

# Teachers' Experiences in the Implementation of G&C in Junior Primary Schools in Mutare District, Zimbabwe

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## ABSTRACT

The study explored teachers' experiences on the implementation of Guidance and Counselling in junior primary schools. The research was prompted by the growing recognition of the importance and the need for formal inclusion of Guidance and Counselling into the Zimbabwean primary education system. To gain a deeper understanding, a qualitative research design was utilized enabling teachers to share their experiences and thoughts in a naturalistic setting and allows the researcher to capture detailed, nuanced perspectives from teachers in the real-world contexts. This study adopted a case study design, focusing on four purposively sampled schools to gather detailed, contextual data and foster a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. The schools were drawn from a peri-urban area and rural areas respectively. Semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis were used to generate data. The study comprised sixteen primary school teachers and four school heads. Data were analysed using thematic content analysis. The findings outlined that teachers had mixed experiences as they were found ill-prepared as their arguments were confirmed by their professional documents which were silent about G&C. The research also revealed that teachers are treating G&C as a club not as a core and standalone learning area. The results of the study further pointed out that though some teachers wanted to implement G&C properly they were hamstringing by lack of resources such as the G&C syllabus. The study recommends that culturally relevant pedagogies such as embracing cultural counselling villages should be adopted.

## INTRODUCTION

The inclusion of G&C in the primary curriculum is of great importance to all stakeholders such as the learner, community and the school in different ways (Egbo, 2015), Ntungwe (2022). The move requires a lot of direction, hence the need for a guiding syllabus for teachers to impart appropriate content, skills and attitudes to the learners (Mapfumo & Nkomo, 2013). Guidance and Counselling works to correct undesirable activities such as substance abuse, truancy, and bullying into productive activities such as participating in drama clubs, and religious or schoolwork (Gumisiriza, 2012). However, the lack of syllabi in schools may make teachers experience difficulties in implementing the learning area, hence, the primary goal for teaching G&C may not be realised.

A study by Janice & Lisa (2019) in Canada, in Alberta District, focused on the needs of both elementary and secondary schools in G&C. Findings showed that G&C is still an unregulated learning area despite efforts made. It found that there is no special framework for school counselling. The school districts handle things in different ways guided by a manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines. Thus, there is no harmony in their operation. This was corroborated by Meyers (2020) who conducted research in Washington D. C and found that learners lacked some learning needs, especially during the COVID-19 lockdown period. The study revealed that 16, 9 million learners lacked home internet access and 1; 7 million did not have a computer or a tablet. Therefore, the implementation of G&C may have been compromised and the situation may have had a negative influence on teachers' experiences.

Leuwerke (2022) conducted a study in China which found that the teaching of G&C in learning institutions seems to have less attention. Teachers do not receive sufficient training to provide counselling services. The study outlined that from a total number of 137 participants, 67% reported having seen counsellors at least once per term, while 43% had seen school counsellors two or three times per term. Cook, et al (2010) aver that a standardised training system is imperative to provide training assessment and continued education. Thus, the teachers seem to view G&C as of little significance in the schools as they pay less attention to it and they are not sufficiently trained to teach it. These various situations might have a bearing on the teachers' experiences as they implement G&C in the school curriculum.

Otwine (2018) conducted a study in Uganda and found out that the government of Uganda has made effort to invest in G&C at all levels. However, there are glaring gaps in human resources, capacity building, inadequate training manuals and poor funding. G&C has been seen as a relatively new movement in Uganda where it started with the introduction of formal education by missionaries (Ministry of Education and Sports Report, 2004). This assertion vindicates a study conducted by Chiwela & Osaki, (2022) in Tanzania which revealed teachers experienced tight school timetables that would limit them from teaching G&C properly. They also experienced lack of support from parents leading to lack of teaching materials and special rooms even for confidentiality. Therefore, the experiences might have a bearing on the proper implementation of G&C.

Samkange & Dondofema (2016) in a study they conducted in Chegutu established that there are no clearly defined counselling structures in the selected schools. Schools lack training in counselling and schools rely on the Schools Psychological Services which are found in the District Offices. Therefore, it leaves room for more learners to be vulnerable. This is corroborated by (Tunner et al 2022) who aver that over a quarter of children in Zimbabwe experience physical, sexual abuse or emotional in their childhood. In addition, Maiongwé (2023) was of the same view that, there is a serious lack of instilling discipline both at home and at school. The findings indicated that G&C is a learning area that requires attention from different stakeholders for it to gain recognition.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The introduction of the competency-based curriculum in 2017 brought about new learning areas in the Zimbabwean education system (MOPSE, 2015). This came as an eye-opener to some critical issues such as G&C which are now considered as important as other learning areas such as English and, Shona. G&C is now an examinable subject and grouped under Social Science, taking ten per cent of the examination starting in 2021 (Matabvu, 2022). However, as the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MOPSE) is trying to make a positive move in this area, some drawbacks disturb the full implementation of the programme. Policies are being developed but are not well articulated to the end-users resulting in poor implementation. Teachers complain that they are not well equipped to teach the subject because they are not inducted in the new learning area in the absence of the guiding syllabus (Kurebwa et al. (2014); (Gudyanga et al. (2015). There are no guidelines that are followed in delivering G&C as a learning area. This study, therefore, seeks to establish the implementation of G&C as a learning area from the teachers' experiences in Mutare district junior primary schools in Zimbabwe.

