

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAUMA INFORMED TEACHING STRATEGIES ON  
CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT: A CASE OF KAKUMA REFUGEE  
SCHOOLS, TURKANA COUNTY, KENYA

by

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DECLARATION


THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAUMA INFORMED TEACHING STRATEGIES ON  
CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR MANAGEMEN: A CASE OF KAKUMA REFUGEE  
SCHOOLS, TURKANA COUNTY, KENYA

I declare that this Thesis is my effort and that it has not been submitted to any other institution for credit


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APPROVAL

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAUMA INFORMED TEACHING STRATEGIES ON  
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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all the children and teachers in refugee settings who, despite the immense challenges they face daily, they continue to rise with resilience, courage, and hope. To the children who carry invisible wounds yet show up with bright eyes and dreams of a better tomorrow, your strength is a beacon of inspiration. And to the teachers who go beyond

the call of duty, offering not just education but compassion, safety, and stability in the midst of uncertainty, your unwavering commitment is the cornerstone of transformation. May this work honor your struggles, celebrate your perseverance, and contribute, in some small way, to the brighter futures you strive so valiantly to create.

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#### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experiences
APHRC	Africa Population and Health Research Center

CBC	Competency Based Curriculum
DU	Daystar University
FCA	Finn Church Aid
IRC	International Refugee Committee
ISERC	Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation in Kenya
NCTSN	National Child Traumatic Stress Network.
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PRISMA	Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
TITS	Trauma Informed Teaching Strategies
UNESCO	United Nations, Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

## ABSTRACT

Trauma often disrupts interpersonal relationships and compels children to develop coping mechanisms for loss and instability, frequently at the expense of normal developmental and academic progress. This study aimed to establish the prevalence of behavioral problems among learners in Kakuma refugee schools, determine the challenges teachers faced in implementing trauma-informed teaching strategies, and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies on classroom behavior management. The study was guided by Trauma Theory,

Attachment Theory, and Ecological Systems Theory, and adopted a descriptive research design using a mixed-methods approach. The study involved 230 participants, including teachers, administrators (head teachers, deputies and community school counsellors) and learners from 21 refugee primary schools in Kakuma refugee camp. Data were collected through structured questionnaires, focus group discussions, and school behavioral records, and analyzed using descriptive and thematic methods. The results revealed a high prevalence of behavioral and emotional difficulties among learners prior to the introduction of traumainformed strategies, with the most frequent problems being absenteeism or lateness (72.5%), aggression and defiance (65.0%), and low academic engagement (55.0%). Learners reported a moderately strong sense of school membership ( $M = 3.62$ ), indicating that trauma-informed teaching strategies had improved belonging, safety, and emotional regulation. However, gaps persisted in peer inclusion and recognition. Teachers identified major challenges such as lack of training ( $M = 4.42$ ), overcrowded classrooms ( $M = 4.31$ ), and limited psychosocial support ( $M = 4.09$ ), which constrained consistent application of trauma-informed practices. The study concluded that trauma-informed teaching strategies significantly improved classroom climate and learner behavior by fostering emotional safety, trust, and cooperation. Nonetheless, systemic barriers particularly high teacher workloads, insufficient training, and inadequate resources limited full implementation. The study recommended that education stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, UNHCR, and partner organizations, strengthen teacher capacity-building, establish peer support and counselling systems, and embed traumainformed approaches into teacher training curricula. Further, schools should implement structured psychosocial programs and provide manageable class sizes and adequate learning materials.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

#### Introduction

Trauma informed teaching strategies promote child's wellbeing, safe and supportive learning environments. SAHMSA defines trauma informed approach as an inclusive realization of how trauma impacts and the potential understanding of recovery pathways which embraces structured policy measures to address the needs of individuals who have experienced trauma so as to promote resilience and avoid triggering past traumas (SAHMSA, 2014). To be a trauma informed approach school according to Majebi et al. (2024), entails developing supportive healthy relationships and implementing safe teaching strategies with the goal of alleviating the negative repercussions of trauma on learners. The execution of trauma-informed methodologies is governed by six fundamental principles: guaranteeing safety, cultivating collaboration and mutual respect, encouraging peer support, empowering individuals by valuing their voice and choices, sustaining trust through transparency, and acknowledging the influence of cultural, historical, and gender-related factors (Gunturu, 2024). When these principles are adhered to, schools become safe havens that promote both healing and better learning outcomes for learners with traumatic histories.

Trauma changes how a child's brain works, interferes with learning and leads to behavioral difficulties and introduces a vicious cycle when unaddressed. Psychological trauma is an overwhelming experience that exceeds an one's usual coping mechanism and this traumatic events elicit feelings of fear, anxiety, helplessness and can have profound effects on a child's overall development (Spytska, 2023). Teachers are faced with a myriad of challenges when handling learners with traumatic experiences that traditional methods of

teaching fail to address what may be considered as classroom disruptions (Antonijadu et al., 2022).

This chapter covers the introduction and background of this research, as well as the problem statement, which highlights the gap that needs to be addressed, the purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, scope, importance of the study, and the study's limitations and delimitations. It also includes definitions for the terms used in the study, hypotheses, and justification for the research.

### Background to the Study

The classroom is an essential setting for emotional and psychological growth in addition to being a place for intellectual learning. Learners are frequently exposed to a variety of adverse childhood experiences in crisis-affected settings, such as refugee camps, such as loss, poverty, violence, and relocation. These encounters may have profound and enduring effects on a learner's conduct, mental health, and emotional state. Trauma may seriously impede a learner's capacity to focus, remember knowledge, and control emotions, which can have an impact on academic performance and classroom engagement, especially when it occurs during developmental years (NCTSN, 2017). Trauma has a detrimental impact on both physiological and psychological functioning and is widespread and complicated (Han et al., 2021). To address these issues, trauma-informed educational techniques have been adopted.

Globally there is a total of one billion children being exposed to adverse childhood experiences and 108.8 million displaced persons with the highest number being women and children (Hauser, 2024; UNHCR, 2023). The burden of adverse childhood experiences is felt both mentally and economically due to the costs incurred by the healthcare systems and educational systems to address issues related to trauma (Alrimawi et al., 2024). Studies

indicate that approximately 66 million US citizens struggle with the mental illness and most of these illness are linked to adverse childhood experiences. By the age of 16, it is expected that two thirds of learners in the US classrooms had gone through atleast one or more traumatic events including violence, sexual abuse, loss, bullying, refugee, physical abuse among others (School of Education American University, 2021). Mood disorders, behavior related disorders, substance abuse, self-harm are common mental health conditions reported among in children with traumatic histories ( Medicaid et al., 2024; School of Education American University, 2021). In the end trauma becomes a whole community problem and not just individual students for the impacts are felt across (NCTSN, 2017).

In 2018 the US government spend approximately \$592 billion to address issues related to abuse and neglect confirming the need to address, prevent and respond to trauma symptoms (Alrimawi et al., 2024). Legislative interest in trauma-informed practices has increased dramatically in the United States, as seen by the 49 laws that were submitted between 1973 and 2015 more than half of which were offered in 2015 alone. At least 17 states have introduced trauma-informed programs at the school, district, or state levels, suggesting that increasing governmental attention to this issue has resulted in meaningful results.(Maynard et al., 2019) . Implementation of trauma informed teaching strategies have been found to be more effective in the American education system especially in communities that are underprivileged (Majebi et al., 2024). According to (Han et al., 2021) , integration of trauma informed teaching strategies has been found to be effective in improving the wellbeing of children.

According to UNHCR statistics, Turkey leads with approximately 3.6 million refugees with children being among the most affected (UNHCR, 2023). Change in family dynamics, migration, child mistreatment, violence and juvenile delinquency have been noted as the common traumatic experiences in Turkey which prompted adoption of TITS (Yildiz et al.,

2024). Linguistic, social, communication, religious, cultural and teachers attitudes were found to be major barriers to addressing behavioral problems among refugee learners in Turkey (Antonijadu et al., 2022). Theirworld, one of the organization that implements trauma informed schools in Turkey incorporated trainings for teachers, counsellors and parents so as to equip them with skills to better support children with traumatic experiences found the program effective and admirable (TheirWorld, 2021).

Research in South Africa indicated that 20% of children between the ages of 11 to 17 had been sexually abused whereas 30% had gone through physical violence during the developmental years with psychological effects and mental disorders such as PTSD being reported. Kaminer's (2020) study postulates that young ones who have been exposed to trauma manifested with behavioral problems such as relational problems, emotional outbursts, poor performance, defiance, aggression, hypervigilance among others. UNICEF (2025) in South Africa reported a huge population of children had been exposed to sexual abuse, neglect, substance abuse, domestic violence and other social inequalities. All these according to Reyneke (2023), are all prevalent stresses among students that cause behavioral issues and interrupted learning in the classroom.

