer sound biblical answers to questions like: how will the world look like after COVID-19? What is God telling His people through the crisis? Why is this happening to us? Is this crisis a sign of the end times? Where is God in this very difficult situation? Amid all these the church must remind God's people that when the righteous cry for help, the Lord always hears and delivers them out of their troubles—2 Chronicles 7: 14 declares "*If my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land*." This means afflictions of the righteous may be many, but the Lord delivers him/her out of them all and keeps all his/her bones; not one of them is broken (Psalm 34: 17-20). There are several Bible passages that suggest plagues are one of the signs that will herald the end of time and the return of Jesus Christ, but it is very crucial that the church provides a good Bible-based theology on the issue.

Theology is the study of God and of God's relation to the world—our understanding of the nature of God and how He relates with His creation influences the way we see and respond to the world (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). People continue to quote the Bible in support of the fact that devastating plagues that ravage humanity, especially in this century are similar to the 10 plaques that Moses called over Egypt at God's command (Exodus 7-12), the destruction of Jerusalem and the predicted suffering in the Book of Revelations, particularly Revelation 6:8 when the world will be judged with pestilence but we need to understand that there is no explicit evidence in the Bible suggesting that COVID-19 is one of the prophesied plagues in the Scriptures. This is because biblical judgments through disease have a supernatural origin. For example, when God sent "boils" on Egypt, they broke out instantly "on man and beast" throughout the land. The pestilence spoken about in the book of Revelations will come by one of the *"four horsemen of the apocalypse"* but not because of a wet market in Wuhan. In our case, scientists have clearly told us that the coronavirus is zoonotic—a virus transmitted between animals and people which means it is natural and not supernatural pandemic. Therefore, the church should offer right teaching to those deifying government and MoH guidelines claiming their belief in that God will protect them from the virus which can be termed as wrong theology, likely to cost lives. This does not mean God is not omnipotent-all-powerful and able to protect His people from everything and anything, but in Leviticus 13 in the Old Testament we see strict quarantine regulations for those suffering of infectious diseases like leprosy which means following government and MoH guidelines as Christians can drastically reduce the spread of coronavirus and it is not an expression of unbelief about God's omnipresence and omnipotence.

There is no debate about the fact that God is super powerful. He is able to protect His people from catching coronavirus and miraculously heal those who catch it without any medication, but the church is His hands and feet here on earth and it is vital that it plays its role—setting the example: listening to and acting upon the advice of experts to stop the spread of coronavirus which is not a 'natural disaster' but a disaster of mankind making—a consequence of our living in a fallen world. When people in their imperfection and frailty encourage regular-closer contact with thousands of animals carrying millions of various deadly viruses, it becomes probable for such viruses to easily jump species and get into humans. This means the untamed environmental destruction as humanity choses to follow their erroneous paths—deforestation, bushmeat trade, animal trafficking, unsustainable agricultural practices and the greed of wealth makes deadly virus outbreaks even more likely to happen, and with greater frequency.

The implication here is that the emotionally, psychologically, physically, and spiritually sad situation we are grappling with currently can be taken as a warning of a tsunami of challenges heading our way unless we change our wrong ways of life. According to Bible passages like Romans 8: 20-21 *"creation is subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God."* Galatians 6:7-8 says *"do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he/she also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the*

one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life." These passages confirm our suffering is connected to our sinfulness and God's wrath on our sinful ways but the good news is that most of the New Testament speaks of God's love, mercy, and ultimate sacrifice for humanity through the blood of His Son Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary. This means we do not need to fear a wrathful God, rather we can rejoice in a God of grace and mercy, who forgives our sins when we sincerely repent.

