The teacher program

Kenyan teachers’ perspectives on working with students from slum areas in Nairobi
A qualitative study

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ABSTRACT

The aim with this study was to give awareness about the school situation for students living in the slum areas of Nairobi. The purpose was to raise the teachers’ perspectives about working with these students. Previous researches around the topic were studied to gain a better knowledge for the subject. The focus was put on Maslow’s hierarchy of basic needs, trauma with its effects and possible treatments in school and the home environment effects on the student’s learning. Since this was a qualitative study, the method used was open aimed interviews. Eleven teachers working in the slum areas in Nairobi were interviewed with these two main questions in mind; What do teachers think is important when working with students who come from the slum areas of Nairobi and how do teachers work with these students? All schools were located in or close to a children home in order for the teachers to have a wide range of experiences when working with students from the slum area. Some of the results that came up were that teachers saw it as important to provide students with their basic needs in school. The teachers also said that students had different reactions towards trauma and it was of great importance for students to be able to both channel their expressions after the trauma but also to forget the trauma for the moment to be able to concentrate in school. The teachers were disagreeing about whether to treat students equally or individually. Some of the teachers said that the student’s home environment affects their learning due to the quality and quantity of help that they can get with their homework. Some teachers felt adequate due to the extra work put on their shoulders in their work with the students from the slum areas.

Keywords: Teacher perspective, Trauma, Basic needs, Home situation, Slum, Kenya
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ATTACHMENT
1 INTRODUCTION

In a conversation with an orphanage manager well acquainted with the orphanage situation in Kenya, it emerged that Kenya has over 1000 children's homes. In Kenya, there is a big difference between rich and poor. While some children are wealthy and can get what they want, other children are living in poverty. These children might not have any opportunity to obtain their basic needs. They are usually dependent on one person to take care of them. Due to the HIV and AIDS, many Kenyan children are single or double orphan. If the caregiver is absent physically or mentally, the child might not have a chance to get education. On the other hand, a large family in Kenya guarantees a social security for the future. However, a large family can result in difficulties to give the children proper education and the help they need.

Case, Paxson and Bleidinge (2004) says,

“Education is crucial to development. Declines in school investments that result from parents' deaths have the potential to reduce the living standards of a large number of African children throughout their lives and to slow African growth further“  

(Case, Paxson and Bleidinge 2004 p. 483).

In Kenya, the classes have a high span of ages. This is because there are students starting school late with no previous education or writing knowledge. Since some students only speak their tribe language, they have a harder time to learn in an English speaking school. When the national exams are being taken, this child fails and has to repeat that class until he passes. A child of 14 years old can come to school with their mind destroyed by abuse, which results in that he has to start in preschool together with children who are four years old.

The teachers meeting students from the slum areas have a big task to fulfill. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2002) writes in the Kenyan Syllabus that all students, no matter background, should be able to interact as Kenyans with mutual respect, moral values and good discipline. The school should be able to develop the students´ talents, interests and abilities. All students should be equal and have equal opportunities. Ideally, a student should develop into a physical fit, healthy and self-disciplined human being.

Sometimes trauma affects students´ learning negatively due to previous experiences outside school. The national council for children’s services (2011) says that children are more vulnerable and affected by traumatic events than adults. Trauma might have a long effect if not addressed appropriate. The students need someone to talk to, but counseling should be held outside school. All adults should work for the best of the child, which is why a close parent teacher relationship is important. Teachers have to have in mind the students’ cultural backgrounds. Children might live a tough life where abuse is normal. All this will affect them when coming to school.

A teacher in Kenya has to be able to help all students, no matter what background or previous experiences the students have. No matter where a teacher works, he or she has to be able to meet all students and help them to learn, to develop and to reach their full potential. Nevertheless, how should teachers be able to meet all these different students without treating them differently, and how should they find the time to help the students with more and more duties added to their work?
2 BACKGROUND

The background addresses Maslow’s hierarchy of basic needs. It also addresses traumatization with its effects and possible treatments in the school environment and in the student’s home situation. These factors can be linked together, especially when connected with the preconditions when working with students from slum areas. All factors play a huge role on the students’ behaviors and performances in school.

2.1 The primary basic needs

Maslow (1987) has created a hierarchy of needs consisting of five levels. The first level is the physiological need, followed by safety needs, affection needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs. The first three levels are primary needs, vital for survival. According to Jerlang (2008), the primary needs are deficiency needs, which get satisfied when a person gets what he or she lacks. The two highest needs are secondary needs or growth needs and cannot be satisfied at once. A person has to work with those needs the whole life. As a rule, the lower needs have to be satisfied before starting with the higher needs.

![Maslow's hierarchy of basic needs](image)

Figure 1. Maslow’s hierarchy of basic needs

Jerlang (2008) says that, physiological needs and safety needs are more important in a famine area, while the secondary needs easier get satisfied in an area where people are sheltered and have enough food. Maslow (1987) adds that a person has to live in a good environment when it comes to education, family and economy to be able to satisfy the secondary needs. He also says that being at the secondary need level is favorably, with greater longevity, better sleep, less diseases and a better appetite. However, a higher need can disappear if the hunger for a lower need is stronger.

Ghazinour (2003) says that a traumatized person cannot cater for his or her needs. Moore and McArthur (2011) interviewed homeless primary and high school Australian students about their perspectives of the homelessness’ effects on school. The students thought it would be easy to identify students in need of support. Students without basic items, students sitting by themselves or sad students are signs of students in need.
2.1.1 Physiological need

Before a student can focus in school the physiological need such as food, drink and sleep has to be satisfied. Maslow (1987) means that if no needs are satisfied, a person concentrates on the physiological need and other needs get pushed away. A hungry child puts all effort on satisfying this need, which makes other things unimportant.

The research made by Santa, Tellez, DeMaria and Galarraga (2011) shows that it is important to cater for students’ basic needs by providing clothes and food. The same result emerges in research conducted by De Witt and Lessing (2005). They studied South African primary school teachers´ views of HIV/AIDS affected orphans´ psychosocial needs in school. When they were asked which need they saw as most important to satisfy a student, the answer was food followed by the need for clothes.

Prince and Howard (2002) mean that the physiological need should be easy to reach since it is the first level on the hierarchy of needs. However, this is not easy for a poor family where children often do not get enough food. Radcliff, Racine, Brunner, Huber and Whitaker (2011) point out that many children in Nairobi only get one meal per day. A study made in Kenya by Otieno Nyambédha, Wandibba and Aagaard-Hansen (2001) shows that the caretakers saw the schooling as a problem. Many times students were too hungry to fulfill the education and learn in school.