Even though South Africa is making great strides in improving child's welfare, according to UNICEF (2025) the education approaches there still exist gaps in meeting the needs of learners affected by trauma due to the limited TITs skills among educators. Reyneke, (2023) stresses the value of putting into practice trauma-informed strategies that are appropriate for the community, such as collaboration between school-based support teams, social workers, educators, and child and adolescent care providers. His research highlights the critical need for trauma-responsive strategies that enhance educational outcomes in vulnerable school communities, provide emotional safety, and increase resilience.

In Kenya, National Violence Against Children Survey (VACS) conducted in 2019 found out 46% of females and 56% of males between the ages of 13 and 24 reported having been the victims of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse as children. 62.6% of female survivors of sexual abuse reported recurrent episodes, highlighting the chronic nature of trauma for many Kenyan children. Kenya is committed to protecting children and promoting their psychological well-being through a number of child-centered policies (Government of Kenya, 2023). These policies highlight the necessity for parents to establish inclusive safe places for caregiving, improve emotional control, and implement non-violent discipline, all of which are in accordance with the objectives of trauma-informed education

The Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) was introduced by the Kenyan Ministry of Education to replace the old, content-heavy educational approach. The CBC is founded on learner-centered, values-based education that prioritizes emotional intelligence, teamwork, critical thinking, and skill development. CBC acknowledges the importance of the home and the learner's surroundings in promoting holistic development (Ministry of Education, 2019). If well implemented, the CBC approach could promote secure parent learner and teacher relationship that equips learners with skills and competencies that prepares them for future challenges.

Kakuma is among the largest refugee camps in the Africa hosting a total number of 302,372, refugees with 75% of the total population being children between the ages of 0-17 years (UNHCR, 2023). A huge percentage of children in Kakuma schools often come from backgrounds of extreme adversity, including exposure to violence, separation from family members, and uncertainty about their future. As a result, many of these children may exhibit challenging behaviors in the classroom, including aggression, withdrawal, and difficulties with attention and concentration. High rates of traumatic experiences and other mental health

disorders have increased suicidal cases in Kakuma camp (Ngonoi & K'Okul, 2024). This implies that many of the refugees in Kakuma are suffering mental health problems due to continuous painful traumatic experiences.

Despite the many attempts made by humanitarian and educational organizations to enhance classroom outcomes, behavioral difficulties among learners continue to be a big problem in refugee classrooms. Organizations including the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Lutheran World Federation (LWF), International Rescue Committee (IRC), UNHCR, UNICEF, and WALDOF, among others, have carried out a variety of initiatives in Kakuma refugee schools with the goal of fostering supportive learning environments (Ferguson, 2018, IRC, 2020; NRC, 2025).

Social Emotional Learning (SEL), art and play therapy and play based learning are examples of trauma informed interventions implemented in Kakuma refugee schools (Porticus, 2024). The teach well project, a program that ensures teachers provide quality education integrates SEL skills in their teaching modules to ensure teachers are well equipped to address behavioral problems in the classrooms (IRC, 2020). A study conducted by Psychosocial support Centre (2024) acknowledges the implementation of SEL and other psychosocial interventions to address trauma related issues in Kakuma, however there were various barriers to ensure effectiveness. NRC implement Better Learning Programme which is an evidence based classroom social emotional learning intervention built upon trauma informed principles being implemented globally including Kakuma (The Norwegian Refugee Council, 2023). The intervention has been found effective in improving the wellbeing of the participants with traumatic experiences.

Art therapy was found to be effective especially when addressing learners with historic trauma (Mahadi, 2023). Better learning program implemented by NRC which involves mindful

exercises during classroom was found to be effective in relieving stress and negative emotions around traumatic experiences (Flemming, 2024). Art and play is also additional intervention implemented by LWF to address communication barriers that may interfere with the healing journey of learners with traumatic experiences. In addition to this interventions, online trainings are offered to equip teachers in crisis context with skills to prepare them to address learners with behavioral problems (LWF, 2025). Despite the increased awareness on child's wellbeing, many students still display disruptive conduct behaviors, emotional dysregulation, interpersonal problems and disengagement in the classroom.

Classrooms in the refugee are overpopulated, handled by refugee teachers who also battle with their own traumatic experiences. Limited resources, high temperatures and lack of professionalism in addressing the psychological needs of learners increases chances of retraumatization and vicarious trauma (Sweetman, 2022a). Efforts of using punishments, isolation and exclusion to eliminate behavioral problems have been futile hence need to explore Trauma informed teaching approaches to address the concerns teachers report in the classroom settings (Mendenhall et al., 2021). These study seeks to examine the effectiveness of the implementation of the mentioned strategies on classroom behavior management.

#### Statement of the Problem

Adverse childhood experiences negatively affect children's wellbeing during the developmental years and later in adulthood if the needed support systems are not in place. ACEs have been directly linked mental disorders, chronic illness, difficulties in employment, and academic problems (Sweetman, 2022a). Research indicates that by the age of sixteen, at least two-thirds of children had experienced at least one traumatic event. (Rahimi et al., 2021). A learner's social, emotional, and cognitive development all of which are essential for

fostering academic success, classroom participation, and positive peer relationships can be significantly impacted by psychological trauma (O'Toole, 2022).

Continued exposure to trauma compromises the stress response system which leads to behavioral changes that are likely to manifest in anger outbursts, social withdrawal, irritability and unexplained absences among other maladaptive patterns. Trauma also impacts both cognitive and social functioning making it harder for learners to make sound decisions and meaningful relationships (Chafouleas, 2023). Trauma disrupts the brain development which affects the physical and mental health resulting in behavioral problems that deteriorates the classroom atmosphere. In their research, Dybdahl et al (2022) highlights that unaddressed adverse childhood experiences result into psychological problems such as conduct disorder, anxiety, depression, obsessive compulsive disorders, PTSD, substance use and addictions among other psychological and physiological problems.

Even though trauma has gained a lot of attention lately, existing teaching methods still find it difficult to meet the special requirements of students who have experienced trauma in the past or present. The traditional teaching methods that are often the emphasis of standardized educational approaches are not adaptable enough to suit the unique demands of traumatized pupils (Karris, 2022). Teachers may react punitively trauma to symptoms if they don't have a trauma-informed perspective, which would make students feel even more insecure and disconnected (Kolk, 2023). In 2021, a study conducted to investigate on corporal punishments in Daadab, found out the corporal punishment was still being used to address behavioral difficulties and students considered schools as a prison (Oyat, 2021). This further exacerbates the learner's sense of insecurity and disconnection.

In high-risk settings like Kakuma, where behavioral disturbances and trauma exposure are common, it is crucial to look at trauma-informed teaching methods that not only address

behavioral issues but also promote emotional safety, trust, and resilience. Putting traumainformed teaching techniques into practice presents a chance to establish inclusive, encouraging classroom environments that foster resilience, safety, and progress. According to Krishnamoorthy et al (2020), teachers can improve learning outcomes and decrease behavioral concerns in the classroom by implementing trauma-informed methods. In order to effectively address and respond to the many needs of refugee students, it is essential to comprehend the implications of trauma-informed teaching practices in Kakuma schools.

#### Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of trauma informed teaching strategies in addressing classroom behavior management among refugee students in Kakuma Primary Schools.

#### Main Objective of the Study

The aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of trauma-informed teaching strategies on classroom behavior management among learners in Kakuma primary schools.

#### Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To establish the prevalence of disruptive behaviors among primary school learners in Kakuma primary schools who have experienced trauma.
- ii. To examine the challenges teachers in Kakuma primary schools encounter in implementing trauma-informed teaching strategies.
- iii. To evaluate the effectiveness of trauma informed teaching strategies on classroom behavior management in Kakuma refugee schools

### Research Questions

- i. What is the prevalence of disruptive behaviors exhibited by learners who have experienced trauma in Kakuma school classrooms?
- ii. What are the challenges teachers in Kakuma refugee schools encounter in implementing trauma-informed teaching practices in the classroom?
- iii. How effective are trauma-informed teaching strategies on classroom management in Kakuma schools?