There are however practical ways Christians can use crises to advance God's kingdom. First, we can reflect God's love in every dark crevice and corner of the diseased world by graciously serving our fellow man. This means frantic search for answers as to why a pandemic is ravaging us, may be a waste of precious time because 'ache' of life is not an abnormality—something to be overcome but a lived reality for all of us at some time. Second, we need to see pandemic as a massive reality check that we are all—both rich and poor, old, and young like, fragile—always on the edge of tragedy and in dire need of God's help. It is therefore about time to go back to God, live with grace, kindness, humility, and compassion. This is what Jesus means when He invites His friends (the true church) to "*love one another, even as He has loved them*" (John 13:34). His love took Him all the way to Calvary and beyond it to the mysterious community of compassion, tenderness and love that is His risen body at work in the world.

6. Materials and Methodology

The researcher employed a descriptive design, which is concerned with describing characteristics of a problem. Creswell 2009 defines descriptive survey method as one which looks with intense accuracy at the phenomena of the moment and then describes precisely what the researcher sees. The researcher deemed descriptive design as the best option because descriptive research design helps portray an accurate profile of persons, events and situations as well as allows for in-depth analysis of variables and elements of the population being studied as well as allows generation of detailed information about the study. In data collection and interpretation, the researcher combined qualitative and quantitative methods—a process generally referred to as triangulation. 360 dissertation (2014) defines triangulation as the process of validating research results through two or more methods. There are various triangulation methods: "*data triangulation which requires use of space, time and people; investigator triangulation which requires multiple researchers in the same study; theory triangulation which requires use of more than one theoretical scheme to interpret the phenomenon and methodological triangulation which requires employment of various methods of gathering data i.e. interviews, secondary documents, questionnaires and observations*" (360 Dissertation, 2014). Two more types of methodological triangulation were identified by Denzin (1978): "*'within-method' and 'between' or 'across' method. While the 'with-in method' uses one method of triangulation but follows different strategies within it, between or across method uses two different methods in one study*".

In this article the researcher employed the latter to minimize inadequacies in one approach as well as gain more insights through using multiple methods to collect data as suggested by Creswell and Plano (2011) and Hubbard (2010). In most descriptive

research, questionnaires and interviews are the main tools researchers utilize in data collection. Hence, current researcher used a questionnaire with 17 closed ended items to collect data from 20% of the population at Africa International University in Nairobi City County. This is because 10%-30% of a population has been proved adequate by researchers like Kothari (2008). An interview guide with 10 items was also used to collect data from 8 purposively selected participants. This was in line with Patton (2015) who argued that qualitative inquiry should typically focus on comparatively small sample- even one case can be enough. The validity of the 17-item questionnaire was determined by experts while its reliability was determined using Cronbach's alpha which gave a reliability coefficient of 0.91. The clarity of the interview guide items was determined through pilot testing.

7. Results and Discussions

Current research findings, both qualitative and quantitative suggest that effects of messages arising from how COVID-19 has been managed on teenagers' emotional and spiritual stability is both negative and positive.

The descriptive statistics on research questions 1 concerning how messages conveyed through the way COVID-19 was being managed indicated that 73% of the respondents were never very anxious, worried, or scared about coronavirus and its effects on their lives, 16 % indicated that they were constantly very anxious, worried, or scared about coronavirus and its effects on their lives while 11% indicated that they sometimes very anxious, worried, or scared about coronavirus and its effects on their lives. 56% indicated that they felt their worry about COVID-19 was out of their control, 23% indicated that they felt their worry was a few times out of their control while 21% indicated that they felt their worry about COVID-19 was constantly out of their control. 24% of the respondents indicated that they constantly felt restless, agitated, frantic, or tense, 40 % of the respondents indicated that they sometimes felt restless, agitated, frantic, or tense while 36% indicated that they never felt restless, agitated, frantic, or tense. 70% of the respondents indicated that they never had trouble sleeping—they did not have trouble falling or stay asleep and were well-rested when they woke up. 19% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes had trouble sleeping—they had trouble falling or staying asleep and did not feel well-rested when they woke up while 11% of the respondents indicated that they constantly had trouble sleeping—they had trouble falling or staying asleep and did not feel well-rested when they woke up. All the respondents (100%) indicated that they were not having difficulty breathing or swallowing. The implication here is that challenges related to COVID-19 is affecting current research respondents' psychological stability more negatively than positively.