Bhana, Morell, Epstein and Moletsane (2006) investigated South African secondary school teachers’ perspectives on what they can do for HIV/AIDS affected students in school. The teachers said that they have to be able to sign read quiet students in order to understand their environment at home. The teachers feel that they have to provide for the students’ basic needs in school, since the students might have nowhere else to turn to. Some teachers use their own money to provide the students with clothes and food. They mean that the students’ minds are somewhere else so they cannot concentrate in school. However, when their physiological need is satisfied, the concentration improves and results in a better performance in school.

2.1.2. Safety need

Maslow (1987) says that safety needs are needs for stability, security, dependency and freedom from fear, anxiety and chaos. People who want to satisfy this need are in need of structure, order, law and limits and in search for a protector. However, the need for safety is not often dominating. Maslow said

“The need for safety is seen as an active and dominant mobilizer of the organism’s resources only in real emergencies, such as war, disease, natural catastrophes, crime waves, societal disorganization, neurosis, brain injury, breakdown of authority, or chronically bad situations.”

(Maslow 1987, p 19)

Radcliff et al. (2011) point out that many traumatized students or students who live in a rough situation feel unsafe and perform badly in school. A similar thought by Prince and Howard (2002) points out that this need is one of the biggest reasons for students not to achieve academically. The students look for possible dangers and threats, which make them unable to concentrate in school. According to the teachers in the research by De Witt and Lessing (2005), what mattered most for the students psychosocial wellbeing was the feeling of safety. Moore and McArthur (2011) showed in their research that many students see the school as a stable and safe environment apart from the violence at home. The school is also a place where the students can learn and socialize together with others.
2.1.3. Affection need

Maslow (1987) says that a person fears loneliness, rejection, rootlessness, friendlessness and ostracism. They might be torn from home and therefore lack roots. They can also move around much, which result in them being newcomers with a longing for a relationship with another person.

De Witt and Lessing (2005) say that orphans seek acceptance, love and support. Case et al. (2004) say that parents invest more in their children than what other caregivers do. Orphans who live in a new family might be put aside. The caregivers put all of their effort into the biological child since the parents are most affectionate with that child. Otieno et al. (2001) research shows that something that becomes an advantage for one need might be a disadvantage for another basic need. Extended families and institutions that take care of children can help them feel affection and safety, but they are often overburdened and take care of more children than they can bear.

“The caretakers’ action of taking up orphans is not matched with their ability to meet the needs of the many orphans. Available resources are overstretched and decisions to accommodate them are made purely out of affection.” (Otieno 2001 p 92)

According to Moore and McArthur (2011) research, the students thought it was important for teachers to show that they care for each single student. School was a place where they could feel like any other student in the school. On the other hand, normality, fright to be treated differently and the fear to be looked down upon was one of the reasons why the homeless students so rarely told the teacher about their home situation.

Raphael and Burke (2012) interviewed teachers and principals in grade six-eight in the United States about students’ academic, social and emotional needs. They say that students need a good relationship with adults. However, the extra work put on a teachers shoulder makes it hard to have time to create that relationship. The principals said that teachers now have to be able to teach, but also to provide for the students’ social and emotional needs, which improves the learning. Wood and Goba (2011) interviewed primary and high school teachers in South Africa about their perspectives on teaching orphans and vulnerable students. The teachers meant that their role has similarities to a social worker’s duty. The teachers said that in school, they try to compensate for the deficiency from home.

2.1.4 Critics towards Maslow’s hierarchy of basic needs

Jerlang (2008) points out that Maslow mention the needs as basic for a human being, but that interferes with the thought that the nature is not given. An unsatisfied need will interfere with the behavior of a person consciously or unconsciously until it has been satisfied. Criticism has also been raised towards Maslow’s point that the lower needs have to be satisfied before a person can satisfy a higher need. The critics mean that a person can be so devoted to something that he or she forgets the lower needs. Maslow’s theory on the other hand involves a thought that a lower need can be forgotten if a higher need is stronger. There is also criticism towards that this theory only applies to healthy people. It is a Western individualistic theory and might not be applicable in other cultures where the individual fulfillment is not in focus.
2.2 The home situation’s effects on the student

Hartas (2011) research about parents’ involvement in homework connected to the students’ performances in school shows that, less wealthy parents with a low degree or no degree from school, cannot help with homework to the same extent as wealthy parents with a high educational degree. The family’s socio-economic background affects students from a poor family negatively when it comes to their social and emotional development as well as their performance in school. Students who have an educated mother perform better in school than students without an educated mother. The background of a family has a bigger effect on the students socially and emotionally than academically. The economic situation has a bigger effect than the mother’s educational background on the student’s performance in school. The research also shows that the amount of time that a parent can help with homework does not make a big difference on the student’s performance in school. The family background has no impact on the amount of help the students can receive from home. On the other hand, it has a big impact on the student’s learning in school.

Serpell and Mashburn (2012) conducted a research on four-year old students in the United States, about the impact on teacher-parent relationship on the social development of a student. Teachers who had a good quality relationship with the parents of their students could see that those students have a better social competence than other students do. They have better behavior, better relationship and fewer conflicts with their teachers. A bad parent-teacher relationship has a more profound effect on poor students than on rich students. In addition, teachers who had a higher amount of contact with the parents of their students reported that the students are lower in social competence. They behave worse and have a bad relationship with their teacher.

Moore and McArthur (2011) observed that many homeless children lack education since they are moving around due to homelessness. Many times, they did not go to school since the schools were too far away or because the schools found it hard to enroll the students that late in the semester. The students felt like they were always behind the other classmates. They also thought that they missed a lot of basic knowledge. Because of this, many homeless students cannot read nor do basic math.

2.3 Trauma

According to Ghazinour (2003), a person suffering from trauma has faced a traumatic event caused by a rare catastrophic stressor. Van der Kolk (2007) says that some stressors are; abuse, assaults, threats, accidents, diseases and loss of family members. Ainsworth, Beegle and Koda (2005) point out that many children are psychological and emotional hurt by living in a violent situation. Some children have been neglected, while others have lost their parents or have a close family member sick. Moore and McArthur (2011) mean that traumatized students have a hard time to achieve at school and to make friends.

2.3.1 Effects of trauma

Ghazinour (2003) thesis shows that trauma can give biological, physiological, social and existential consequences. De Witt and Lessing (2005) mean that students suffering from traumatic events might have behavior problems, emotional problems or disciplinary problems. Alisics (2012) interviewed Dutch primary school teachers
about their perspectives on working with traumatized students. According to those teachers traumatized students act in different ways. Some students act out, while others cry or get withdrawn. According to Van der Kolk et al. (2007), one common reaction is to avoid situations that remind them about the trauma. This may result in that those children get unsociable and stop playing or talking to their friends. Another common reaction is to deny and forget the traumatic event. Since some traumatized people are reliving the event through dreams and thoughts, one normal reaction is to escape from life, which might make it hard to get in contact with that child. That student can be perceived as gifted and finds a safe world in school and textbooks. Coherent with this Zucker, Spinazzola, Blaustein, Van der Kolk and Bessel (2006) says that students handle their previous experiences in many different ways. However, they add that some students may try to appear overly normal, perform well in school, act hyper mature or act out towards others.