### Justification of the Study

Krishnamoorthy et al (2020) recognize that prolonged trauma affects the social wellbeing, school relationships, personalities, worldviews, and even biological functioning in childhood and adulthood as well. Trauma is damaging and can render individuals to have negative perceptions of self, others and the environments around them for example school environments. There is a huge gap when it comes to addressing and responding to conduct and oppositional behaviors among learners in Kakuma refugee classrooms. Learners in Kakuma refugee continuously are faced with traumatic experiences which with time could lead negative behavioral patterns. Lots of resources including finances and time are lost in the event of addressing the effects. This study is necessary because there still remains much to explore when it comes to trauma informed teaching strategies, the impact of traumatic experiences on classroom behavior management and challenges teachers encounter when implementing TITS.

### Significance of the Study

This study is valuable for various stakeholders such as educators, legislators, and humanitarian organizations working in Kakuma and other refugee settings. By shedding light on the effectiveness of trauma-informed teaching strategies on classroom behavior management, the results of this study guided the creation of evidence-based interventions, systems, and policies targeted at promoting the academic success and general well-being of students who have experienced traumatic events by illuminating the impact of traumainformed teaching strategies on classroom behavior management.

Additionally, this study adds to the expanding body of research on trauma-informed education and its applicability in many environmental and cultural contexts. The researcher hopes to influence best practices and direct future research endeavors in the field of traumainformed education by drawing attention to the unique challenges and possibilities faced by Kakuma schools. Furthermore, the study is significant because this study aims to provide solutions that could educate individuals who work with students and encourage healing, empathy, optimism, and classroom transformation.

### Assumptions of the Study

The researcher adopted the following during this particular study;

- i. The teachers in Kakuma refugee school settings had prior knowledge on the meanings of trauma and trauma teaching strategies
- ii. Trauma informed teaching strategies were being implemented in Kakuma refugee primary schools by teachers
- iii. Teachers in Kakuma refugee primary schools faced various challenges when implementing trauma informed teaching strategies.

- iv. There were classroom behavioral problems exhibited by learners as a result traumatic experiences and after implementation of trauma informed strategies, learners change.
- v. The school administration and organizations that support primary schools in Kakuma Schools would collaborated and support the research activities in the respective schools.

### The Scope of the Study

This study focused on evaluating the effectiveness of trauma informed teaching strategies on classroom behavior management in Kakuma refugee schools, Turkana county Kenya. The researcher carried out the study in 21 primary schools in Turkana west county, Kakuma camp. Kakuma refugee camp hosts a high number of children with traumatic experiences hence high rate of classroom behavioral problems. Data gathered in this context was of great value to this study and generalization in another context. The respondents were teachers who have received any form of training or sensitization on TITS and are implementing trauma informed teaching strategies such as social emotional learning, art and play therapy, better learning programs among others. Teachers are front line workers and well informed whether TITS is working or not.

Learners from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade was sampled because of their Swahili and English comprehension skills, and are able to express themselves and are able to think abstractly in relation to study topic. Having learners who can express themselves in the main language, limits involvement of translators which increases confidentiality in addition to enriching data collection. The community counsellors, head teachers, deputies who have been in their position for more than a year are well informed of the various problems or changes learners have exhibited as a result of TITS hence in a better position to provided information in the research. These categories interact a lot with learners who are referred to them to address

specific behavioral and make decisions on further steps. The head teachers are also wellinformed of existing policies. The researcher collected data in the month of September 2025.

### Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

Some of the challenges were language barrier among the different nationalities who are still learning the Kenyan national languages. Communicating mental terms were not accurate as expected when involving third party for interpretation services from both participants and interviewer. Due to the high populations, high temperatures and time constraints and the burden to complete lessons in time, these conditions may influence teachers to prioritize lesson completion over the research activity.

Due to the nature of study, some questions seemed to be too sensitive to the target group especially those already going through traumatic experiences hence requiring further follow up and individual mental services. The researcher also had few incomplete questionnaires. Due to challenges anticipated; the researcher prepared early in time, build rapport, clarified and explain in advance any concerns including confidentiality and anonymity. Where needed community school counsellors supported in the translations otherwise learners from the upper grades and those who can communicate in English or Kiswahili was the target participants. Digital platforms such as WhatsApp and google was used to administer surveys, allowing teachers to respond at their convenience.

The scope of the study was limited hence careful considerations should be given generalizing the studies in other areas. However, lessons and recommendations in this study provided insights in similar areas of study

## Operational Definitions of Terms

*Trauma:* According to O'Toole (2022), trauma is any emotional or psychological reaction to a painful experiences which causes distress to an individual. In this study, trauma is any visible or reported emotional, behavioral, or psychological challenge encountered by refugee learners in Kakuma primary schools because of exposure to painful overwhelming experiences, such as conflict, displacement, loss, insecurity, abuse, or neglect.

*Trauma informed approach:* an inclusive realization of how trauma impacts and the potential understanding of recovery pathways which acknowledges the impact of trauma in individuals involved and addressing by incorporating policies, procedures and practices that promote resilience healing without retraumatization (SAHMSA, 2014). In this study, trauma informed approach is teacher's use of specialized classroom approaches to promote safe learning classroom environments.

*Refugee:* a person forced to flee their county and seek safety in another (UNHCR, 2023). In this study refugees are persons who have fled from their own countries and now residing in Kakuma, Turkana country, Kenya.

*Learner:* Anyone actively engaged in the process of acquiring information, skills, attitudes, or values through formal or informal education. (Ministry of Education, 2019). In this study, a learner is a child between the age of 4-21 years' old who is enrolled in a formal primary school in Kakuma refugee camp and actively participates in class activities and is impacted by their educational environment

*Teacher:* A trained professional mandated to facilitate education, direct classroom conduct,

and promote the cognitive and emotional growth of students (Ministry of Education, 2019). In this study a teacher is an adult officially designated by the Ministry of Education or through implementing partners to supervise classrooms, provide teaching, and promote the learning and welfare of students in primary schools within the Kakuma refugee camp.

*Community school counsellor:* a mental health specialist who offers assistance and recovery to community people who have suffered a traumatic incident (HandWiki, 2022). In Kakuma refugee community school counsellors are refugee staff who have received basic counselling skills to offer basic counselling to refugee learners.

*Disruptive behaviors:* Behaviors that are characterized by violation of others rights, go against what is expected socially and interfere with daily functioning (APA, 2018). In this study, the term was used to refer to behavior's learners manifest in the school due to traumatic experiences. The behaviors interfere with the learning and wellbeing of self or others

*Classroom Behavior:* Refers to how students actually act in that environment: their interactions, their compliance or non-compliance, how they focus or distract, their cooperation, defiance, or withdrawal ((Karasova & Nehyba, 2023) . In the study, this are observable characteristics and responses of students during classroom activities.

*Classroom management:* the strategies, structures and routines teachers that establish and ensure a conducive preserve a learning environment (Karasova et al 2023). In this study classroom management refers to teaching strategies teachers employ on daily basis to minimize disruptions in the classroom.

## Chapter Summary

This chapter sought evaluate the effectiveness of TITS on classroom behavior management in Kakuma refugee Schools to offer an opportunity for early identification and intervention, while utilizing an understanding of learner’s cultural backgrounds to address their diverse needs through collaboration with existing organizations, schools deliver comprehensive support, including education on mental health and coping strategies. This chapter presents the background of the study, problem statement, objectives, research questions, scope, and significance of the study. These components established the rationale and direction for examining how trauma informed teaching can improve classroom environments and learner well-being in refugee settings.

### CHAPTER TWO

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

##### Introduction

This chapter reviews the theoretical, general, and empirical literature that is pertinent to the topic. The chapter provides a summary of the body of research on trauma-informed teaching methods, concentrating on how they affect classroom behavior, particularly in refugee learning settings. The concepts explored include trauma and impact on learning, challenges faced by teachings when implementing TITS, and behavioral difficulties encountered by learners and teachers in refugee settings. It also looks at both regional and global studies that has evaluated the effectiveness of trauma-informed teaching methods in classrooms. Furthermore, the chapter analyzes the existing knowledge, finding gaps in current research, and emphasizing the need of trauma-informed interventions for changing learner behavior.