## Research Questions

The current study was based on the following research question:

What are the experiences of teachers in the implementation of G&C in Mutare district junior primary schools?

## Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory which was published in 1979 by Urie Bronfenbrenner and has influenced many psychologists in terms of analyzing the person and the effects of different environmental systems that one encounter (Erickson et al, 2018). The theory has five systems (Refer to Figure 1) namely, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem (Evans, 2020).

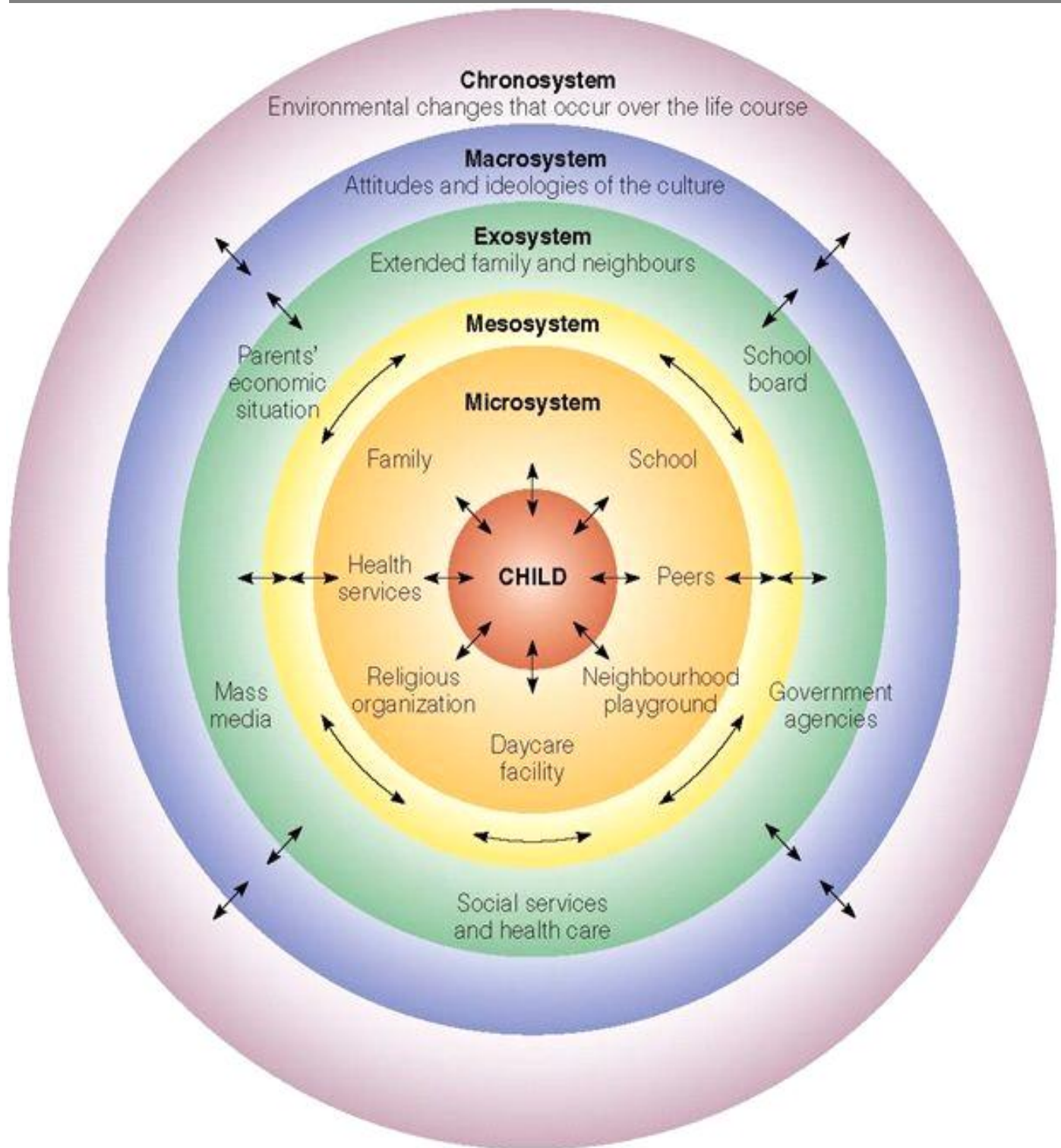


Figure 1 The Ecological Systems Theory

Source: Guy-Evans, (2020)

The ecological systems theory shown in Figure 2.1 has five systems that influence the experience of teachers on the implementation of G&C in junior primary schools.