Van der Kolk, McFarlane and Van der Hart (2007) say that traumatized students may have displaced the trauma to such a high degree that they also have lost large amounts of memory. For others, links to their own reality become painful and remind them of the trauma. These two reasons can make it both hard and painful for traumatized students to learn from experiences. They also mean that trauma often brings concentration difficulties and many times traumatized students cannot control their feelings. Ghazinour (2003) says that trauma can lead to lack of empathy due to inability to recognize other peoples’ feelings. Other reactions towards trauma are irritability, depression and impairment in concentration and in memory.

Van der Kolk (2007) says that trauma leads to stress, which affects the memory function in the brain in a negative way. The learning ability gets impaired and this causes problem in school. Prince and Howard (2002) convey similar thoughts and add that the brain damage can result in anxiety, attention deficit and a hard time to control emotions. Valentino, Toth, and Cicchetti (2009) proved the debilitated memory with a research on maltreated children who had been victims to different kinds of abuses. The children had a hard time to connect a specific word with a personal memory. They could not remember small parts from their lives, only things that had been going on repeatedly or for a longer time. This shows that people are still suffering from trauma and this might be a sign for future depression.

2.3.2 Handling trauma

Uguak (2010) means that it is important to give awareness to all adults surrounding a traumatized students in order to be able to help them and as a way of recognizing other students in the same position. Teachers have to know how to recognize students living a hard life. According to De Witt and Lessing (2005), one way of helping and supporting a traumatized student is to be a good role model. The teachers in the research done by Bhana et al. (2006) said that it is important for teachers to show that they are there, so students can turn to them for help when needed. Tata (2004) says that orphans and other vulnerable children are in need of health, education and psychosocial care. Moore and McArthur (2011) conveyed that students think it is important to have someone in school knowing about their situation who could understand their behavior and who would help them if needed.

2.3.2.1 Singing, drawing and acting

The teachers in Alics (2012) research mean that the students’ normal lives should go on. By that, they mean that teachers should not dig too deep into the students’
backgrounds in order not to make them feel bad for being treated differently. Ghazinour (2003) means that a good way to control the trauma is to repeat the memory. Van der Kolk et al. (2007) mean that a way to control and survive the trauma is to act it out through games. Uguak (2010) says that one way to express and forget the trauma is to play games and sing. It helps the students to feel self-confident and to be creative. Drawing is another way of expressing yourself, which also helps the teacher to understand the student’s behavior and his or her situation at home. Drama is a way for students to express their feelings and to grow among the classmates. All these activities are ways to get closer to friends and to express oneself in front of others and all the activities promote a better behavior. In Moore and McArthur (2011) research, one student suggests that teachers let their students express themselves through creative art. This can help them to process their situation at home, to forget it and to feel happy and safe in school.

2.3.2.2 Teacher counseling

Counseling is a way to help orphans and vulnerable students. The teachers in Irisdotter’s (2012) research express a will to help the students feel emotional well. They want to help the students feel self-confident, even if they have failed in all subjects. One teacher found it important for the students to share emotional experiences with someone, while another teacher showed a strong opinion that teachers should not be counselors.

Wood and Goba (2011) convey in their research that many teachers feel that they do not have the right knowledge to be able to help traumatized students. When counseling orphans and vulnerable students, teachers have to talk about sensitive issues, which need to be followed-up in order to make progress. According to these teachers, many schools lack follow-ups. One teacher said that the students that you think are all right also have problems that they cannot handle themselves. Irisdotter (2012) conducted research about Swedish teachers’ perspectives on risks and possibilities involved in being a counselor for the students. Those teachers wanted to connect to the students in a more personal level, but found it hard. One teacher said that teachers do not know how to handle the students’ feelings and emotions. Tata (2004) says that it can help to use a puppet, which the children can interact with during counseling. In that way, the children can express their feelings and work with their emotional needs.

2.4 Background summary

In summary, Maslow mentions that the basic needs have great effects on a person’s life. The primary needs are more important in a famine area, while the quest for satisfying the secondary needs is more common in an area with a higher standard. According to Ghazinour (2003), a traumatized student cannot cater for its own needs. Both Santa (2011) and De Witt and Lessing (2005) mention the importance to provide students with their physiological need in school. Maslow (1987) mentions that the safety need is not often dominating a person’s life. However, Radcliff et al. (2011) and Prince and Howard (2002) say that traumatized students often feel unsafe and perform badly in school, while Moore and McArthur (2011) indicate that students see the school as a safe place apart from their home environment. De Witt and Lessing (2005) convey that students seek love in school. Both Raphael and Burke (2012) and Wood and Goba (2011) say that a teacher’s job has many similarities to a social workers´ duties, and that many teachers feel adequate.
Moore and McArthur (2011) say that traumatized students have a hard time to achieve in school. Alisics (2012), Van der Kolk et al. (2007) and Zucker et al. (2006) mean that students can have different reactions towards trauma, which affects their personality and their performance in school. Ghazinour (2003) convey that traumatized students often have a hard time to handle emotions, which can result in them loosing friends. Van der Kolk (2007), Prince and Howard (2002) and Valentino et al. (2009) also mention that trauma can affect the memory and concentration.

De Witt and Lessing (2005) say that in order to help students, a teacher has to be a role model. Uguak (2010) says that by letting students sing, draw or act, they can get help to channel their trauma and express their feelings. However, it can also be a way to make them forget the trauma and for the moment be able to concentrate in school. By letting them express themselves, the teacher can get a better understanding for the students’ behaviors and their situation at home. Irisdotter (2012) and Wood and Goba (2011) say that teacher counseling is a method to use. However, their studies also show that many teachers do not feel that they have the right knowledge to counsel and help traumatized students.

Hartas (2011) means that the family situation also affects the student´s ability to get help with homework. Moore and McArthur (2011) also showed that many students lack basic knowledge.
3 THE PURPOSE

This study gives awareness about the school situation for students living in the slums of Nairobi. The purpose is to raise the teachers’ perspectives about working with students who lives in the slum areas. To have a school situated in a slum area gives a wide range of experiences and backgrounds among the students.

Based on the purpose, these questions have been posed, which are going to be illuminated in the study:

- What do teachers think is important when working with students who come from slum areas of Nairobi?
- How do teachers describe their work with students from slum areas?
4 METHOD

This section contains a description of the study's approach. A description is made concerning the choice of method, the method instrument used, the study group participating in the study, implementation and processing of data. It also raises ethical aspects that has to be met in order to conduct study and concludes with a method discussion.