The descriptive statistics on research questions 2 concerning how messages conveyed though how COVID-19 was being managed indicated that 40% of the respondents were very accurate that they were finding everything very stressful. 30% of the respondents indicated that they were not sure if they were finding everything very stressful while 30% of the respondents indicated that it was very inaccurate to suggest

that they were finding everything very stressful. 79% of the respondents indicated that it was inaccurate to suggest that their mood was often changing while the remaining 21% indicated that it was somewhat accurate that their mood was often changing. 80% of the respondents indicated that it was very in accurate to suggest that they were taking offense more easily than before, 10% of the respondents indicated that they were not sure if they were taking offense more easily than before while the remaining 10% of the respondents indicated that it was somewhat accurate to suggest that they were taking offense more easily than before. 10% of the respondents indicated that it was very accurate that they were relaxed most of the time during this pandemic while the other 90% of the respondents indicated that it was somewhat accurate that they were relaxed most of the time during this pandemic. 30% of the respondents indicated that it was very accurate that they constantly worried about almost everything—their health, future, finances, and family. 50% of the respondents indicated that it was very inaccurate that they constantly worried about almost everything—their health, future, finances and family while 20% of the respondents indicated that they were not sure if they constantly worried about almost everything—their health, future, finances and family. According to this research findings current research respondents' stability is to a great extent negatively affected by COVID-19 challenges.

The descriptive statistics on research questions 3 concerning how messages conveyed through the way COVID-19 was being managed indicated that 80% of the respondents agreed that the storm of COVID-19 has not swung them off Christ's course—they were actually more rooted in their faith. 16% of the respondents disagreed that the storm of COVID-19 has not swung them off Christ's course and they were more rooted in their faith while 4% of the respondents were not sue if the storm of COVID-19 has not swung them off Christ's course. 70% of the respondents agreed that they count it all joy as they face challenges associated with COVID-19 while the remaining 30% of the respondents disagreed that they count it all joy as they face challenges associated with COVID-19. 78% of the respondents agreed that they were holding on to faith in Jesus Christ because they know trials comes as a test of their faith while the remaining 22% of the respondents disagreed that they were holding on to faith in Jesus Christ because they know trials comes as a test of their faith. 30% of the respondents disagreed that as COVID-19 infections kept increasing their patience was running out. 34% of the respondents were not sure if their patience was running out as COVID-19 infections kept increasing while 36% of the respondents agreed that as COVID-19 infections kept increasing their patience was running out. 45% of the respondents agreed that even though they believe God will give them strength to endure, they constantly asked God why all these troubles. 30% of the respondents disagreed that they constantly asked God why all these troubles even though they believed God will give them strength to endure, while the remaining 25% of the respondents were not sure if they constantly asked God why all these troubles even though they believe He will give them strength to endure.

After the researcher did narrative analysis of the qualitative data transcripts, the findings majorly concurred with quantitative results. For instance, in line with research question 1, which sought to understand how participants perceived unintended

messages conveyed through the hidden curriculum amid COVID-19 as affecting their psychological stability, the 8 interviewed participants claimed that uncertainties surrounding coronavirus was the most difficult thing to handle and was causing untold anxiety among people. Participant 03 said "*I don't know how exactly we will be impacted or how bad things might become in days to come. This vagueness catastrophizes and spirals out into overwhelming dread and panic not in me alone but in many of my friends.*" Participant 01 added "*there are so many things one cannot do—especially in the face of this unique crisis—for example managing one's anxiety and fears. As the headlines keep highlighting terrifying pronouncements from the ministry of health officials, we cannot avoid wondering about what is going to happen next.*" This observation was echoed by participants 01. 05, 07 and 08 who argued that "*people's feelings are evolving as the pandemic progresses—the initial set of emotions included anxiety, fear, worry, panic but prolonged physical distancing and social separation has brought in different kind of negative emotion beyond fear, panic, anxiety and worry.*" According to participant 03 there is "*deep sorrow and distress in many people's hearts especially those who have lost job or lost a loved one.*" In the same vein, participant 02 argued that challenges related to COVID-19 "*have brought a range of emotions in many people—all of which seem to have a negative impact in people's psychological stability and as a result many people cannot even explain exactly why they may be feeling bitter yet putting a label on one's emotions puts one in control*". The implication here is that as we look at ways to control the spread of coronavirus, we have to not only address the immediate needs of stopping transmission, cushioning those who have lost their jobs or those from vulnerable areas, but must also look at the effects the pandemic will have on people psychological stability.