The microsystem is the first level of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory. The level is characterized by a series of interconnected environmental immediate surrounding such as the family and school settings and are the things that have direct contact with the child in the immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The microsystem is the most influential level and immediate environmental setting containing the developing child.

The development is reciprocal, if the child has a strong nurturing from the immediate environment, this positively affect the child, whereas negative experiences may hurt the child.

Evans (2020) describes the mesosystem as a system that comprises of interactions between the child's microsystems, such as the interactions between the child's parents and teachers or between school peers and siblings. This means that family experiences may be related to school experiences, for example, there is a link between family norms, values, G&C techniques and those found in the school system.

The exosystem describes other formal and informal social structures, which do not themselves contain the child but indirectly influences them as these social structures affect one of the microsystems (Evans, 2020). In this instance, the implementation of G&C in the primary school is influenced by various forces that have no direct link to the school curriculum such as neighbourhood, parent's workplace, and mass media. Such phenomena influence the experiences of the need for and ways of implementing G&C in junior primary schools.

The macro system represents the broader level and is the layer of the ecological system that is furthest from the school. Ngorima (2021) presented the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goal Number Four (4) that include the inclusion and equity of quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all. At this macro level the influence of the geographical location might also affect the proper implementation of G&C in junior primary schools. G&C.

The chronosystem, the final stage of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system focuses on the role of time in shaping an individual's development (Schunk, 2016). People's culture, attitudes and beliefs are influenced by changing times. The chronosystem necessitates the implementation of G&C in primary schools so that learners deal with the ever-changing world. Events like natural disasters such as Cyclone Idai burdened societies and this calls for new problem-solving skills through G&C. However, resources, government policies, bodies of knowledge and the civil rights movement may also influence teachers' experiences on implementing G&C in junior primary schools.

## Research Paradigm

For this study which explored teachers' experiences on the implementation of G&C in junior primary education curriculum, the researcher adopted the interpretive paradigm. A paradigm is a set of ideas with a reciprocal connection that determines a theoretical structure. From this research, answers were sought from participants on how they were implementing G&C in junior primary schools. This resonates with Pelvin & Mokhtar, (2022) who aver that interpretive researchers see social truth as embedded in their social surroundings. To explore the teachers' experiences on the implementation of G&C in the primary school curriculum, a qualitative approach was adopted. Cohen, et al. (2018) consider qualitative research as information analysis that involves representing, accountability for an explanation of the data, comprehending data in terms of participants' interpretation of the situation, and taking note of the patterns, themes, categories and regularities. Therefore, during this study the researcher created a conducive environment that enabled participant to give data freely in interview sessions for them to provide valuable information that enriched the research findings on the experiences of teachers on G&C implementation in junior primary schools.

## Research Design

The explicit type of case study utilized in this study was a multiple case study. Sileyew (2020) defines a multiple case study as collective case studies or multisite studies. A multiple case study enabled the researcher to procure an abundance of information from different sites. In this study data on teachers' experiences on implementing G&C in junior primary schools in Mutare District was collected from four (4) schools. Multi-case study enhanced the collection of rich data from different sites as this validated the reliability of the data gathered. In this study, the researcher only focused on the implementation of G&C concerning the experiences of teachers.

## Sample and Sampling Procedure

The schools were drawn from a peri-urban area and rural areas respectively. Semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis were used to generate data. The study comprised sixteen primary school teachers and four school heads. Data were analysed using thematic content analysis.

During data collection, the researcher followed certain procedures. Gay et al (2010) denote that, a researcher needs to seek entry into a setting and on selected participants. In this study, the researcher obtained ethics clearance from Midlands State University (Ethical Clearance Number **PHDED002/23**). After obtaining the ethics clearance, the researcher proceeded to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to get permission to enter the schools and then carry out the study.

## Data Coding

### School Codes and Their Explanation

Data were coded using school identifiers to ensure anonymity and facilitate systematic analysis. Each school was assigned a unique code, accompanied by a summary of its key characteristics, to enable easy identification during data presentation and discussion. Four junior primary schools drawn from the same catchment area served as the data sources for exploring teachers' experiences of G&C implementation. The schools and participants were coded as **S1JP**, **S2JP**, **S3JP**, and **S4JP**, as presented in Table 1. These codes were consistently used throughout the chapter to reference data obtained from each school and to protect the identities of the institutions and participants involved in the study.