4.1 Research method

The purpose of the study is to gather teachers’ perspectives about the specific situation to work with students from slum areas. To be able to raise the teachers’ perspectives, the method used in this study is qualitative interviewing.

The interviews are so called open aimed interviews, which Lantz (2007) says gives a deeper understanding to a specific phenomenon. It is a way to let the respondents describe the context that they think is important and interesting from a given area. Through this kind of interview, the respondents can talk relatively freely and deepen their thoughts.

According to Patel and Davidson (2003), the structure of the questions affects the extent to which the respondent can interpret the questions freely according to their own experiences and attitudes to the subject. The questions in this study were broad so that the respondents should be able to answer whatever came up in their mind as long as they stuck to the topic. Since it is a qualitative study, the interest lies in the differences and not in the similarities in the answers.

This interview method produced the result that no interview looked the same. The questions came in different order. Some questions did not have to be asked and other questions only had a few follow-up questions since the respondent talked about that area when asked another question. This resulted in that the interviews were different in length, depending on how much the respondent talked about each question.

4.2 Research instrument

An interview guide was written as a help during the interview. This guide is written using the thoughts that Lantz (2007) raises in her book. She says that it is a good idea to start with some fact based questions about the respondent and the school. That gives background knowledge when interpreting the interviews and it also gives a good and easy start since those questions are easy to answer. After that follows a broad question that is penetrated by follow-up questions (ibid). The interview guide starts with fact based questions about the age, education and the working experience of the teacher, the size of the school in terms of students and teachers as well as questions about what background the students have. This creates an understanding for the setting and an understanding for the answers given. The interview guide had many main topics. During the interview, follow-up questions were asked in order to dig deeper into the main question and the context the responder found interesting. The follow-up questions varied between the interviews depending on the respondent’s perspective of the phenomenon.

One test interview was made as Lantz (2007) suggested, ascertaining how comprehensible the questions were and how usable the information was that came through the answers. As she recommended, the test interview was done in the same
Changes were made in the interview guide depending on the result of the test interview. The test interview showed which questions that could be difficult to understand. These questions were made more comprehensible for the next interview. The test interview also showed examples of follow-up questions that could be asked in the actual interviews that followed.

4.3 Research group

Since the purpose of this study was to raise teachers’ perspectives about working with students from the slum areas of Nairobi, schools that had both students from an orphanage and students from the community were selected. In that way, all of the teachers would have an idea of how it is to work with students that have a wide range of experiences in life.

It should be clarified that not all children who live in an orphanage are orphans. Some children have been neglected, have been living on the street or have been rescued from a violent home. Other children are affected by HIV, have parents who are sick or have parents who cannot provide for their needs. They have been rescued from a life that many children from the community are still living. Kenya has 42 tribes, which all have their own culture and their own language. That affects the experiences that the students have, which affects the students in school. All schools participating in the study have relatively small classes; however, the schools do not have extra teachers who can help students in need of special attention or special education.

The interviews were done in four different schools all located in the slum areas of Nairobi. Eleven primary school teachers participated in the study. The teachers were between 24 and 38 years old with an average age of 27 years. Their working period as teachers was between one to eleven years with five years as the most common working period. They had been working in the school where the interviews were carried out for between one to eight years with two years as the most common working period. All the teachers had a two-year education from the university to become teachers of Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Development. Due to communication difficulties, the head masters of each school selected the teachers for the interviews, which ended up being mostly women.

At the first school, two teachers participated in the study. This school had about 230 students from nursery class to standard eight with ten teachers. This was a private school with a school fee, which unfortunately excluded some of the students from the neighborhood. The school had however students from the close area with a big variety of backgrounds and experiences outside school. Some of the students were single or double orphans living with someone outside the family, others lived in a violent situation and some had parents who were alcoholics. Many of the students were the family providers.

The second school had four teachers that participated in the study. This school had about 180 students from nursery class to standard eight with nine teachers. That school was a mixture between a public and a private school, which in this case meant that they had a low school fee. Most of the students came from orphanages in the close area, where most of the students had wealthy sponsors that could provide them with the school fee and the material for school. One of the orphanages focused on children coming from the street. Many of these children had previously abused drugs. Other students were single or double orphans or had been neglected by their
parents or caretakers. The school also had students living with their parents in a stable home or students living in a violent home.

In the third school, three teachers participated in the study. This school had about 400 students from nursery class to standard eight with one to two parallel classes with 24 teachers. This school was a private school with school fees. They also had students from an orphanage in the close area. The school had however removed the school fee for the students from the orphanage so that they should be able to go to school. This school had students who were single or double orphan, students living in violent situations, refugees and students fleeing from home due to cultural activities.

The fourth school had two teachers that participated in the study. This school was situated at an orphanage, with mostly students from the orphanage. However, the school also had students from the community outside the orphanage. The leaders at the orphanage went out searching for children in need of education. The students in this school were single or double orphan. They had been neglected or had fled due to cultural activities. The students from the community lived on the street, lived in violent situations or could not get their basic needs satisfied.

4.4 Implementation

Lantz (2007) meant that it is important to inform the respondent about the purpose, the design, and the anonymity coming with the interview. Therefore, all schools or orphanages were contacted ahead of time and where informed about the purpose of the interview, how long the interview would take, how the interview would be designed, and who else would be able to read the information coming out of the interview. They were also told that the school as well as the respondent would stay anonymous. This information was repeated in the beginning of all the interviews. In the beginning of all interviews, the respondents were asked if the interview could be recorded, as a guide when working with the material later on.

All interviews were recorded either on a computer or on a camera. The teachers were assured that only the sound was recorded and not them or any other person from the area, in order to make them understand that their responses would stay anonymous. The recording was only a guide when processing the data. Lantz (2007) says that recording is a good way of remembering the interviews. That also gives a chance for the interviewer to concentrate on the conversation that is taking place. This creates a safe environment where the respondent feels that the interviewer is interested and keen on getting their views.

A total time of eight hours and seventeen minutes was recorded. The length of each interview varied depending on how much time each teacher had and how much he or she talked about each question.

As Patel and Davidson (2003) say, it is also important to give feedback on the result. Because of this idea, emails were exchanged with those head masters and participants who had an email address and who had the opportunity to use a computer. That made it possible for new questions and complements to previous questions to be exchanged after the interview. Each teacher also had a chance to read the final study when it was done and were given the opportunity to get in contact if they wanted to drop out.
Sometimes when the answer was not clear, the wrong interpretation could easily be made, resulting in an incorrect summary. Lantz (2007) suggests that it is good for the interviewer to summarize occasionally during the interview without any interpretation to show the respondent that he or she has listened and to see if the answers are understood correctly.

4.5 Processing of data

Patel and Davidson (2003) say that it is good to have the interviews on a piece of paper in order to make it easier to look through and easier to process the material. To create an overall impression of the result, all interviews were transcribed and read repeatedly. However, the interviews were not transcribed verbatim since there were misunderstandings and errors in the language. There was also a lot of background sound, which made it hard to hear each word.