## Theoretical Framework

According to Varpio et al. (2020), a theoretical framework is a coherent and interconnected collection of ideas and presumptions drawn from one or more theories that a researcher develops to support and direct a study. To better understand learner behavior in refugee classroom settings, this study employs a thorough framework based on ecological systems theory, trauma theory, and attachment theory. Trauma theory addresses the psychological repercussions of trauma, including hyper arousal, intrusion, and constriction. Trauma theory highlights the need of safety, empowerment, and relationship healing in the healing process (Herman, 2015). However, trauma theory pays little attention to relational and environmental elements and primarily concentrates on individual pathology. The gap in trauma theory gap has been addressed by attachment theory which emphasizes how early caregiver connections influence behavior, trust and emotional regulation. The theory's focus on relational safety where regular, attentive teacher-student interactions operate as therapeutic emotional experiences is one of its main advantages (Robledo et al, 2022). Attachment theory is criticized for its Western bias and limited application to older children, despite its emphasis on relationship safety hence application of Ecological system theory.

Yang, ( 2021) expands ecological Systems Theory by placing trauma and behavior within a number of interconnected systems, including the family, community, school, and policy. It acknowledges that structural issues like overcrowding, poverty, and a lack of institutional support, in addition to interpersonal trauma or relationships, influence learner behavior. Together, these theories offer a multifaceted perspective that helps us understand trauma-informed teaching as a relational and systemic intervention that meets the complex emotional and behavioral needs of refugee learners, rather than merely as a classroom practice.

## Trauma Theory

Trauma theory is a multifaceted field that encompasses various concepts and frameworks aimed at understanding the psychological, emotional, and social impacts of traumatic experiences (Davis & Meretoja, 2020). Herman's Trauma Theory (1992) is among the most important frameworks for comprehending the psychological effects of trauma and how it influences behavior, especially in vulnerable groups. According to Herman, trauma is a breach of fundamental human safety that exceeds a person's ability to cope, shatters their sense of self, and destroys their relationships with others (Herman, 2015). For students in Kakuma who have endured armed violence, forced migration, family separation, and continuous instability, her work is especially pertinent.

Herman (2015) underlines that complex trauma causes deeper psychological damage such as emotional dysregulation, changed self-perception, dissociation, and relational problems. Exposure to numerous, prolonged, chronic traumatic events are often interpersonal in nature occurring throughout crucial developmental stages, have the potential to seriously impair brain development and attachment bonds, resulting in a variety of emotional, behavioral, physical, and cognitive disorders (Fonagy et al., 2023). Complex trauma frequently necessitates long-term, multifaceted therapies that address the underlying emotional, psychological, and relational challenges (Meier, 2024). Ash notes that complex trauma can also result into both physical and mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, drug abuse (Ash, 2023). Teachers may interpret these symptoms as defiance or misconduct rather than as indicators of psychological discomfort. This misconception may result in harsh reactions that alienate students and exacerbate the same problems that call for empathy and trauma-informed care.

Lannon notes that trauma significantly impacts the brain by disrupting its normal functioning and altering key structures involved in stress regulation, memory, and emotional processing. The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, responsible for managing the stress response, becomes over activated, leaving individuals in a state of hyper arousal or dissociation. This dysregulation can lead to difficulty managing emotions and heightened sensitivity to stress (Lannon, 2022). From a neurobiological perspective, trauma leads to structural changes in the brain that further exacerbate emotional and cognitive difficulties. In trauma survivors, the amygdala, which is crucial for processing fear, becomes overactive, resulting in heightened fear reactions and trouble differentiating between perceived and actual dangers. (Lobo, et al., 2011). Ongoing emotional dysregulation frequently shows up in the classroom as behavioral issues, which hinders their social and intellectual development. Schools must therefore deliberately implement trauma-informed strategies that put an emphasis on relational connection, emotional safety, and structured support for their behavior, going beyond traditional teaching methods.

Trauma limits an individual's capabilities to read social cues and trust the intentions of others which leads to relationship issues with peers and teachers which is sometimes misunderstood as deliberate resistance in the classroom. Chafouleas agrees that this is frequently the case because traumatized students are always extremely conscious, which leaves them emotionally depleted and unable to focus, heed guidance, or control their urges (Chafouleas, 2023). This explains why learners with traumatic experiences may show lack inspiration, become disengaged, or quickly agitated by seemingly minimal issues.

Herman distinguishes three main clusters of symptoms that arise from trauma: constriction intrusion, and hyper arousal (Herman, 2015). Increased alertness, irritation, anxiety, and trouble focusing are all signs of hyper arousal. Reliving horrific events through

flashbacks, nightmares, or emotional outbursts is referred to as intrusion. Detachment, emotional disengagement, or a general lack of reactivity are signs of constriction or numbness (Berger, 2021). These symptoms frequently show up as disruptive conduct, inattention, or emotional disengagement in refugee school environments (Kumari, 2020) . Without a traumainformed perspective, these actions might be mistakenly seen as signs of underlying resistance, laziness, or a lack of self-control rather than psychological pain (Alsharif et al., 2024).As a result, understanding these trauma reactions is essential to creating instructional practices that support safety, emotional control, and inclusive education.

When individuals are faced with traumatic events, they adopt various defense mechanisms to protect self. Fletcher categorizes trauma responses into fight, flee, freeze, fawn and flop responses (Fletcher, 2023) . In the fight response, the person faces the threat head-on, usually with aggression or anger; in the flight response, the person flees or avoids the threat, which causes anxiety or restlessness (Rashid, 2018).In the freeze response, the person becomes immobile or numb, feeling stuck or unable to move whereas in the fawn response, the person tries to please or appease the threat to avoid harm, which frequently results in people-pleasing behaviors (Beck, 2022). Owca (2020) notes that individuals with a fawn reaction may find it difficult to express their needs and create limits in treatment and in the end they need to be supported to develop appropriate boundaries, assertiveness, and selfworth to heal emotionally.

Herman proposed a structured model with three progressive stages. Which are, establishing safety, remembrance and mourning and reconnection and integration (Sütterlin, 2020). According to Herman, safety and stabilization, aims to assist survivors regain control over their bodies, emotions, and surroundings. It includes establishing physical and psychological safety, treating symptoms, and devising coping methods (Herman,

2015). Fletcher acknowledges that establishing safety, serves as the cornerstone of recovery. Herman's (1992) model of trauma recovery provide a useful framework for applying traumainformed teaching strategies. For example, stage, safety, aims to alleviate anxiety and behavioral problems by establishing a predictable, encouraging atmosphere where students feel safe both physically and emotionally(Overstreet, 2016).

Apart from explaining the behavioral problems, trauma theory helps understand the importance of safety, routines, empowerment and other trauma informed principles support recovery (Goodman, 2017). Positive relationships characterized by trust, empathy, and consistency can foster a sense of safety and belonging among traumatized students, thereby reducing disruptive behaviors and promoting academic engagement classroom (Fonagy et al., 2023). It is therefore worth noting establishing regular routines, upholding stable and nonthreatening classroom settings, and cultivating sympathetic, trustworthy teacher-student connections, trauma-informed teaching practices meet TITS requirements.

Trauma frequently deprives victims of control, leaving them feeling helpless and alone. Herman (1992) emphasizes that empowerment, choice, and voice restoration are critical to healing. This is consistent with trauma-informed principles that place an emphasis on relational discipline, supportive behavioral interventions, and autonomy (Overstreet et al, 2016). In the setting of refugees, where students frequently lack autonomy, trauma-informed education can be an effective means of promoting prosocial behavior and identity reconstruction. Recent research has shown Herman's theory's ongoing applicability, especially in educational institutions impacted by conflict. In order to address behavioral challenges originating from complex trauma, Mendenhall et al., (2021) study on refugee education highlights the necessity of trauma-responsive pedagogies. Furthermore, (Opiola et al., 2020) contend that educators who have received training in trauma theory are better able to meet the

emotional and behavioral requirements of students, especially in environments where there has been a crisis. This study adopts the position that incorporating choice and empowerment into routine classroom activities promotes both emotional and behavioral recovery, a position that is supported by (Liasidou, 2024). Of importance is assisting learners in Kakuma in reclaiming their identities by reinforcing their potential and worth, which are often undermined by traumatic experiences

Herman's theory makes key contributions to the field of trauma studies by providing a holistic approach that integrates individual and collective aspects of trauma. Her stage-based recovery model offers clear, actionable steps that guide both teachers and learners through the healing journey (Chafouleas, 2023). However, Herman's Trauma theory focus on linear recovery concept and primary focus on individual symptoms may not be appropriate for the ongoing, complex trauma that is encountered in camps such as Kakuma. Additionally, the approach tends to prioritize pathology over resilience and ignores the importance of relationships. This study uses Attachment Theory to fill up these gaps. Attachment theory describes how a child's capacity to trust, control emotions, and build relationships all of which are characteristics frequently observed in classrooms is impacted by early relationship disruptions.