**Table 1 School codes and their explanations**

School code	Explanation
<b>S1JP</b>	School one junior primary
<b>S2JP</b>	School two junior primary
<b>S3JP</b>	School three junior primary
<b>S4 JP</b>	School four junior primary

Teachers' experiences on the implementation of G&C in Mutare junior primary schools Data gathered on the teachers' experiences on the implementation of G&C in Mutare junior primary schools through lesson observations, document analysis and interviews are presented, analysed and discussed. From the data gathered, teachers seem to have varied experiences on the implementation of G&C in junior primary schools.

Table 1: Summary of observations on G&C teaching

Observation on G&C teaching status	School Code				Comments
	S1JP	S2JP	S3JP	S4JP	
Use of G&C syllabus	No syllabus	No syllabus	No syllabus	No syllabus	Some use the G&C manual guide
Availability of timetable	1 double lesson per week, slotted end of the day	1 double lesson per week, slotted midday	1 double lesson per week, slotted last lesson midday	1 double lesson per week, slotted midday	Teachers teach other subjects in the G&C slot

Use of technology	Yes	Nil	Nil	Nil	One school had a computer lab
G&C schemes of work	Teachers schemed, but evaluation did not show learners' participation as well as the strengths	Scheming was not adequately done; they did not cover all the term's weeks as they	Scheming was done, but teachers were not evaluating as they did in	Teachers schemed, but the evaluation was shallow as they gave	Commercialised schemes of work were presented

Table 1: Summary of observations on G&C teaching Cont'd

	SCHOOL CODES				
Observation on G&C Teaching and Learning	S1JP	S2JP	S3JP	S4JP	Comments
	and weaknesses of learners.	schemed up to the tenth week.	other learning areas.	general comments with no detail.	Most schools presented typed schemes. The evaluation lacked detail to give insights into the teaching and learning of G&C.
Staffing of teachers	Qualified, and two teachers attended workshops	Qualified with no further training in G&C	Qualified with no further training in G&C	Qualified with no further in G&C	No teachers were staffed for G&C. Generally, though they are qualified, there is little evidence of Continuous professional development for G&C.
Supervision	Partially supervising	Partially supervising	Partially supervising	Partially supervising	Little supervision was done in G&C, with more emphasis on the supervision of other areas considered more important.
Classroom displays	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	No displays for G&C.
G&C textbooks	Nil	Nil	Nil	Yes, but only for grade four	Most schools had no textbooks
Written work	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	No written work found
Infrastructure	No specialised infrastructure for G&C	No specialised infrastructure for G&C	No specialised infrastructure for G&C	No specialised infrastructure for G&C	Lack of G&C infrastructure may signal a lack of seriousness in the teaching of G&C.

### Teachers 'experiences

Results from the lessons observed, including analysis of documents, were also used to corroborate findings from the interviews with teachers and school heads. The interviews conducted showed that teachers as well as school heads had mixed experiences as they implement G&C. Most teachers showed that the teaching of G&C is still far beyond reach, as this is renounced by the way school were treating G&C. Most of the participants' responses revealed that G&C is being treated as a requirement to fulfil the school timetable's demands, but practically teaching is not being done. Teachers' experiences are revealed in Figure 1.

Teachers expressed their teaching experiences in various ways, which are represented in Figure 1.