As Patel and Davidson (2003) suggest it is a good idea to mix quotes and own writing in the result to make it easier to read and easier to understand. Each study question is divided into two categories, which in turn have sub-categories. One or two quotes were picked out for each sub-category in order to illuminate the study question. The result has been processed many times in order to get the best categories and the clearest reflection of the purpose of this study.

4.6 Ethical aspects

Patel and Davidson (2003) mentioned the information, the consent, the confidentiality and utilization requirements as four important aspects that have to be reached in order to conduct research. The information requirement is to inform all people involved about the purpose with the study (ibid). All of the head masters were contacted and they in their turn contacted each teacher and told them about the purpose with the study. Each teacher also got the information once more during the interview. Patel and Davidson (2003) said that is important to have the respondent willingly participating in the interviews. In other words, they must give their consent. It is also important for the interviewer to handle the information with confidentiality (ibid). All teachers were asked both by the head master and during their interview if they wanted to participate. They were also free to drop out at any time. They were asked if the sound could be recorded and they were told that neither their name nor the name of the school would be written in the study. No names, ages or sex of the respondents are mentioned in the result, in order for them to be completely anonymous. Patel and Davidson (2003) said that it is important to use the information that is revealed about an individual during the interviews only for the purpose of the study.

4.7 Method discussion

Lantz (2007) raises the importance of making the interviews somewhere where the respondent feels safe and where there is nothing bothering them. This was hard to do in this case since the schools are not sound proof and there is not enough space to be able to make an interview in a room with no other person. Since many of the interviews were made in rooms with other people or with distracting sounds, it was hard to hear each other and hard to transcribe the interviews afterward. This might also have led to the teachers not being completely honest in their answers and that they felt that they could not say what they thought just because that someone might
overhear it. On the other hand, this topic might not be as sensitive as many other topics, which might result in the answers being honest after all.

The language might have been an obstacle in this case. Sometimes it was hard to understand each other because of accents and difficult words. Since the Swedish and Kenyan culture is very different from each other, this might have affected the answers given and the interpretation. Sometimes prior knowledge was far apart from each other in both directions. Due to a power outage, small portions of the interviews disappeared.

As Lantz (2007) mentioned, a critical aspect of a qualitative interview is that the interviews can be interpreted in a way that is not generally applied. Conclusions might be drawn that are not based on quantity. On the other hand, a qualitative study is meant to show differences in the responses. The interviews can give reliable answers since the respondents are closely attached to the situation that they are being asked questions about. All the teachers have experience working with students from the slum areas. However, the group of teachers interviewed was so small that their answers might not be consistent with what other teachers in the same environment would answer.

The head masters of each school picking out the teachers who were interviewed might have affected the result. For example, only teachers who could give a positive picture of the school and the teacher’s job might have been picked out. The teachers might also not have felt that they were able to be honest at all situations. However, most of the answers received seemed to be honest and reasonable. Even though an interview should be optional, it can be seen as a requirement to participate when the head master selects the teacher for the interview. However, the respondents were told that they could drop out at any time.

When interviewing teachers they might give an arranged picture during the interview. Since the environment was familiar for the interviewer, follow-up questions could be asked that revealed a truer side.
5 RESULT

Below are the categorizations from the interviews. The result bases on the questions: What do teachers think is important when working with students who come from slum areas of Nairobi? and How do teachers describe their work with students from slum areas? Each question has two categories with sub-categories. Below is a table, which gives a clear view of the categorization made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is important when working with students from the slum area?</th>
<th>Teachers considering the students basic needs</th>
<th>Physiological need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers perspectives concerning student´s home situation</td>
<td>Safety need</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affection need</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other needs that the students might have</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How do teachers work with students from slum areas?</td>
<td>Teachers handling traumatized students</td>
<td>Effects on the student´s learning</td>
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<td>Treating students individually or equally</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>During their first time in school</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students reactions towards trauma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Helping students to handle trauma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Give them hope for a bright future</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. An overview of the results

5.1 What is important when working with students from the slum area?

Teachers mentioned many important aspects when working with students from the slum areas. Two categories that appeared clearly after the interviews were; teachers considering the students basic needs, and teachers perspectives concerning student´s home situation.
5.1.1 Teachers considering the students’ basic needs

In this study, Maslow’s theory of the basic needs is used to sort the research. However, the motivation theory is of subordinated importance. Teachers found it important to provide for the students basic needs in school since many of them could not get their basic needs satisfied at home. The teachers mentioned the physiological needs, the safety need, the affection need and some needs that are put under other needs that the students might have.

5.1.1.1 Physiological need

All teachers thought it was important that the students were not hungry at school. That prevents them from learning, which makes that student fall behind the others. Some teachers took money out of their own pocket in order to satisfy this need. Other teachers made the students share with each other. This teacher said:

Students from the orphanage come without food. We do not just let them sit there. We say that sharing is caring.

One teacher thought it was important to provide the students with clothes. According to this teacher, dirty, tattered clothes or lack of a school uniform are signs that a student needs help. The teachers had different perspectives on how they could meet the students’ needs for clothes. While some teachers collected clothes from their own friends and families in order to provide students in need of clothes, other teachers thought they could not help the students to satisfy this need.

There is only so much we can do. We do not have the possibility to offer them clothes. That is not our job.

Some of the teachers raised the point that the work as a teacher has changed from only teaching the students towards also providing them with their basic needs.

I also go out in the community searching for children whose parents are unable to take them to school, to afford school uniform, food and shelter.

5.1.1.2 Safety need

Some teachers considered the safety need important only outside school. Those teachers rounded up every day by telling the students how to behave outside school. One of those teachers even helped the students cross the road to make sure that they were safe. Some teachers said that it is important to make the students feel safe in school in order to focus on the learning and to be able to ask for help when needed. All teachers saw it as important to stay close to the students in order to make them feel safe. Some teachers also said that they try to keep the students safe from their parents or their guardian. One example of this is:

We give some of the students extra lessons after school so they will not have a lot of time at home with their parents.

5.1.1.3 Affection need

Some teachers said that it is important to show love, regardless of the students’ backgrounds. The teachers wanted to create a close relationship with the students so they can ask for help when needed. They showed concern and asked how their day had been to create that relationship. Some teachers said that it is important to try to
create a friend relationship with the students while other teachers found it important to act as their parents. One teacher said:

Many students lack love. We act as their parents and show them that even if it is not love at home there is love at school.

However, one person expressed the difficulties involved in loving all students. According to this teacher, the affection that a teacher has is not enough for all students, so it has to be aimed to certain students who are in need of extra love.