In line with research question 2, which sought to understand how unintended messages conveyed through the hidden curriculum amid COVID-19 was affecting participants' emotional stability, participant 07 argued that "*emotions related to coronavirus are inscribed in our cultural histories and quickly permeates into how we perceive our current threat.*" When the researcher probed for explanation regarding what the participant meant, he explained "*COVID-19 pandemic experiences are evoking feelings of unresolved grief and anger from earlier like post-election violence, floods and locusts, to mention but a few, and they are likely to manifest again when we face another crisis.*" Participant 08 echoed participant 01's sentiments when she asserted that "*emotional connections between painful events are usually made in unpredictable and unexpected ways and are usually expressed in many forms.*" What the participants seem to say is that emotions associated with current crisis are linked to earlier painful experiences and are feeding into the way people are reacting to current tuff situations and are likely to resurface when people think they have overcome and recovered from COVID-19 challenges. This conclusion is also informed by participants 04, 06 and 08's claim that the "*negative feelings people are experiencing as a result of COVID-19, which are themselves connected to past experiences are likely to become part of the emotional language through which people will understand and experience dangerous situations in the future.*" Even though talking about positive emotions amid sadness, anger, fear, and nervousness, may seem unjustified, participant 01 and 05 suggested that "*people should cultivate positive emotions because they will buffer them against depression.*" The three participants suggestion is in line with Folkman & Moskowitz (2000) who claimed that

"*positive emotions are known to co-occur alongside negative emotions during stressful circumstances.*" Both qualitative and quantitative data concur in that COVID-19 is affecting people's emotions more negatively than positively and we are better advised if created conducive environments to help people effectively overcome the emotional turmoil people are going through.

In line with research question 3, which sought to understand how unintended messages conveyed through the hidden curriculum amid COVID-19 was affecting participants' spiritual growth, the 8 interviewed participants suggested that some people will increase their commitment to biblical practices (prayer, studying the word and worship) as a means of coping with challenges related to COVID-19 crisis and as a result grow stronger spiritually. This observation is in line with Hall (1986) who argued that "*individuals who increased their commitment to spiritual values as a means of coping with crisis conditions grew spiritually stronger.*" On the contrary, participants 02, 06 and 07 claimed that faithful are facing severe challenges, especially those who do not have smart phones or TV sets which means they cannot receive spiritual nourishment from their pastors and as a result some of them are spiritually drained. But in a quick recounter, participant 08 said that people are praying more during COVID-19 pandemic because they seriously need a breakthrough.

Participant 03 said "*I think the big question many people are grappling with as they hear thousands of people died in US, Italy as well witness scarily burials, is what happens to one's soul after he or she dies*." Participant 01 and 05 added "*the world is currently confronted with life and death choices—not just about an individual's death but also that of the individual's loved ones and people are realizing that they have very little control over their fate, which is really frightening.*" According to participant 02, "*even those who previously never saw themselves as conventionally religious, it is becoming very hard for them not to be engaged with spiritual things, especially prayer.*" This observation was echoed by 6 participants out of the interviewed 8 who said that they had prayed more than they had done for the last 5 years for an end to the spread of coronavirus as well as faithfully watched religious services online. According to participant 08, "*the most dramatic effect of COVID-19 on religion is the exceedingly quick shift of religious services from face-to-face to online worship—through radio, television and online media which has significantly disrupted entrenched religious habits and shaken people's spirituality.*" These mixed reactions are in line with Hall (1986) who argued that "*crises are a necessary condition for spiritual growth, but crises conditions alone are not sufficient for spiritual growth.*" Hall's observation is supported by current research findings in that some of those who participated in the research are not experiencing increased awareness of spiritual values. As such, assuming participants in this research who turned to God during COVID-19 were genuine then we can say that the pandemic has had negative and positive effects on people's spiritual stability in equal measure. However, whether the crisis has had long-term spiritual effects on personal religious commitment, needs further investigation.