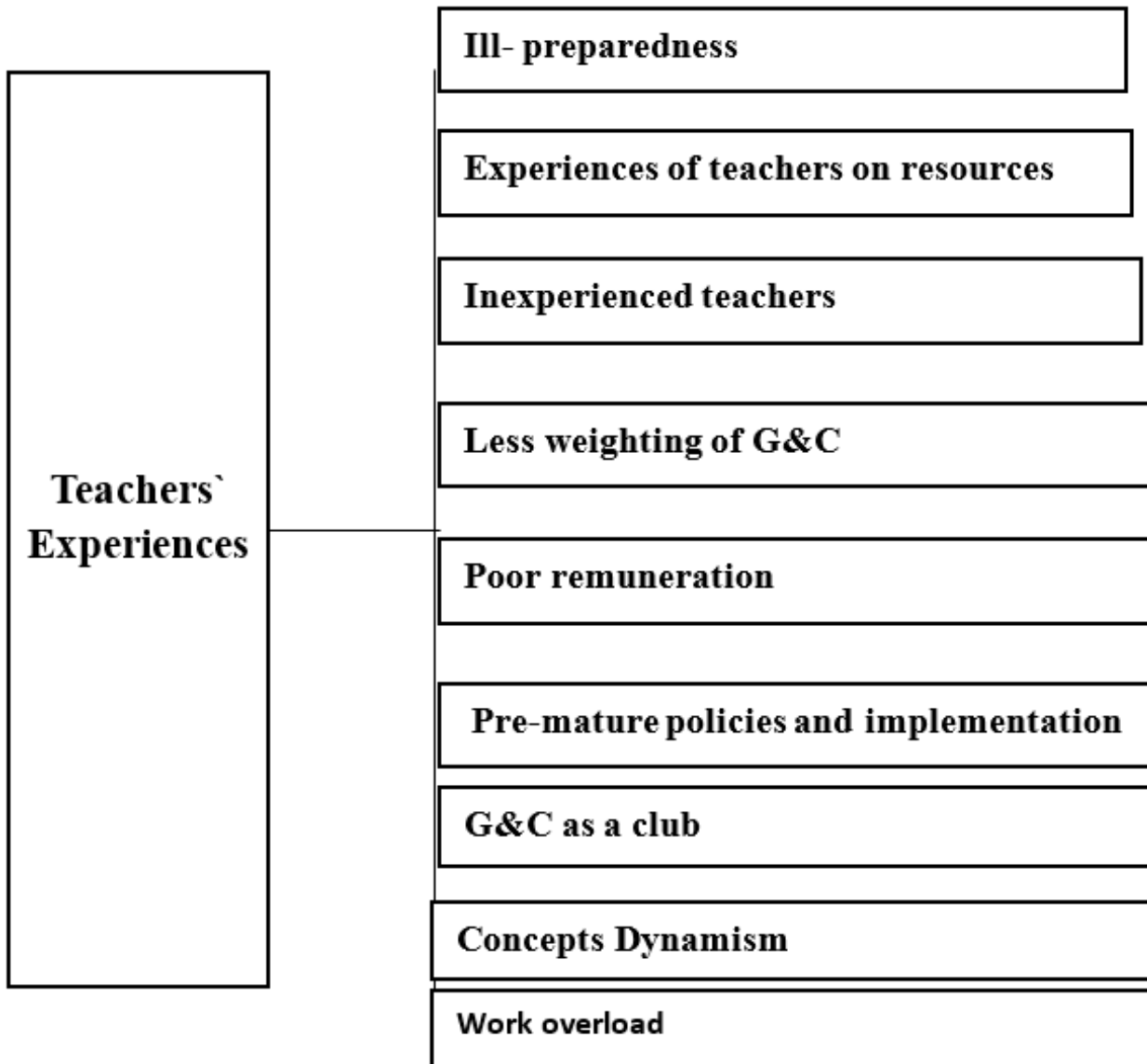


Figure 1: Teachers' experiences

From Figure 1, teachers' experiences that hindered the teaching and learning of G&C, included ill-preparedness to teach G&C, inexperienced teachers, premature policies, less weighting of G&C, poor remuneration, concepts dynamism and peripheral treatment of G&C as a club.

### Ill- Preparedness

It emerged that, most participants were ill-prepared to teach G&C due to various reasons some beyond their control. Further analysis, indicated that, most of the information found in the schemes of work seemed not to be correct. Teachers' schemes of work had no proper referencing as they were drawing them without a syllabus, hence using other learning areas' textbooks as their point of reference. Results showed documents with no traces of G&C written work to correspond with schemes of work. Learner exercise books had work in other learning areas, except G&C. The researcher seems to conclude that the current teaching of G&C and its implementation is just on the timetable, real teaching is still doom.

These observations were supported by T3S3M also said:

*Topics in the G&C syllabus are scattered in most of the content subjects, so I see no value in repeating the same concepts that are in various subjects, and they are over-emphasised hence cannot waste time. Instead, I had to move on to other subjects on the timetable.*

In support, SHS1F had this to say,

*The absence of a syllabus in teaching indicates that G&C is not yet functioning optimally, and several issues need to be addressed.*

Findings revealed that participants were found ill-prepared as their arguments were authenticated by their professional documents, which had nothing concerning G&C. Likewise in Zambia a study carried by Mushota (2022), indicated that, the government had no enough support in terms of syllabus provision for G&C. Njagi (2020) carried out a study in Kenya which reported that teachers were found incompetent in delivering G&C lessons due to limited subject matter knowledge. It can be concluded that teachers are generating schemes of work without a syllabus, where they refer to what is expected. They are focusing more on fulfilling the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's mandate for scheming.