#### Attachment Theory

John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth developed the attachment theory in the mid-20th century, has emerged as a pivotal framework for understanding the dynamics of interpersonal relationships and emotional development (Gibson, 2020). Through an experiment known as strange situation procedures they came up with what is commonly known as attachment styles (Demogeot et al, 2022). Attachment theory posits that a child's interactions with their primary caregivers shape their internal working models, which in turn affect how they view the world,

other people, and themselves. While insecure or disrupted attachments can result in anxiety, fear, aggressiveness, and emotional dysregulation, safe attachments provide as a basis for trust, self-regulation, and resilience (Zinn, 2020). When children are routinely subjected to trauma, loss, displacement, and caregiver separation it disrupts the attachment system. It's worth noting that disturbances in the attachment show up in the classroom as oppositional conduct, hypervigilance, avoiding adults, or emotional dysregulation (Brunzell et al., 2019). Thus the foundation of all trauma informed approaches is the significance of solid, reliable, constant, and predictable adult-child connections. Opportunities to heal dysregulated stress reactions and disruptive attachment patterns may arise in this environment.

Attachment Theory and trauma-informed teaching practices are closely related because they emphasize relational safety, emotional intelligence, and regular, attentive teacher-student interactions. Teachers can serve as secondary attachment figures in classrooms where they build trust, uphold consistent routines, and validate students' emotional experiences which helps to mend broken relationship templates and encourage behavioral stability(Brunzell et al., 2019) . Teachers may lessen the effects of early attachment disruptions and promote the growth of prosocial conduct, emotional control, and academic engagement by creating safe, nurturing interactions in the classroom (Fonagy et al., 2023). This is especially important in Kakuma, where formal educational environments are among the few safe and secure places for learners to go.

Secure attachment is characterized by a strong emotional bond between a child and their caregiver, facilitating a sense of safety and trust. This attachment style plays a crucial role in early childhood development, promoting effective emotional regulation and resilience in the classroom (Gibson, 2020). Cherniak et al further adds that caregivers who are responsive and sensitive to their child's needs contribute significantly to fostering secure

attachment, which lays a foundation for healthy interpersonal relationships (Cherniak et al, 2021). Research indicates that individuals with secure attachments experience better coping mechanisms during stress and demonstrate positive outcomes in adulthood, contrasting sharply with other attachment styles. Teachers and other peers in schools by providing safe and building trustful relationships in the classrooms help learners with wounded attachment bonds build secure ones (Jennings, 2018). Healthy relationships in the classroom serve as corrective attachment experiences, which is in line with TITS idea that safety must be established before greater healing and learning.

The practical relevance of attachment theory in traumatized educational environments is supported by various studies. For example, (Spilt, 2022) stress that responsive, friendly, and sensitive teacher-student relationships are essential for students who have faced hardship. In a similar study, Bosman et al., (2021) contend that stable teacher-student bonds might mitigate the adverse consequences of early attachment disturbances and encourage constructive school adjustment. As a result, attachment theory offers a strong framework for comprehending and meeting the behavioral and emotional requirements of refugee students, highlighting the need of trauma-informed approaches that place a high value on developing relationships as a vital healing and educational process (Forslund et al 2021). Students benefit from having caring, regular relationships with their teachers, which helps them rebuild trust and emotional control (Jennings , 2018). This implies that emotional safety is increased by caring teachers in the classrooms.

Insecure attachment, particularly disorganized attachment, can hinder prefrontal cortex (PFC) development, making it more difficult for individuals to control emotions, manage impulses, and regulate stress responses (Siegel, 2020). Children who are persistently exposed to traumatic experiences can have a hyperactive amygdala, which increases

sensitivity to anxiety disorders, hypervigilance, and emotional dysregulation (Forslund et al 2021). Hippocampal function can be further compromised by early-life trauma or neglect, leading to dissociation, fragmented memories, and trouble processing emotional events. Neural integration is also disturbed by insecure attachment, which either results in emotional suppression in avoidant attachment or increased emotional reactivity in anxious attachment (Siegel, 2020). Students who have been through trauma, especially those with insecure bonds, benefit from stable, caring teacher relationships that help them rebuild trust and control their emotions. Emotional safety is increased by caring teachers.

In relationships, learners with a dismissive-avoidant attachment style can come across as emotionally aloof, detached, and extremely independent. They may find it difficult to be intimate, shy away from strong emotional bonds, and get overburdened when over-relied upon, which causes them to emotionally and physically retreat (Forslund & Duschinsky, 2021). Johann et al observes that, at the heart of dismissive attached children is the thought that being vulnerable would always lead to pain, which is why they subconsciously believe that they are flawed and that relationships are unpredictable (Johann & Franz, 2024). When teachers offer clear, straightforward communication, portray respect for individuality, and offer regular emotional support, the outcome is healthy connections. With patience and empathy, children can eventually learn to feel safer in relationships and form stronger emotional bonds (Gibson, 2020). Building healthy and secure classroom relationships is the foundation of recovery for learners with developmental trauma.

Avoidant attachment style is characterized by emotional detachment and an unwillingness to rely on people, whereas anxious attachment frequently presents as hypervigilance to relationships and a dread of abandonment (Gordon, 2022). These tendencies are usually the result of early relationship experiences in which a child's feeling of security is

undermined by inconsistent or negligent caring (Lowe, 2024). The anxious child could act incoherently, have trouble concentrating, stay on edge all the time, and find little solace in other people (Gordon, 2022). Jennings acknowledges that teachers affect the social aspects of the classroom in both direct and subtle ways, in addition to showing students how to behave. She further notes that educators who helped learners build support systems, especially those who seemed to be alone increased sense of belonging. If the teacher knows about the social groups and relationships in the class, students are more likely to stop being aggressive to others (P. A., 2018). This indicates that teachers by being trauma informed and applying trauma informed principles cultivate supportive healthy peer relationships in the classroom.

The relevance of attachment theory extends beyond childhood, permeating various aspects of adult relationships and mental health. The interplay between attachment styles and psychological outcomes is of great importance in understanding how these dynamics can inform and improve classroom relationships (Jennings 2018). Trauma informed teaching strategies are built on secure, safe, responsive and consistent relationships. Teachers play a big role in repairing the insecure attachment styles hence improving classroom behaviors.

Insecure attachment is often pathologized by attachment theory, which fails to take into account the adaptive survival mechanisms that children may acquire in reaction to trauma, dislocation, or neglect. Additionally, Attachment theory pays more attention to children in infancy stages, it provides little information on how to heal attachment problems later in life, considering that a large percentage of students in refugee settings like Kakuma are older children. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory is used to address this gap and show how different systems can affect teaching strategies, classroom behavior management but above all expounds on how relationships can be repaired in the relational systems.

#### Ecological System Theory

Bronfenbrenner came up with ecological systems theory in 1979 to help us understand how environmental factors affects child's development. The ecological system theory helps us understand the many environmental factors that affect children's wellbeing, such as larger social and cultural factors (Yang, 2021). First, the bio-ecological method sees and describes "environment" as a complex, multidimensional idea with five levels. The five levels are microsystem, mesosystem, ecosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. Each system interacts with and impacts the others, resulting in a complex web of forces that determine development and behavior(El Zaatari & Maalouf, 2022). The ecological model takes into account that the classroom is an ecosystem that includes interactions between multiple factors and learner's behavior. Therefore, it is necessary to take into account how learning environment and the relationships between various educational settings interact when explaining management of classroom behavior.

The microsystem, being the deepest layer, encompasses the settings that have the greatest direct impact on the individual, such as family, school, peers, and neighborhood (Yang, 2021). Microsystem, Guy-Evans, (2024) asserts that, whether positive or negative, these interactions have a direct impact on developmental outcomes, and the person has an effect on the attitudes and behaviors of others in the same context. The frequency, consistency, and quality of these interaction which are most formative in early childhood have lasting significance throughout life are what give the microsystem its power. When the interactions in the microsystems are unhealthy and unstable the developmental risk increases and learner becomes vulnerable (Scharpf et al., 2021a). For refugee learner's healthy relationships in the macrosystem act as protective factor increasing resilience hence less disruptive behaviors and reduced classroom management problems

Mesosystem is the connections and links between two or more microsystems of which an individual is represented by which includes home, school, neighborhood among others (Tong & An, 2024). Recognizing how various aspects of a person's life connect and jointly influence their development and well-being in a variety of circumstances requires an understanding of the mesosystem (Guy-Evans, 2024). Strong connections, particularly good parent-teacher communication, lead to more awareness of students' needs and consistent behavioral expectations. However, poor relationships can result in uneven discipline, miscommunications, and worsening of behavioral problems (Epstein, 2010). Parental and community involvement in managing behavioral problems is key in building lasting behavioral change. Coordination and collaboration between homes, schools, families and communities strengthens interventions put in place to address classroom and learning behavioral problems.

