

# Hidden Curriculum as One of Current Issue of Curriculum

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## Abstract

There are several issues in the education system, especially in the curriculum field that affect education. Hidden curriculum is one of current controversial curriculum issues. Many hidden curricular issues are the result of assumptions and expectations that are not formally communicated, established, or conveyed within the learning environment. Thus, awareness of hidden curricular issues becomes a consideration, which has negative and positive influences.

**Keywords:** Curriculum issue, hidden curriculum, positive and negative impact.

## 1. Introduction

Understanding the influential factors at work within learning environment in the school or the classroom is a growing area of interest. Hidden expectations, skill sets, knowledge, and social process can help or hinder student achievement and belief systems. A hidden curriculum refers to the unspoken or implicit values, behaviors, procedures, and norms that exist in the educational setting. While such expectations are not explicitly written, hidden curriculum is the unstated promotion and enforcement of certain behavioral patterns, professional standards, and social beliefs while navigating a learning environment (Miller & Seller, 1990). This argumentative study is investigated how hidden curriculum issue transpired in learning environments of institutional and organization systems. Therefore, this paper will focus on the scholarly literature to show the hidden curriculum as the one of the problems, which most common in the curriculum. Also, it will show what the products of hidden curriculum are not always negative; effects can produce positive results.

## 2. Literature Review

**Concept of Hidden Curriculum.** There are several studies that addressed the issues of curricula, especially hidden curriculum with its results. One of them reported that the concept of a hidden curriculum refers to the unspoken or implicit values, behaviors, and norms that exist in the educational setting. So, it is a significant matter to define the hidden curriculum. For example, Jerald (2006) noted that the hidden curriculum is an implicit curriculum that expresses and represents attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors, which are conveyed or communicated without aware intent; it is conveyed indirectly by words and actions that are parts of the life of everyone in a society. To address this issue, we should understand that the hidden curriculum plays positive or negative role in education system in school; therefore, teachers have to be aware of it and how it appears in the school.

It is hard and impossible to observe what is the hidden of curriculum, so it is necessary to conclude or infer the characters of the hidden curriculum. Cornbleth (1984) found that there are different elements that impact to shape the hidden curriculum, such as teachers, students, society, knowledge, and awareness. Moreover, knowledge of the hidden curriculum is of advantage to move towards a more enlightened future. As Myles (2011) noted that there is problem of the hidden curriculum that students may not recognize the rules of this type of curriculum. Therefore, students are put at disadvantage or embarrassing situations with their students and classmates in the classroom since they are not aware about the goal and rules of the hidden curriculum. For example, when a teacher punishes another student to stop talking, it is not available time of a student to talk with his/her neighbors or ask the teacher a question. Also, teachers may share students in this issue when they do not effectively deal and address this type of curricula.

**Issue of Hidden Curriculum.** Teachers can make issue of the hidden curriculum and influence negatively in their students when they do not understand the hidden curriculum well. Cornbleth (1984) found that because the hidden curriculum is as messages that send through school's staff, especially teachers, so curricula maker, superintendents, and administrator of school should provide teachers with more explanations the concept of the hidden curriculum. As a result, teachers would effectively deal and work with curriculum in the same line. Additionally, teachers can play an important role in development the education practices for them and their students through the hidden curriculum. However, Myles, Trautman, and Shelvan (2004) found that even though the hidden curriculum can be issue in the classroom, it is the best way to teach social skills for students with

special needs in few minutes per day. Moreover, in order to address this issue, Myles (2011) noted that it is essential matter to equip or provide teachers with methods or strategies to help their students realize the hidden curriculum through making opportunities for students to practice or apply one rule of the hidden curriculum once every day. For instant, writing one of hidden curriculum rule on the board and reviewing it for five minutes every morning with students is a good idea to understand hidden curriculum. As a result, teachers will observe good difference in students' social recognizing.

**Results of Understanding the Hidden Curriculum.** There are great results for a good understanding of the hidden curriculum. Jerald (2006) noted that when teachers are aware of the importance and influence of hidden curriculum, they will always review their personal attitudes with their students in the classroom. Moreover, teachers may use the hidden curriculum in their teaching as strategy or method to send specific message to student through these approaches, such as cooperative learning. So, if we as teacher do not utilize this kind of curriculum by right way or effectively, we will have issue in the hidden curriculum. We may also send negatively entrenched and social beliefs and ideas to students rather than using the hidden curriculum to make school place to social change.

**Hidden Curriculum in some Studies.** On the other hand, there are some authors, such as Schiro (2008) and Vygotsky (1978) intentionally or no have used the hidden curriculum in their researches or studies. First, I have observed that some of Schiro's theories in his book *Curriculum theory: Conflicting visions and enduring concern* (2008) have appeared through the hidden curriculum. For example, when Schiro talked about learner centered and its importance in the schools, he wanted to sent indirect and implicit message to administrations of schools that the learner centered is an important point and theory, which should be taken in account to make their schools are ideal because this characteristic or feature supports and enhances schools through the hidden curriculum to provide their students with their needs and interests of learners to determine the curriculum ( Schiro, 2008).

On the other hand, I also have found that some of Vygotsky's theories in his book *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (1978) have appeared through implicit or tacit message to educators. When Vygotsky explained his theory of development the childhood (psychological processes of children), he has advised the teachers that they should enhance and contribute helping and encouraging children to socially communicate with other people through words and signs because these tools as best ways of contraction and relationship. On the other hand, the Vygotsky's hidden curriculum is the value presuppositions and moral commitments are embedded in Vygotsky's educational developmental psychology. Moreover, Vygotsky's socio-cultural psychology presents a form of caring pedagogy, and that the value of care, concern, and responsiveness because Vygotsky's psychology manifests caring factors, and because a socio-cultural perspective, modeling, and imitation are not conceived as mechanical and disembodied process (Vygotsky, 1978).