8. Conclusion

Current research results revealed that negative emotions associated with crises are likely to linger and re-emerge which means we are better advised if we nurtured and promoted counter positive emotions like hope, tranquility, and optimism to prevent teenagers from letting their inner fears and worries take over and control their lives. For this to happen we need to be very cognizant of the messages conveyed through the hidden curriculum and above they role on teenagers' emotional and spiritual stability amid crises. This means curriculum developers and implementers must not only give emphasis on the official curriculum but also the hidden curriculum because it accounts for 90 percent of all learning and our emotions, spirituality and attitude towards life is to a greater extend shaped by the implicit curriculum. Our attitude guides our thoughts, feelings and ultimately our behavior and for a holistic change to occur in our lives, our attitude must be holistically transformed. This means during this pandemic, positive attitude towards life challenges and reverence to God and His word, must be a major focus so as to keep our teenagers emotionally and spiritually vibrant and alert.

References

360 Dissertation (2020). Triangulation and its importance in research. Retrieved from: http://www.360dissertation.com/triangulation-and-its-importance-in-research/.

Academic Rigor, Journalistic Flair (2020). Healthcare workers and coronavirus: behind the stiff upper lip e are highly vulnerable Retrieved from: https://theconversation.com/healthcare-workers-and-coronavirus-behind-the-stiff-upper-lip-we-are-highly-vulnerable-133864.

Al mosa, A. (1998). Hidden curriculum, its onset, concept, psychology, components, and dangers. *Um El.qura Journal*, 12(1), 107-123.

Al qomoul, Mohammad & Atallah Al roud (2017). Impact of hidden curriculum on ethical and aesthetic values of sixth graders in Tafila directorate of education. Retrieved from, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1157434.pdf.

Alshamsi, K. (2005). Ethical and aesthetic values in Arabian Gulf Education, Dar Atlas (1st ed.). Cairo, Egypt.

Alsubaie, Merfat A. (2015). Hidden curriculum as one of current issue of curriculum. *Journal of Education and Practice,* 6 (33), 125-128.

Amina, E. and Faiq, N. (2007). Hidden curriculum and its relationship with social skills and Islamic ethics for nursing children, *Journal of Reading Knowledge*, 2 (35), 127-138.

Azimpour, E. (2015). Hidden Curriculum. World Essay Journal, 3(1), 18-21.

Bradley K. (2020). Emotional & spiritual wellness during COVID-19. Retrieved from: https://www.miaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/covid-coping-natasha-edit-muslim.pdf.

Creswell, John & Clark, Vicki L. (2011). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches, 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Inc.

Deepak Chopra: The coronavirus and the need for spiritual well-being. Retrieved from: https://www.cnbc.com/2020/04/03/deepak-chopra-the-coronavirus-and-need-for-spiritual-wellness.html.

Fardin, Mohammad Ali (2020). COVID-19 epidemic and spirituality: A Review of the benefits of religion in times of crisis. Retrieved from, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341653099_COVID-19_Epidemic_and_Spirituality_A_Review_of_the_Benefits_of_Religion_in_Times_of_Crisis.

Folkman S. & Moskowitz J. T. (2000). Positive affect and the other side of coping. American Psychologist. 55:647–654.

Ghanta, Bikash & Mrinal (2018). Hidden curriculum: an informal way for moral development of learners. *International Journal for Research in Engineering Application & Management.* 04 (05) 2454-9150.

Haleem, Abid; Mohd Javaid & Raju Vaishya (2020). Effects of COVID 19 pandemic in daily life. DOI: 10.1016/j.cmrp.2020.03.011.