The exosystems looks at the social and institutional structures that affects the child indirectly (El Zaatari & Maalouf, 2022). Bronfenbrenner's theory states that the exosystems is made up of outside events and circumstances, including a parent's place of employment, neighborhood associations, or governmental regulations, that have an indirect impact on a person's surroundings (Epstein, 2010). These environments have a big impact on a person's development even if they may not be directly engaged, showing how factors outside of one's personal experiences may shape possibilities and conditions in life (Yang, 2021). Poor social services, parental financial constraints, poor government policies and lack of communal resources are risk factors, hence leading to high prevalence to trauma.

The chronosystem is mostly concerned with how life transitions and historical events impacts the life of a child (Guy-Evans, 2024). A child's welfare may be significantly impacted by a number of circumstances, such as the child's age, the support systems they currently have,

and how society as a whole respond to events like global epidemics, droughts, or family relocations(Tong & An, 2024). This implies that occurrences such historical trauma, changes in family dynamics, gender role changes, cultural changes among others especially during critical developmental years results in severe behavioral outcomes. This calls teachers to adjust the classroom management strategies that would meet the learners where they are at. The macrosystem refers to the broad cultural, social, political, and economic circumstances that influence all other systems. It consists of rules, beliefs, belief systems, and social conventions that have an indirect impact on life (Guy-Evans, 2024). Bronfenbrenner advocates for a more continuous welcoming and encouraging atmosphere by integrating culturally appropriate behaviors in learner's interactions. It is imperative to implement policies that reduce poverty, provide equitable access to resources and culturally responsive policies and research (Scharpf et al., 2021). Children's exposure to trauma and coping strategies are greatly influenced by their cultural beliefs, political climate, and economic systems. Children are more likely to have ongoing behavioral issues in situations where structural injustices restrict access to support resources or where social norms justify violence(Tong & An, 2024).The sociopolitical dimensions of trauma cannot be fully understood without considering the systemic and collective factors that contribute to its occurrence. Structural violence, including war, systemic racism, oppression and power dynamics perpetuate harm.

### General Literature Review

The general literature review was discussed under various topics as guided by the objectives of the study. The topics include classroom behaviour problems among the refugees,

challenges teachers encounter when implementing TITS and the effectiveness of TITS on classroom behaviour.

### Classroom Behaviour Problems Among the Refugees

Teachers in the refugee context face various challenges during classroom interactions. According to (Antonijadu et al., 2022) learners in the refuge contexts struggle with aggressive, insecurities, fears, anxiety, bullying among other behaviours that manifest in the classroom as a result of mental traumas. It has been noted that behaviours such as lack of empathy, withdrawal, resistance to authority, and erratic emotional reactions are some of the classroom behavior that may be misunderstood as misconduct or intentional defiance rather than signs of trauma among learners. (Columbia et al., 2020). Understanding trauma functions enables teachers to provide these learners with the resources they require to appropriately address and teach new coping mechanisms.

Sweetman records teachers are likely to meet reduced classroom participation, social withdrawal, attention problems, truancy and aggressive behaviours among learners with traumatic experiences (Sweetman, 2022). Children and teenagers who are living through a crisis frequently have increased anxiety and hypervigilance, which makes them see danger where none is. While some retreat and become passive, others may behave aggressively or disruptively as a way to vent their pain which hampers their capacity to learn (Jennings., 2023). Positive relationships characterized by trust, support, and empathy can buffer the adverse effects of trauma and foster a sense of safety and belonging in the classroom (Fonagy et al., 2023). In traumatized environments like Kakuma refugee schools, social safety and connection are especially important. Improved behavior management is directly impacted by trauma-informed teaching practices that increase cooperative learning, decrease social isolation, and enhance social acceptance.

According to Sweetman trauma impacts children's cognitive abilities, relationships, physical health, performance and school continuity. These may lead to poor performance and increase school dropout and unfortunately this may be considered as defiance and attract negative punishments (Sweetman, 2022a). When teachers listen, care and respond, they in turn create secure classrooms thereby reduce disruptive behaviors, promote academic engagement and build conducive learning environment (Foreman, 2021). understanding how relationships between learners and teachers influence classroom behavior and identifying strategies to enhance supportive interactions is key in Kakuma refugee camp schools. Jones's (2022) research highlights that peer interactions are essential to classroom management, not only a supporting element. Peer modeling, organized social engagement, and restorative practices when are all integrated they provide a sustainable approach to behavior modification which is in line with the psychological and physiological principles of trauma healing.

Children may display physical symptoms, dissociation, avoidance behaviors, fear, mistrust, or discernible behavioral changes in school environments (Spytska, 2023). Despite the commonalities in trauma responses, learners may respond differently, which can have a big influence on their everyday lives and long-term development. Some children when supported they are able to exhibit resilience and are able to resume their prior level of functioning following traumatic experiences (Santiago, 2018). Establishing routines that are predictable, giving learners the freedom of choice and autonomy, imparting emotional regulation skills, teaching them mindfulness and relaxation techniques, and employing trauma-informed disciplining tactics is key in preventing classroom negative classroom behaviours (Foreman 2021). It is worth noting that empowering learning environment helps learners acquire the social, emotional, and cognitive skills necessary to overcome the effects of trauma and succeed even in future.

## Challenges in Implementing Trauma Informed Teaching Strategies

The effectiveness of trauma-informed teaching strategies hinges upon teachers' knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards trauma and its impact on students. Identifying barriers encountered by teachers in implementing trauma-informed practices, such as limited resources, time constraints, or organizational challenges, is essential (Sweetman, 2022a). Financial issues that schools particularly those in low-income communities such as Kakuma, encounter limit hiring and training of professional teachers who can implement TITS.

The implementation of trauma-informed teaching practices presents a number of challenges. According to El Zaatari and Maalouf, (2022), structural injustices like racism, poverty, and historical oppression all of which teachers have little control over are frequently the root cause of distress. Many teachers just address personal trauma, ignoring the effects on the community or generations, which makes diverse classrooms less successful. Goldin et al., (2025) notes that consistent practice of TITS is hampered by school restraints, such as strict rules, testing demands, and a lack of teamwork. They further add that some institutions and educators oppose adopting an equity-focused perspective because they believe it goes against established teaching methods or violates discipline standards. This implies that without the right support the emotionally draining task hence affecting the implementation of TITS.

Even when funding is available, high-quality training is frequently lacking or poorly adapted to the requirements of schools. Implementation becomes inconsistent and unsustainable in the absence of continuous assistance (Nkoyo et al., 2024). Challenges in accessing training opportunities, limited resources for implementation, and insufficient support from educational institutions have been highlighted in studies (Rose et al., 2019). Lack of training among teachers in Kakuma limits teachers the knowledge on identifying trauma symptoms and hence poor responses that leads to retraumatization in the classroom. Insights

gained can inform efforts to enhance teacher preparation and support mechanisms, thereby improving the implementation of trauma-informed strategies in Kakuma schools.

Cultural, linguistic barriers, structural and resistance to change along with the impedes the effective implementation of trauma-informed strategies (Nkoyo et al., 2024). Conflicting perspectives on trauma and cultural stigma might also lower community involvement. TITS lack consistency when it comes to definitions hence leading to barriers in application and integration into teacher training programs (Avery et al., 2021). Adoption of TITS is also hampered by misconceptions, such as the idea that trauma-informed treatment is just for children who are badly impacted or is only connected to mental health. (Nkoyo et al., 2024). Understanding these barriers is crucial for developing sustainable training initiatives tailored to the needs of teachers in Kakuma. Policy reform, leadership backing, culturally sensitive methods, and solid community relationships are necessary to overcome these obstacles in Kakuma.

Sweetman acknowledges the emotional turmoil, compassionate fatigue and burnout teachers experience while handling learners with traumatic experiences in the classroom (Sweetman, 2022b). He further adds that for some teachers, learner's painful experience also triggers their own trauma hence unable to realize, recognize and respond to the learner's problems positively. Berger and Martin (2021) in agreement to this view also adds that teachers are faced with other challenges including time constraints and the burden of curriculum requirements. This among other factors such as work demands, overpopulated classrooms and inadequate support are among the challenges teacher in Kakuma experience when addressing classroom behavioral problems (Mendenhall et al , 2021).