5.1.1.4 Other needs that the students might have

All teachers said that it is important to give students an opportunity to grow with confidence and to feel as important as anyone else is. The teachers tried to achieve this by giving the students important roles such as prefects or extra teachers or by letting the students perform in front of the class. Some teachers raised the importance of praising the student after the performance. One teacher said that she gives the students a gift when behaving and performing nicely. This is an example of that:

A student performing gets a star, which makes other students work harder. I give stars outside class to, because otherwise some students never get one.

5.1.2 Teachers’ perspectives concerning student´s home situation

All teachers agreed that a student´s home situation has a big effect on the student´s performance in school. Two subcategories were found: effects on the student´s learning, and effects on the student´s interaction with others.

5.1.2.1 Effects on the student´s learning

One of the teachers raised the problem with the holiday breaks. A Kenyan school year is divided into three semesters. One semester is three months, followed by one month of holiday. During this time, the student who can stays with his or her family.

When the student comes back from holiday, whatever you have done during the semester is wasted. We try to get the student to the school two weeks earlier so they can learn more and so we can understand the students better.

Some teachers raised the importance to understand that students who come from good homes have nothing bothering their mind and are able to concentrate and learn in school. Those students who live hard lives have many thoughts brought to school, which interferes with their learning. According to the teachers, it is important to remember that the home situation affects the students’ possibilities to do homework. They said that either the home setting is not aligned on homework or the students cannot get help from an adult. To do homework alone affects the learning dramatically. This is according to one teacher:

A student doing homework alone gets it wrong. With help from home, something would have stuck. Students who get help from home learn better and when they are corrected in school, something extra sticks.

Teachers said that they help with homework and give extra lessons in order to help students who cannot get help from home. One teacher gave extra lessons outside her regular working hours. Some teachers also said that they contact the parents to solve the situation. They meant that many parents do not see the value of education.
5.1.2.2 Effects on the student’s interaction with others

Teachers thought that it was important to teach the students how to interact with each other. However, they could see that the students’ situation at home affected their behaviors and their social skills in school. According to one teacher, it is a difference between the students acting towards each other:

A student with a good background behaves. But, most of them are from poor backgrounds, where they talk loud, harsh and fight. When they come to class that is how they interact with others.

All the teachers had classroom rules, which the students had to follow. They should use the right language, behave well, not fight and not take other persons’ belongings. This is a way of helping the students interact correctly with each other:

I teach them to play together, learn together, sing together, go to church and dramatize together. In that way they learn how to talk, behave, listen and show respect to one another.

5.2 How do teachers work with students from slum areas?

Through the interviews, it was clear that teachers work with students from the slum areas in many different ways. Categories found were; treating students individually or equally, and teachers handling traumatized students.

5.2.1 Treating students individually or equally

When interviewed the teachers it was clear that they acted consiously or unconsiously towards the students. They were disagreeing whether to treat all students equally or individually. They had different methods on how to treat the students. Two subcategories were found; how they treat the students every day, and how they treat the students during their first time in school.

5.2.1.1 Every day

One teacher individualizes the lessons by basing the learning on the students’ experiences, so they can get a better understanding. However, some teachers said that they are aware that the students have experienced different things outside school that can affect them in school. Nevertheless, they meant that teachers have to treat all students equal in school. This teacher said:

If I treat one student different because of his background, he will put it in his mind and it will be evident.

The teachers tried to treat all students equal by giving them equal portions, equal opportunities, equal gifts, equal resources and equal punishments. However, when it came to punishment, not all teachers treated the students equally. On teacher said that students with hard backgrounds were not caned since that would have scared them. One teacher had a different way of correcting and punishing those students:

I give them a lot of homework. That makes them so tired. Other times they have to run around the compound twice. Next time when he sees you he will think that the teacher will tell me to run around, maybe I should just behave.

5.2.1.2 During their first time in school
According to the teachers, the very first day a student comes to school, tests and interviews are being done in order to see what level that student is at that moment. Kenyan teachers place the students in classes, not according to their age but according to their level of knowledge. Some teachers thought that students who are fast learners and think faster than the other students in the same class could be able to skip a class. On the other hand, if a student fails one year in school, he has to repeat that year. Some students are put in classes many levels below their normal class due to lack in basic knowledge.

A student who is ten should be in class five, but maybe they only know Kiswahili. The school language is English, so then we put that student in nursery school in order to catch up with the others.

5.2.2 Teachers handling traumatized students

Many teachers mentioned the students being traumatized due to their experiences from home. The teachers expressed that they have to be able to handle all students, even those who are traumatized. From their answers, three clear subcategories were found. Those were; the students’ reactions towards trauma, helping students to handle trauma, and give them hope for a bright future.

5.2.2.1 The students´ reactions towards the trauma

Some teachers said that it is important to remember that students react differently towards trauma and previous experiences. Common in all the teachers´ answers was that many students do not know how to express their feeling. One teacher described common student reactions in this way:

They get angry and act out towards the others in the class. Others tend to isolate because they are rejected even at home where there is no love. Even a bright student might be affected by trauma.

5.2.2.2 Helping students to handle the trauma

According to the teachers, one important role they had in school was to help the students channel and forget the trauma. Teachers found it vital to keep the student busy and make him or her laugh, in order to concentrate and for the moment forget the trauma. One way of keeping them busy was to let them express themselves through drawing, playing games or other kinds of creative art, since some students find it difficult to express their feelings verbally. All teachers also mentioned counseling of great importance to help a student. Many teachers counseled through talking to the student, but one teacher used toys to help the student express repressed feelings and in order for the teacher to get an understanding of the student’s home situation. This is strengthened by the answer on how toys can be used to help traumatized students:

They get a toy. You see them repeatedly hitting and throwing it. By that, you are able to understand the students´ lives and where the violence comes from. You see if they were comfortable last night.

5.2.2.3 Give them hope for a bright future

Some teachers said that many traumatized students seem to have given up on getting a better future. The trauma implies that they get difficult to see the future as bright. Therefore, some teachers thought it was important to show the students that they
have a bright future. According to those teachers, the students often do not have grownups to look up to at home. Therefore, the teachers act as a role model. An example of that is:

They imitate how we dress, talk, act and move. I tell them to not be like me, be better than me. The students get examples of people who have similar background to them and who have succeeded in life.

5.3 Result summary

Many teachers found it important to provide for the students´ basic needs in school. According to some teachers, the satisfaction of a need was crucial for the student´s concentration and learning. Some teachers provided for a student´s physiological need out of their own pocket, while others found it difficult or not as a part of the job to provide for that need in school. Common for all teachers was the desire to show love by creating a good relationship where the students can come and ask for help. However, one teacher found it difficult to give love to all students. Teachers disagreed about the situations in which the security need is important. Some teachers found that need important only outside school while other teachers emphasized the importance to create a safe environment in school. Some of the teachers expressed a feeling that the teacher job has some similarities to a social workers job, since they have to care for the students’ wellbeing. They all strengthen this by talking about their want to provide for the students basic needs and to help them work in the society.