Hall, Margaret (1986). Crisis as opportunity for spiritual growth. *Journal of Religion and Health*, Vol. 25, No. 1: 1-17.

Hubbard, Barry (2010). Manifestations of hidden curriculum in a community college online opticianry program: An ecological approach. Graduate Theses and Dissertations.

Johal, Sarb; Macdonald, Carol & Mounsey, Zoe (2016). Framework for psychosocial support in emergencies. Ministry of Health, New Zealand.

Kothari, C. (2008). Research methodology, methods, and techniques (2nd Ed). New Delhi: International PHI Limited.

Massialas, Byron & Hurst, Joseph (2009). The new social studies–retrospect and prospect. The Social Studies. 100, (6), 246-250.

Matthew Brady (2020). Coronavirus update: COVID-19 impact on healthcare workers. Retrieved from: https://insights.omnia-health.com/coronavirus-updates/coronavirus-update-COVID-19-impact-healthcare-workers.

Medical News Today (2020). COVID-19 global impact: How the coronavirus is affecting the world. Retrieved from: https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/COVID-19-global-impact-how-the-coronavirus-is-affecting-the-world#Physical-and-mental-health-in-jeopardy.

Ndunge A. (2020). The psychological and social effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Retrieved from: https://sbs.strathmore.edu/news/the-psychological-and-social-effects-of-the-COVID-19-pandemic/.

Nisah, Cooh (2020). Impact on frontline workers' mental health. Retrieved from https://www.practiceupdate.com/content/COVID-19-impact-on-frontline-workers-mental-health/100259.

Nooney, J. & Woodrum, E. (2002). Religious coping and church-based social support as predictors of mental health outcomes: Testing a conceptual model, Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 41, 359–368.

Oxman, T. E., Freeman, D. H., & Manheimer, E. D. (1995). Lack of social participation or religious strength and comfort as risk factors for death aft er cardiac surgery in the elderly. Psychosomatic Medicine. 57, 5–15.

Patton, Michael Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Powell, L. H., Shajhabi, L., & Thoresen, C. E. (2003). Religion and spirituality: Linkages to physical health. American Psychologist, 58, 36–52.

Pratt, Maureen (2020). We should focus on psychological and spiritual health during COVID-19. Retrieved from: http://thedialog.org/catechetical-corner/we-should-focus-on-psychological-and-spiritual-health-during-COVID-19/.

Sell All Coronavirus Research (2020). Most Americans say coronavirus outbreak has impacted their lives. Retrieved from: https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2020/03/30/most-americans-say-coronavirus-outbreak-has-impacted-their-lives/.

Skelton, A. (1997). Studying hidden curricula: Developing a perspective in the light of postmodern insights. *Curriculum Studies*, **5,** 177-193.

Solomon, Andrew (2020). When the pandemic leaves us alone, anxious, and depressed. Retrieved from: https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/09/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-depression-anxiety.html.

Sulaimani, Mona F. & Dianne M. Gut (2019). Hidden curriculum in a special education context: The case of individuals with autism. The Journal of Educational Research 9(1):30-39, DOI: 10.5590/JERAP.2019.09.1.03.

The New York Times (2020). Tracking how the coronavirus is changing our daily lives. Retrieved from: https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/coronavirus-update-03-14.

The World Bank (2020). Kenya's tough balancing act: Protecting lives and livelihoods in the time of COVID-19. Retrieved from: https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/kenya/publication/kenyas-tough-balancing-act-protecting-lives-and-livelihoods-in-the-time-of-COVID-19.

United Nations (2015). Youth population trends and sustainable development. Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/YouthPOP.pdf.

United Nations (2020). Department of economic and social affairs: The impact of COVID-19 on indigenous Peoples – UN/DESA Policy Brief #70. Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/publication/un-desa-policy-brief-70-the-impact-of-COVID-19-on-indigenous-peoples/.

WHO (2020). Mental health and psychosocial considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak?

Yee, Vivian in (2020). In a pandemic, religion can be a balm and a risk. Retrieved from, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/22/world/middleeast/coronavirus-religion.html.