### **Experiences of Teachers on Resources**

Findings noted that teachers are improvising the available resources to make ends meet, such as using other learning areas, the internet, and resource files. No G&C materials were found in the four schools. When asked, T2S1M said,

*The unavailability of G&C textbooks presents a challenge, as we are left with the option of either omitting the subject or utilising textbooks from related subjects that are readily accessible.*

SHS2M added,

*The inconsistent and delayed payment of school fees by some of the parents perpetuates a cycle of inadequate funding, ultimately impacting the availability and quality of teaching resources.*

On checking, classroom displays were for other learning areas, showing that G&C is being neglected by teachers. It seems that teachers are diverting G&C resources in favour of other learning areas. Radhika (2023) advances that when teaching and learning methods and materials are not in a well-developed state, the educators will experience impediments while imparting information among students. Research conducted by (Surjaningrum & Yulianti, 2022) in Indonesia also buttressed the view that G&C implementation faced challenges such as a lack of teaching materials and time constraints. The study results further revealed that although teachers were willing to implement G&C effectively, they were hindered by a lack of resources, notably the absence of the syllabus as well as textbooks.

### **Inexperience of Teachers**

Interviews conducted showed that even at college G&C was silent, hence, most of the learning areas were taught under professional studies. Upon observation, display materials were available for other learning areas, but none were found for G&C. The findings also revealed that teachers were using commercial schemes of work, as they failed to interpret the G&C manual guide that they claim to be using as their reference point. T2S1M echoed.

*Lack of syllabus interpretation knowledge leads us to purchase teaching schemes, therefore if the syllabus is availed, we get motivated to teach the subject as most of the lessons will become easy to teach following the syllabus demands.*

SHS3F said,

*Teachers are not experienced in teaching G&C as it is found in schools, because when training no none of them majored in G&C. The normal trend is that the subjects that are in primary schools are to be taught in colleges first before teachers are deployed into schools.*

Findings revealed that the unavailability of the syllabus is another gap leading teachers to be incompetent to teach G&C, as the inexperience is caused by a lack of a syllabus, yet it is the most important document as far as implementation is concerned. Kus et al (2022) said, there is a lack of clear guidelines for G&C, as there is a lot of confusion on what teachers should teach, hence teachers spend more of their time trying to figure out things. Safingudin (2020) indicated that teachers lacked the knowledge and skills specifically for G&C due to

inadequate training and professional development. Study findings revealed that teachers are not experienced in G&C due to lack of training at teachers' colleges as the subject found not to be part of the teacher training curriculum.

### Less Weighting of G&C

Findings showed that the curriculum does not include G&C as a major subject amongst other subjects that are offered at junior primary level. T1S4F said,

*The low weighting weakened the teaching of G&C, which one sees as a waste of time to teach G&C that carries only ten percent of the whole examination time, rather I would teach those subjects with a higher percentage at the end. The effort I put in matches well the ten percent of the hundred exam portion.*

SHS4F echoed,

*Low weighting contributes to less teaching as teachers tend to attach their effort to subjects with more weighting.*

A study carried by (Atuhurra & Kaffenberger, 2019) in Tanzania and Uganda found that, there is a lack of coherence between curriculum standards and exams and instructions in primary schools. Whereas in Zimbabwe, examination is run by the Zimbabwe School Examination Council (ZIMSEC). this board has awarded G&C ten percent of the total percentage from the Social Sciences (formerly General Paper) examinations. The examination has two papers, namely Paper 1 (Multiple choice and Paper 2 (Structured questions), with each paper weighting 50 percent. The distribution is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council (ZIMSEC) weighting

Learning Area	Examination Weighting
FAREME	50 percent
Heritage and Social Studies	40 percent
Guidance and Counselling	10 percent
Total	100 Percent

Source: (Chitumba, 2020).

The study discovered that teachers are using the above information to distribute their precious effort to decide where to spend more time and effort. This is supported by Banda (2021), who echoes that G&C is not taken as a priority in the allocation of resources by our key providers because it is not an examinable subject, hence, we cannot achieve the desired goal without appropriate and sufficient support.

### Poor Remuneration

Across all research sites, participants reported receiving poor salaries, which were further complicated by excessive workloads. The study revealed that low salaries had a strong impact on the implementation of G&C, as most of the participants complained about insufficient funds. T4S1M narrated:

*Teachers have been receiving poor salaries that are coupled with crowded teaching slots, hence limiting the proper implementation of G&C, as most of us complain about low remuneration that does not match the quantity of work, we are expected to carry out by the ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.*

SHS4F bemoaned,

*Poor remuneration becomes a major issue as teachers are not happy with the salaries they are getting. They see a gap between the salaries and the amount of work they are doing. This gives reason for them not to attend to some other subject, such as G&C.*

The study further established that poor remuneration affects not only teachers but also learners. Inadequate salaries, combined with poor working conditions, increase the likelihood of teacher disengagement and may indirectly expose learners to harmful practices that infringe on children's rights (Okesina, 2019). Havlik et al

(2019) argues that when insufficient pay is compounded by resource scarcity, teachers' motivation to teach declines sharply. Supporting this view, Govender and Bussin (2020) found that unfavourable working conditions hinder the retention of skilled teachers, particularly in specialised areas such as G&C.