### 3. Analysis

This study is based on a review of some current research. This argument also led me to investigate the aspect of hidden curriculum, which has not been given much attention in the literature or the resulting conceptual models but is important to consider when conceptualizing the functions of hidden curriculum.

When I was a teacher of second grade in the elementary school in K.S.A, I have observed that I could influence my students in this age by indirect ways without aware of me. Therefore, now, after this study, I think that we as teachers should have a good aware of this type of curriculum and effectively use the hidden curriculum to positively influence our students in the classroom. Therefore, I agree that the hidden curriculum is an implicit curriculum that expresses and represents attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors which are conveyed or communicated without awareness and are manifested indirectly by words and actions which are parts of the life of everyone in a society. Also, hidden curriculum is one of issues of curriculum if teachers cannot deal well with it since it affects negatively or positively in students' behaviors and beliefs.

According to my past experience also, in my classroom when I was teacher of a second grade in elementary school in K.S.A, I tried to enhance the children's lives by attempting to explore more active methods of implementation teaching and learning and support their cultures and experiences that are naturally in them. Thus, I have diversified my approaches of teaching and learning, such as simulation, role-playing, problem solving, and cooperative learning. I have practiced these methods many times with students, so the students have adapted and adjusted with new classroom environment and had a good accomplishing. Therefore, I could raise the academic achievement and provided them with good beliefs about themselves and their societies by using the

hidden curriculum positively through these methods.

On the other hand, I agree that when Schiro argued the learner centered, he sent positive and helpful message to teachers. That means teachers can impact their students' behaviors, beliefs, experiences, skills, and knowledge through their hidden curriculum to develop their students from several ways, such as personal and academically ways. As a result, Schiro wanted to say that teachers have to encourage their learners to learn, create, and improve through hidden curriculum to provide them with opportunities to gain new skills, thought, experiences, and knowledge.

In addition, I agree with Vygotsky theory that teachers should encourage and help children to speech and provide them with objects and subjects that relate with own children's behaviors. Vygotsky wanted to send an effective message that we as parents and teachers should support children by the tools that help them to solve difficult tasks. Therefore, children may overcome action, suggest solution before act or do, and control their behaviors if teachers can effectively use the hidden curriculum.

The implicit value presuppositions associated with the socio-cultural of Vygotsky's perspective on learning and development, and to explore what might be called Vygotsky's hidden curriculum; the unstated goals and messages of his educational and developmental psychology. Thus, when Vygotsky talked about the psychology and pedagogy, he used the hidden curriculum to send good messages to educators about pedagogy and child development.

#### **4. Practical Implications**

Hidden curriculum is one of several ways to impact the education in schools. Therefore, educators who work with curriculum development should be aware of this type of curriculum when they design and develop the curriculum. Sometimes, teachers positively use hidden curriculum without awareness through their behaviors and methods of teaching in the classroom. However, some teachers purposely use the hidden curriculum because they are aware of this kind of curriculum and its influences and results. Teachers want to teach their students several knowledges, beliefs, and experiences, but they cannot do this for some reasons. For instant, teachers can not teach these items for their students because these are not parts of the regular curriculum, so they implicit what they want to teach through the hidden curriculum of teaching approaches similarity of what Schiro talks about learner centered ideology.

In addition, when teachers wants to teach and develop the skills and languages of their students, but they do not have enough time to do this directly by the regular curriculum. As a result, they can use this type of curriculum. For example, they use the collaborative learning and give their students opportunities to interact each other to improve students' language and skills through indirect way that similarity of Vygotsky's ideology of development the language.

Sometimes, I have used the hidden curriculum in education and dealing with my daughter when she was three years and until now. This means I want to send indirectly positive messages to my daughter, so I send these messages through the implicit curriculum. For example, I want to encourage her to share her friends playing with her toys, so I talk with her father about this matter and ask her about her opinion after expressing my agreement of sharing with my friends and giving example of it.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The hidden curriculum mainly grew out of the literature on the educational environments. One's experiences in the educational system can positively or negative shape one's growth. His concept of those experiences, learning or notions does not related to subject matter or formal education objectives, speaks to the ability of an environment to convey messages and information, which can encompass future attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs. In short, the hidden curriculum is an important curriculum in the school because it has strong and effective influence in the students in many ways. However, it can be issue of the school's staff, especially teachers who do not use this type of curriculum effectively and positively. Therefore, schools or professional educators should prepare many courses about hidden curriculum importance and how work with it and provide teachers with these knowledge and skills. Indeed, schools have to recognize the importance of hidden curriculum with its advantages and disadvantage, so they work to improve students' behavior and believe through hidden curriculum. Schools should use the hidden curriculum as a basic curriculum in schools' cultures to avoid issues of it if it is used without awareness. It impact negatively social ideas of students. Therefore, I am as a teacher I am going to active this kind of curriculum effectively to send socially positive messages to my students that I can not teach them

through the regular curriculum. In addition, I am going to develop my relationship with my students to be easy to impact them. However, I should be aware of my behaviors and beliefs before using it in my classroom in the future.

Finally, I hope that the hidden curriculum is the admitted, promoted, and reinforced the regular curriculum. Also, educators have to consider in this type of curriculum when they develop the curriculum. Thus, they should effectively and positively utilize the hidden curriculum to change and improve the negative beliefs, thought, and behaviors. Hidden curriculum is an issue that is controversial issue today because it negatively and positively influences the students without awareness from teachers.

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