Teachers considered the home environment as important. According to them, a student´s background affects their chance to learn through homework and their chance to get their basic needs satisfied.

Many teachers worked actively to help the students control their emotions. One way to do so was to have the students forget the trauma that they have experienced by occupying their minds with other things. They also offered different creative arts to help the students channel the trauma. Teachers also counseled the students and one teacher let them express themselves with toys.

The teachers had different strategies to handle the students´ different preconditions. Some students got a two-week shorter holiday break in order to work with the students learning. Many teachers did not punish all students. Some students could get extra help in school when they had not been able to do their homework at home.
6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Working with the students´ basic needs

The researches made by Maslow (1987) and Bhana et al. (2006) indicate that a person has to get their physiological need satisfied before they can concentrate in school. Many teachers in this study showed similar thoughts, by trying to provide for the students basic needs in order for them to improve their learning. The teachers meant that otherwise, those needs are constantly in the back of the students’ minds, which prevents them from obtaining new knowledge in school. However, other teachers catered for the students' needs more out of compassion, when saying that school was the only place where the basic needs could get satisfied. De Witt and Lessing (2005), Prince and Howard (2002), Otieno et al. (2001) and Santa et al. (2011) all conveyed thoughts which suggested that food was the most important need to satisfy before learning could proceed. All the teachers in this study mentioned food as a major effect on the students learning. Some of them meant that a hungry student could not concentrate and learn in the same level as a satisfied student. However, according to some of the teachers, the most important role as a teacher is to show love to the students. They also meant that love was crucial in order to get the other needs satisfied and to get the learning possible. Some teachers had taken money out of their own pocket to satisfy the students’ needs, just as some teachers mentioned in the research made by Bhanas et al. (2006). However, this was more an exception than a rule. Other teachers in this study did not consider it a part of the teachers work to satisfy the students’ needs in school.

Radcliff et al. (2011) research shows that students can feel unsafe in school. However, the teachers in this study disagreed about the situations in which students could feel insecure and how teachers in the best way would help them to feel safe. Safety did not seem to be as important as the need for food and love. Some of the teachers did not even mention the safety need while all teachers mentioned the need for food and love. This can be coherent with Maslow (1987) who said that the safety need only dominates in a few situations (ibid). On the other hand, love and security are closely linked together and can be hard to separate.

Some of these thoughts show that Maslow’s hierarchy of basic needs (Figure 1) is not always the right way to go. As shown, some of the teachers experienced love as a more important need than the need for food. This is contrary to Maslow’s theory. That is, however, the teachers’ perspectives and that says nothing about which need the students see as most important to satisfy in order for them to feel well and perform well in school.

None of the teachers mentioned the need for self-esteem or the need for self-actualization. Jerlang (2008) mentioned that these needs might only be important in communities where the primary needs are satisfied. The standards and the environment in the slum areas of Kenya make it hard for many children to reach the secondary needs. Due to poverty, many children are lacking what people in other countries see as standards. This entails that they may have difficulties getting the basic needs met. That might be why so many teachers raised the importance to provide for the students´ needs even in school. However, the study shows that some teachers think it is important to make the students grow with confidence and to feel
special by giving them important roles or praise them when performing. This can be interpreted as a way of trying to provide for the students’ self-esteem needs. However, Jerlang (2008) also mentions that one of the criticisms against Maslow’s hierarchy of basic needs is that it might not be applicable in other cultures where the individual fulfillment is not in focus. This might be the case in the slum areas of Nairobi, which in that case affects that the result mostly addresses the primary needs and not the secondary needs.

6.2 The home situation effects on the students

The teachers emphasized that students who had a poor background had a bigger problem to get help with homework than students who had a richer background. According to the teachers in this study, the socioeconomic background affected both the quality and the quantity of help that the students could receive. Contrary Hartas (2011) conveyed indications that a family’s socioeconomic standard affects only the quality of help that the student can get during homework and not the quantity.

This study attests Woods and Gobas (2011) research that showed that the teacher’s role sometimes has similarities to a social worker’s job, which can make many teachers feel inadequate. Raphael and Burke (2012) research showed that the teachers felt that due to the extra work that was put on their shoulders they could not produce as good a relationship with their students as they wanted (ibid). The teachers in this study indicated a willingness to help students as best as they could. Some of the teachers even worked with the students outside the normal working hours or working duties in order to handle the students’ preconditions. Some teachers spent an extra two weeks with the students during holiday in order to help them to retain the knowledge they embraced during the semester gone by. Others offered extra lessons in order to help the students improve in a certain subject, or to keep them away from a violent home environment. One teacher also spent time in the community looking for children in need of education and special support. However, this result might not be generally applicable since this study is conducted in a very special situation, which cannot be found in many other countries. One question to rise is what happens with the other students, whom do not need the same amount of help and support in comparison with those students that this study treats? Are they being forgotten for the benefit of those students who need extra support? In addition, for how long can a teacher keep working outside their normal working schedule before they break down?

6.3 Handling students individually or equally

There is a growing demand for teachers to understand their students, and familiarize themselves with their lives. Some teachers expressed a will to get to know the students and their backgrounds in order to offer good counseling and in order to help the students get the most out of the education. Contrary, other teachers thought that in order to treat all students equal they had to forget about the students’ backgrounds. On the other hand, if a teacher does not try to understand his or her students and their home situations, then the teacher might miss the reasons behind the students’ behaviors. They will not be able to offer the help that the students need.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2002) wrote in the Kenyan Syllabus that all students, no matter background should be equal and have equal opportunities. The teachers in this study had different opinions on whether to treat
the students equally or individually. Some teachers meant that they treat all students equally regardless of the students’ backgrounds and preconditions by giving them the same tasks, the same punishments and the same treatments. On the other hand, it is questionable whether that really is to treat everyone equally; to treat people equally can also be to treat someone according to that person’s precondition. One teacher said that she treats all students equally, but on the other hand, she did not cane those students who came from a rough background. One teacher mentioned that she treated all students equally in order for them not to feel different. According to this teacher, being treated differently can stick in that student’s mind and he or she can make that evident. Moore and McArthur (2011) research follows the same thought. In that research students saw school as a place where they could feel like any other student. On the other hand, the normality and the fright of being unlike others and treated differently were main reasons why they did not seek help (ibid). Though many teachers wanted to create a good and safe relationship between teachers and students, the unwillingness to treat the students differently might be a reason for them not to open up and talk about their problems and needs. In this case, it might be a benefit to show the students that they are all different.