### **Pre-mature Policies and Implementation**

It emerged from the study findings that teachers are experiencing pressure from pre-mature policies that sometimes affect the proper implementation of G&C. Whenever a new policy is introduced, it is immediately implemented, yet teachers require some form of sensitization or orientation through teacher training workshops, syllabus interpretation, or feasibility study through a pilot study to effectively execute the policy. T1S4M alluded:

*When the competence-based curriculum was introduced G&C came as an afterthought and very little effort was made to prepare teachers for teaching. The government fast tracked the policy, and this made teachers have negative attitude towards the teaching of G&C in particular.*

SHS2M contributed that,

*New policies are coming through workshops focusing more on school administrators, sometimes in the form of circulars leaving out teachers, yet they are the major implementers as they are directly involved in children's learning.*

Siziba & Kaputa (2023) pointed out that teachers do not have the skills and knowledge on how to teach G&C lessons as they were not trained in the subject matter. The situation is exacerbated by a lack of or insufficient in-service training to prepare teachers for changes brought about by the introduction of new policies (Dayce & Florah, 2024). This can lead to teachers feeling unprepared to teach G&C, without proper interpretation of new policies, teachers may struggle to create a supportive environment that allows proper implementation of G&C. Larran & Hein (2024) carried out research on premature policies in East and Southeast Asia and discovered that, there are some policy gaps and there is need to the effectiveness of the current policies to ensure they are aligned with the needs of schools and student needs.

### **Concept Dynamism**

The study revealed that the curriculum is grappling to embrace the fast-changing world dynamics, for example, 'climate change'. Whilst G&C cover topics such as 'Disaster and Risk Reduction', this is only reactionary and not proactive, as mechanisms to predict future trends are limited (Dal, 2024). Thus, knowledge is also scarce and limited for teachers, hence, they cannot effectively implement the curriculum. T2S4F complained,

*Some information on what we should teach is very scarce. We only get to know about these things when they happen, for example, climate change, it seems people don't understand what is happening and cannot predict, so teaching about disaster and risk reduction only becomes reactionary.*

SHS1F uttered that,

*Societal demands such as the use of technology are seen as disturbing. Unfortunately, such concepts are taking time to be reviewed, yet they are the most dangerous aspects that are contributing to poor implementation of G&C; hence, learners are found vulnerable to the effects of such inevitable changes.*

The new political phenomenon of teaching learners to become job creators and not job seekers despise the incense of G&C. Zimba (2022) assert that, the fundamental role of G&C is to facilitate the total wholesome and fullest development of every student, in terms of enriching their intellectual, vocational, social, and emotional ..., hence, schools must consider its implementation.

### **G&C as a club**

Findings revealed that teachers are treating G&C as a club, not as a learning area, as it should be done under the curriculum. The researcher observed that G&C is on separate timetables in all research sites' offices. Some facilitator names were assigned to specific topics and were evenly distributed to cover the term's assembly

sessions. Interviews unmasked that teachers normally conduct the G&C sessions during clubs, leaving a suspicion on how the concepts are being taught. T3S4M said,

*At our school, we normally teach G&C as a club, especially in the afternoon, as we are experiencing more cases of child abuse due to the influence of farm background.*

SHS3F alluded to that,

*I have observed that teachers get interested in teaching G&C issues during club time, but without necessarily following the syllabus, hence this defeats the G&C teaching.*

From the above responses, it revealed that G&C is being taught at assemblies and as a club, meaning no ample time is given to teach specific concepts. Basing on the above communication, this casual approach in the implementation of G & C is buttressed by teachers' attitudes as unpacked by Wambu & Fisher (2015), who found that Guidance and Counselling was offered during breaks, lunch and after school as a club. A study done by (Banda, 2021) in Zambia indicated that, teachers and students were concerned with the non-allocation of time for G&C from the examinable subjects, with teachers providing it in their spare time, such as break, lunch and as a co-curricular activity.

### **Work overload**

Findings revealed that teachers are overloaded with other teaching duties. On observation, in other research sites teachers are failing to add G&C on their timetable. In other sites G&C was on timetable but interviews conducted revealed that, teachers are included it in adherence to G&C policy, but the teaching practice is far-fetched. Teachers were not giving work to learners; this was evidenced by lack of G&C exercises in children's books.