#### Effectiveness of Trauma Informed Teaching Strategies

Integrating trauma informed teaching strategies means those interacting with the learners ensure they employ the key trauma informed principles which include; safety, transparency, trustworthiness, cooperation empowerment, voice and choice, and cultural humility and gender responsiveness (Thompson et al, 2022). Recognizing the symptoms of traumatic experiences, responding to or addressing these traumatic symptoms using trauma focused approaches principles is the first step for every teacher who seeks to support their learners (Spytska, 2023). According Maynard et al, implementation of trauma informed teaching strategies promote safe learning environments, reduce behavioral problems, improve academic performance and learn to express emotions in a healthy way (Maynard et al., 2017). Teachers confirmed when TITS is implemented, pupils are less disruptive and more involved, demonstrating the benefits of a responsive and encouraging atmosphere (Nkoyo Lynn Majebi et al., 2024). This implies that learners who are stable emotionally and mentally in a better position to excel in academics and adopt better coping mechanisms in the classroom

The cornerstone of trauma-informed is safety. It entails establishing safe, dependable surroundings on the psychological, emotional, and physical levels. This entails making certain that learners feel protected physically from harm and that their mental and emotional health are given first priority (Maynard 2019) . Transparency and Trustworthiness being a principle trauma informed teaching entails qualities of establishing and preserving a relationship of trust with those who are receiving care as a result trauma (SAHMSA, 2014). This necessitates dependability, stability, and honesty when having conversations. On examining the effectiveness of trauma informed teaching strategies, (Tabone et al., 2020) found that trauma informed classrooms showed improved attention in the classroom, reduced traumatic symptoms, led to emotional stability and eventually healthy development.

Cooperation and Mutuality highlight how crucial it is to work as a team with those affected to provide needed help. Cooperative strategy encourages shared decision-making, mutual respect, and empowerment while respecting diversity (O'Toole, 2022). Empowerment, voice, and choice support learners' capacity to make knowledgeable decisions about their care by recognizing their innate resilience and capabilities (Sweetman, 2022). Studies conducted by (Nkoyo Lynn Majebi et al., 2024) in the United States confirmed reduced absenteeism, higher student accomplishment and enhanced staff-student connections as key benefits of TITS in schools. The initiative's overall success was facilitated by the project's emphasis on the value of incorporating families, communities and stakeholders in addressing trauma-related behavioral problems.

Learners from schools that implement TITS have shown improvement in attention, problem solving skills, self-expression, increased social interactions and respect for boundaries (Sun et al., 2024). Criag recommends establishing routines that are predictable, giving learners freedom of choice and autonomy, imparting emotional regulation skills, putting mindfulness and relaxation techniques into practice, and employing trauma-informed disciplining tactics to achieve all these benefits (Criag, 2016). SAHMSA highlights among the significance of establishing a safe and empowering learning environment, students acquire the social, emotional, and cognitive skills necessary to overcome the effects of trauma and are able to succeed both academically and solving problems in their personal lives (SAHMSA, 2014). When learners are empowered they adopt new skills use in challenging times.

Building supportive Teacher-learner relationships play a central role in creating favorable learning environments, especially for students who have experienced attachment trauma. Despite the essential nature of early attachment experiences, research suggests that attachment patterns are not set in stone (García-Rodríguez et al., 2023). According to Opiola

et al (2020) teachers trained on trauma informed approaches were in a better position to realize and recognize trauma symptoms and therefore reduced retraumatization. This also helped teachers to gain more insights of student behavior, categorized these behaviors and had refined behavior interpretation which in the end reduced teacher stress and enhance the emotional competence to handle classroom behaviors.

Wall (2021) confirms that teachers who are who have built better relationships with learners with traumatic experiences change how they view behavioral problems as communication and not defiance. Supportive relationships create safe, build resilience, foster trust, improve teamwork, leverage stories and personal experiences that support recovery and safety(D'Urso & Pace, 2019). Parental involvement, community engagement, cultural norms and peer support have been found to be an important protective element in building inclusive educational settings, lowering aggressive behaviors, and promoting better mental health (Tol et al., 2013). El Zaatari asserts that, learners feel a sense of belonging when they have supportive connections and constant positive reinforcement across these systems.

They further recommend in ensuring family standards, school culture, and community ideals all fit together for they keep learners interested, safe, and behaving well(El Zaatari & Maalouf, 2022). In Turkana Kenya, Wanjiku and Alexis (2024) conducted a descriptive cross sectional research design to assess the role of community, parents, teachers, educational officers on community development including quality education, the study found a positive relationship between the variables. This systems-based view emphasizes how important it is to include multiple stakeholders in educational practices that aim to enhance classroom management and student's well-being.

#### Empirical Literature Review

Empirical studies have consistently shown that students who have experienced trauma, such as refugees, often exhibit challenging classroom behaviors. Behavioral problems and physiological complications among refugee children, including difficulties with self-regulation, disruptive behavior, aggression, withdrawal, and inattention and interpersonal relationships are commonly reported (Betancourt et al., 2017). The findings were discussed under the three research objectives.

#### Prevalence of Classroom Behavioral Problems Among Refugees

Scharpf et al., (2021c) conducted a systematic review by reviewing findings across the globe to examine the social-ecological factors leading to prevalence of behavioral and emotional problems among refugee children and adolescents across North America, Europe and across the globe using ecological model. The findings revealed high prevalence of aggressive behaviors, anxiety, withdrawal behaviors among other PTSD symptoms. Family systems dysfunctions, poor system policies, poor peer relations, unhealthy learning environments, poor parenting styles and lack of collaboration was to be found to be among the factors that increases retraumatization (Scharpf et al., 2021). It is evident that children adopt various ways to cope with traumatic experiences and these behaviors manifest as behavioral problems in the classrooms.

A nationwide, school-based cross-sectional research was carried out in Jordan by Labib et al, with children and adolescents from public, private, refugee camp schools as well as non-formal education facilities. The participants ranged in age from 8 to 18. Significant rates of behavioral and emotional disorders were discovered by the study using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), with conduct issues and emotional symptoms being more common among refugee learners. This demonstrates the increased susceptibility of displaced children in learning environments (Labib et al., 2024).

Research continuously demonstrates that refugee students have significant rates of behavioral and mental health issues, which are mostly caused by trauma exposure, displacement, and ongoing stresses in their surroundings. In a cross-sectional study of 1,591 Syrian refugee children living in informal settlements in Lebanon, for example, McEwen et al., (2023), discovered startlingly high prevalence rates of anxiety disorders (47.8%), depression (20.1%), conduct/oppositional defiant disorder (26.9%), and PTSD (39.6%). These figures demonstrate the intricate mental health requirements of refugee students as well as their susceptibility in educational environments.

Children and teenagers between the ages of 2 and 17 who visited pediatric outpatient clinics in Damascus, Syria, participated in a cross-sectional research by Alsharif. The study used the WHO Quality of Life Questionnaire and the Strengths & issues Questionnaire (SDQ) and found that behavioral issues were highly prevalent in children ages 2–4 (74.7%) and 5–17 (61.3%). The most common issues were emotional, followed by behavioral and peer difficulties (Alsharif et al., 2024).

In a research carried out in Kenya's Kakuma Refugee Camp, using a qualitative study, Horn (2010) interviewed 32 key informants and 52 community members using the free listing approach to examine the emotional and general psychological wellbeing of refugees. The study found that pessimism, fear, sorrow, anger outbursts, feelings of hopeless, sadness were among the common emotional issues among refugees from diverse nationalities. According to these results, addressing emotional issues is crucial for enhancing psychosocial wellbeing and lowering antisocial behavior in the neighborhood(Horn, 2010). Refugees continuously face traumatic events in their host countries that continuously increase emotional turmoil.

A longitudinal study conducted in Kakuma Kenya to assess the degree to which children's prosocial behaviors are encouraged by mainstreaming in a refugee camp while taking into consideration their emotional and behavioral issues. Two groups of learners with disabilities were assessed, those in special classes and those in mainstream classes, the researchers findings indicated learners in mainstream classes exhibited more behavioral and psychosocial problems compared to those in special classes(Crea et al., 2023). The study concluded that more support was needed to support learners in the refugee settings. Mitigating these behavioral issues and fostering positive classroom results need trauma-informed teaching practices that focus on relationship-building, emotional control, and systemic supports.