6.4 Teachers handling traumatized students

Moore and McArthur (2011) prove with their research that traumatized students can have a hard time to create friendship. Similar thoughts are being raised in this study. Many teachers said that it is important for the students to be able to interact with other people. However, they meant that the students’ inabilities to control emotions and their reactions towards the trauma, could affect their relationships with other people. This is coherent with Van de Kolk (2007) research, which points out that traumatized students can have a hard time to control their feelings and emotions.

The teachers interviewed said that it is important to remember that students have different reactions towards trauma. As a teacher, you have to be able to recognize those signs to provide the best help. Some students get unsocial, since they are withdrawn. Other students act out towards others, as a result from not being able to handle their emotions. However, both the teachers interviewed and Van de Kolk (2007) said that a teacher has to know that even students who perform well and seem fine, might be affected by trauma (ibid). Many times focus might be put on those students that show clear needs of help, who fail in school and who obviously do not get their basic needs satisfied. That can result in teachers not discovering a student who might be in a bigger need of help, since that student does not seem to have as big problem because of the performance in school.

Teachers interviewed in this study agreed that it is important to have in mind that trauma affects the students in school. Van der Kolk (2007), Prince and Howard (2002) and Valentino et al. (2009) convey that trauma can cause stress, which affects the memory (ibid). Due to impaired memory, traumatized students might have a hard time to absorb knowledge in school. The teachers interviewed did not mention a link between traumatization and weakened memory; however, they all said that the trauma affects the student’s learning. They said that when a student is traumatized, he or she cannot concentrate on the school activities since his or her mind is constantly on what is going on at home. Van de Kolk (2007) says that traumatized students might find it difficult to learn from experiences. This might be because that the experience is closely attached to their trauma or because they have displaced the
trauma to such a level that they have lost memories connected to it. Only one teacher in this study mentioned learning from experiences as a method used when working with traumatized students. That method was a way to help the students create a deeper understanding for a specific topic, since the education bases on a topic that the student can relate to. This method does not have to be wrong, however, as a teacher you have to have in mind that it can be difficult for some students to learn from experiences and that it sometimes can cause anxiety.

Coherent with Uguak (2010), the teachers interviewed saw it as important to let the students express themselves through different kinds of creative art. The teachers mentioned that this way of working could help students to express experiences and feelings that they cannot lift verbally. While Ghazinour (2003) conveys the goodness of repeating traumatic events in order to control the trauma, Uguak (2010) says that students also need to be able to forget the trauma. Teachers talked about the importance for the students to be busy in school and to do funny things in order to forget what they have experienced. They all mentioned that they use counseling to help traumatized students. However, some teachers mentioned that many of the schools lack a professional counselor who can support the students. The national council for children’s services (2011) mentioned that teachers should not perform the counseling by themselves. The ultimate is to have an educated counselor, who can support the teachers when working with traumatized students (ibid). However, the counseling is a job that the teachers have to put on their shoulders, which gives an extra work outside their normal duties. Irisdotter (2012) conveyed different opinions against teachers being counselors. Some of the teachers talked about the importance of students talking about their experiences, while other teachers thought that teachers as counselors were not a part of the teachers job and something that they did not have the right knowledge to perform. This study shows that teachers do not always think that they have the right knowledge to be able to counsel the students and help them in the best way. Tata’s (2004) research showed that a puppet could be used in the counseling to help students express their feelings. Only one of the teachers mentioned toys and play as a way for the students to express themselves.

As De Witt and Lessing (2005) show in their research, it is important as a teacher to be a good role model. They say that it is important in order to handle trauma. In this study many of the teachers also mention being a role model as important, to be able to show the student that they have a good future, a way of motivation them to perform and to work hard for a better future.

6.5 Conclusion

That which pervades much of the study is teachers' perception on the importance of meeting students' basic needs in school. To be aware that students might not be able to get their basic needs satisfied and to get help with homework at home, is important in order to know how to help the students to concentrate and increase their knowledge in school. To act as an extra parent and role model in order to cater for what the students are lacking is essential to help them reach the same level as the other students in school. A teacher has to have in mind that students might have experiences that have caused trauma, and they must have different methods to use in order to help the students channel and for the moment forget the trauma in order to concentrate in school. As long as a teacher has an intention with how he or she treats the students, individualism does not have to preclude equality.
Even though this study might not be applicable in all situations and in all school environments, it is clear that a teacher has to consider many things in order to help the students from the slum areas. The teacher job in this case is a hard work with many teachers working outside their normal duties and work schedule. The question is; to what extent is a teacher's duty to meet a student's needs?

**Tips for further research**

One interesting aspect would be to get the students perspectives on what help they think they need to get in order to learn and what role the teachers play for their learning. However, due to the ethical aspects, that research might be hard to conduct.

Another interesting study that can be done is to get the teachers’ perspectives on how well the Kenyan curriculum is adapted to the students and their lives. To what extent can the students use the knowledge that they gain in school in their real life? The focus can be put on how the teachers are able to transform theory into practice for students from the slum areas. This can be done by looking at the teacher’s background. Do they know about the life in the slum areas? Do they have own experiences on living in a slum area and do they know how to motivate the students to gain knowledge?
7 REFERENCES


Uguak, U (2010), 'The Importance of Psychological Needs for the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Displaced Children in Schools', *Journal Of Instructional Psychology*, vol. 37:4, pp. 340-351.


Attachment 1

The interview guide

Background information:
How old are you?
What is your educational background?
How long have you been working as a teacher?
How long have you worked at this school?
How many students and teachers does the school have?
I what grade do you teach?
How many students are you teaching?
Can you tell me a little about the students’ backgrounds?
Do you have a special education to take care of students coming from slum areas?

Main questions
- What is important to think about when you work as a teacher with students from the slum area?
- How do you try to manage those “important issues” that you describe?

What is important to think about when the students start school the very first day?
What is important to think about when the students come to school in the morning?
What is important to think about when you plan your lessons?
What is important to think about when it comes to recess?
What is important to think about when it comes to the lunchtime?
What is important to think about when you give the students homework?
What is important to think about during the lessons?
What is important to think about in your every day meeting with the students?
What is important to think about when the students end school every day?
What is important to think about according the students social development?
What is important to think about when it comes to the students learning?
Hello

My name is Ulrika and I am a student from Linnaeus University in Sweden. I am studying my last semester to become a teacher. I am staying in Kenya for the moment, to make research for my final essay. My final essay will be about what Kenyan teachers think is important to think about when they work with students from the slum areas and how the teachers work with those students in school. Therefore, I wonder if it would be possible for me to take part of a few lessons in your school and afterwards interview some of the teachers.

The interviews will be performed individually with each teacher and will take about one hour. If it is possible, the interviews will be sound recorder to make it easier to work with the material afterwards. The teachers as well as the school will be anonymous in my study. I see it as very important that the teachers really want to participate in the interviews. Therefore, they can at any time decide to stop taking part of my study.

Kind regards,

Ulrika