T1s3M said,

*I am failing to balance and include G&C in my timetable, the day is fully packed with other learning areas excluding G&C.*

SH1F alluded that,

*As a school we overlooked the inclusion of G&C on our master timetable hence, the timetable is already full of other school activities. Meaning the addition of G&C will be a burden to teachers since they always complain about such many activities.*

These findings align with Chirershe & Matabvu (2021), who noted that excessive workload undermines curriculum implementation. Similarly, Cooper (2021) argue that imposed curriculum reforms often fail due to inadequate consideration of implementers' capacities. Consequently, teachers' attitudes and workload pressures collectively render G&C implementation ineffective, despite policy intentions.

### **DISCUSSION**

Findings revealed that participants were found ill-prepared as their arguments were authenticated by their professional documents, which had nothing concerning G&C. Likewise in Zambia a study carried by Mushota (2022), indicated that, the government had no enough support in terms of syllabus provision for G&C. Njagi (2020) carried out a study in Kenya which reported that teachers were found incompetent in delivering G&C lessons due to limited subject matter knowledge. It can be concluded that teachers are generating schemes of work without a syllabus, where they refer to what is expected. They are focusing more on fulfilling the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's mandate for scheming.

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Findings revealed that the unavailability of the syllabus is another gap leading teachers to be incompetent to teach G&C, as the inexperience is caused by a lack of a syllabus, yet it is the most important document as far as implementation is concerned. Kus et al (2022) said, there is a lack of clear guidelines for G&C, as there is a lot of confusion on what teachers should teach, hence teachers spend more of their time trying to figure out things. Safingudin (2020) indicated that teachers lacked the knowledge and skills specifically for G&C due to inadequate training and professional development. Study findings revealed that teachers are not experienced in G&C due to lack of training at teachers' colleges as the subject found not to be part of the teacher training curriculum.

A study carried by (Atuhurra & Kaffenberger, 2019) in Tanzania and Uganda found that, there is a lack of coherence between curriculum standards and exams and instructions in primary schools. The study discovered that teachers are using the above information to distribute their precious effort to decide where to spend more time and effort. This is supported by Banda (2021), who echoes that G&C is not taken as a priority in the allocation of resources by our key providers because it is not an examinable subject, hence, we cannot achieve the desired goal without appropriate and sufficient support.

The researcher discovered that lack of adequate teachers' remuneration leaves them complaining about poor wages that are coupled with poor working conditions, resulting in them engaging in activities that violate the children's rights in schools (Okesina, 2019). Teachers are not paid enough as it is, but if one adds the lack of resources in a classroom to that, they are going to lose their will to teach. Research conducted by (Govender & Bussin, 2020) in South Africa showed that, schools' failure to provide favourable working conditions that would enable teachers to acquire the basic physiological needs and safety needs which are supposed to lay a foundation for higher order ones could be one of the reasons schools fail to retain the best teachers for G&C. Therefore, the study revealed that there is a lot of grumbling amongst teachers as some are creating time for extra lessons in trying to compensate for the salary gap, though these practices are normally done in difficulty areas such as reading, and math to mention a few.

The new political phenomenon of teaching learners to become job creators and not job seekers despise the incense of G&C. Zimba (2022) assert that, the fundamental role of G&C is to facilitate the total wholesome and fullest development of every student, in terms of enriching their intellectual, vocational, social, and emotional ..., hence, schools must consider its implementation.

From the above responses, it revealed that G&C is being taught at assemblies and as a club, meaning no ample time is given to teach specific concepts. Basing on the above communication, this casual approach in the implementation of G & C is buttressed by teachers' attitudes as unpacked by Wambu & Fisher (2015), who found that Guidance and Counselling was offered during breaks, lunch and after school as a club. A study done by (Banda, 2021) in Zambia indicated that, teachers and students were concerned with the non-allocation of time for G&C from the examinable subjects, with teachers providing it in their spare time, such as break, lunch and as a co-curricular activity.

Therefore, a possible explanation for this outcome is that teachers felt mentally overloaded, despite having a dedicated slot for G&C teaching as a standalone subject as expected by the G&C curriculum. Teachers claimed that they had a lot of work to do excluding G&C. The finding is supported by Nkomo, Pakombwele & Dube (2024) found that the activities done by teachers and students were demanding. Teachers highlighted that government-imposed G&C as a standalone learning area which came with numerous drawbacks, with obstruct their implementation. This is similar to the findings made by Arar, Kondakci & Taysum (2019) that policy makers usually impose syllabus change on the implementers. Hence, the teachers' attitude makes it difficult for G&C to be implemented effectively making the MOPSE effort futile.

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