#### Challenges in Implementing Trauma Informed Teaching Strategies

Champine et al (2022) investigated the use and comprehension of trauma-informed concepts in using mixed-methods research Michigan State University and Yale School. The study that employed mixed study design included surveys and focus groups for practitioners, including teachers. The findings indicated implementation, support and definition challenges. Because of this definitional vagueness, trauma-informed approaches were applied inconsistently by educational institutions. Berger and Martin (2021) who conducted a critical literature analysis targeting policy makers, educators other scholars is in agreement with definitional vagueness, indicates that this challenge leads to limited application of trauma informed principles in the classroom and teacher training programs.

In a scoping review Wassink et al., (2022) , sought empirical data on the factors that support and hinder TITS adoption in various educational settings. Using data from 37 empirical studies, the study emphasized the importance of whole-school cooperation, staff training, and leadership support in promoting the adoption of trauma-informed practices. The

absence of resources, inadequate professional development, teachers' emotional strain, and ambiguous policy direction, on the other hand, were some the challenges in the implementation of TITS. A systematic review conducted by Avery et al (2021) from 24 studies concluded that inconsistent training and limited resources led to poor integration of trauma informed principles in the classroom settings.

In a systematic review by Lembke et al., (2024) to examining trauma-sensitive school models for refugee students, highlighted global gaps in trauma-informed education for displaced learners. Of the 9,363 sources screened, only 17 concepts met inclusion criteria. Just 35.3% specifically targeted refugee learners, and only 17.6% included adaptations for challenges like war trauma, cultural displacement, or disrupted education. While many models addressed general trauma, few disaggregated outcomes for refugee students due to under resourcing in the refugee settings. Chafouleas (2023) in agreement to this challenge recommends structural changes, enhanced professional development, and improved interagency cooperation among educators. The necessity of trauma-informed pedagogy in teacher preparation programs and the significance of providing teachers with useful, classroom-based techniques were underlined by the participants.

Emotional exhaustion, burnout , time constraints and pressure to meet curriculum goals was another challenge that was recorded in a mixed approach study conducted by Kim et al (2021).The study which engaged 112 educators, 71 intervention groups and 41 comparison conducted in south Western Ontario aimed at assessing the effects of trauma informed training on teachers' outcomes registered reduced stress levels. Even though instructors who took part in the intervention expressed greater comfort utilizing traumasensitive techniques, they still felt drained and emotional exhausted when addressing the behavioral problems in the classroom. In order to reduce teacher burnout and enhance

professional attitudes, the same study highlighted the value of trauma-informed training in conjunction with mindfulness-based social-emotional learning (Kim et al, 2021). From this study, it is evident that teachers who get trauma-informed training and are also supported to address vicarious trauma are more resilient, emotionally stable, and relationally competent.

Mary et al (2018) conducted a mixed method study by analyzing data from refugee hosting countries including Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Syria among other countries. The researchers analyzed education policies, education data, conducted interviews and surveys to educators to assess challenges and available opportunities to providing quality education. Among the challenges recorded included overpopulated classroom, poor infrastructure, inadequate learning materials, lack of training among other challenges. These findings support the role of both an individual, schools, families, communities and systems play in addressing disruptive behaviors in the classrooms.

#### Effectiveness of Trauma Informed Teaching Strategies

Integrating trauma-informed techniques into educational settings improves behavioral problems and promote psychological well-being for children with traumatic experiences. Opiola et al., (2020) conducted a mixed methods case study design to three elementary teachers in southeastern States to assess the effectiveness of training , supervision and peer support on classroom behavior, the results indicated better relationships between the teacher and learner in addition to improved behavioral outcomes. Avery et al., (2021) conducted a systematic review to assess how TITS were being implemented in the educational settings.

The researchers who are affiliated to Monash University analyzed schools that implemented SAHMSA whole approach principles and found that implementation of TITS increased emotional safety, lessened behavioral problems, and fostered resilience among learners. A participatory study by (Brunzell et al., 2019) to 18 teachers in Australia, reported personal

improvement in confidence, emotional regulation, and the ability to use trauma-sensitive practices, in addition to changes in how the teachers interacted with students who had experienced trauma, a confirmation of the effectiveness of TITS.

Sun et al. (2023) conducted a scoping review that looked at the data from across the world on trauma-informed methods in Early Childhood Education and Care settings. Studies from Australia, the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom were included in the review. Intervention features, target groups, and results were carefully mapped using PRISMA criteria. The results underscored that effective trauma-informed early education programs frequently entail caregiver involvement, teacher training in identifying trauma symptoms, and the establishment of secure and predictable environments (Sun, et al., 2024). The results further showed that after children participated in the trauma-informed Program, parents reported improved attention, decreased hyperactivity, and fewer internalizing problems in addition to increased resilience, while teachers reported improvements in oppositional defiance, externalizing behaviors, and attention (Sun, et al., 2024). All things considered, these results provide credence to the efficiency of trauma-informed practices in fostering young children's wellbeing.

Meier in South Africa, conducted a contextual and conceptual literature review to examine how trauma informed neuroscience theory informs the pastoral role early childhood education. The study conclusion indicates that when early learners education teachers understand the brain functioning and how it is affected by trauma, the teachers are able to build safer, empathetic and nurturing classrooms that enables learners to thrive (Meier, 2024). This confirms findings in exploratory descriptive study design conducted to 26 teachers by Munyadziwa et al, (2025) who sought to find out whether teachers in Limpopo primary schools were well informed to support traumatized learners. The study found out that, how

teachers understood and defined trauma helped in employing strategies suitable to support traumatized learners. Even though with little understanding their definition of trauma helped them support learners and build conducive learning environments.

In Kenya, study was conducted to Somali refugee youth in urban areas with the aim of establishing if trauma informed psychoeducation would reduce PTSD symptoms. (Im et al., 2018) engaged 141 somali refugees who underwent 12 Psychoeducation peer sessions and after the pre-post study they found reduction PTSD symptoms, increased awareness and selfreferral for further help among those with PTSD symptoms. This indicated that when TITS is implemented reduces the disruptive behaviors. In 2023, in Kisi county Kenya, Omare et al, investigated the effectiveness of trauma-informed approaches on students' adjustment. They sampled with 275 adolescents from a total of 1100 and used a mixed-methods approach to conduct the study. They found a significant positive relationship between academic adjustment and trauma-informed practices. Applying TITS techniques helped students become more resilient and improve their coping mechanisms, according to FGDs and interviews with students (Omare, 2023). This implies the implementation of TITs eventually results in better academic outcomes and mentally healthy students.

#### Summary of Knowledge Gaps

There are gaps in the research, especially in refugee schooling environments like Kakuma, despite the substantial theoretical and practical contributions made by both Trauma Theory and Attachment Theory and ecological theory. Trauma theory exhibits a lack of awareness of cultural and environmental differences, particularly in African contexts where caregiving is frequently shared. Attachment theory places a strong emphasis on early caregiver interactions but frequently dismisses attachment styles as fixed, undervaluing the

impact of relationships at school, such as those with classmates and teachers, which can act as compensating attachment systems in situations of displacement. Despite the fact that ecological theory considers structural issues including forced migration, overcrowding in classrooms, and poverty most of the research in the Kenyan settings have paid little attention on education setting and specifically in Kakuma refugee camps.

Most of the empirical research on trauma-informed teaching has been done in Western countries and clinical contexts with very little being done in refugee local schools. In addition to a scarcity of culturally appropriate instruments to evaluate behavioral outcomes in various educational contexts, there is a scarcity of longitudinal research documenting the long-term effects of trauma-informed practices. The voices of learners who are the end users to determine the effectiveness is minimal. By examining how trauma-informed teaching strategies affect student behavior within the particular sociocultural and structural circumstances of Kakuma refugee schools, this study A systematic review conducted by Avery et al (2021) from 24 studies concluded that inconsistent training and limited evaluation tools led to poor integration of trauma informed principles in the classroom settings. seeks to reduce these gaps. Below is the literature gap table

*Table 1: Summary of Knowledge Gaps*

Sources	Area of Study	Study Findings	Type of Gap	Knowledge Gap	How Current Study Addresses Gap
Rose et al. (2019)	Attachment-aware schools	Positive impact of attachment-based interventions	Empirical, Methodological	Lack of longitudinal data, minimal learner's voice	Incorporates teacher and learner voice in refugee context
GarcíaRodríguez et al. (2023)	Teacher-student attachment measurement	Systematic review of instruments and variables associated with teacher-student attachment	Methodological, Theoretical	Lack of consistent measurement tools; under-researched in refugee settings	Provides empirical context for choosing culturally appropriate tools in Kakuma
Sütterlin (2020)	History of trauma theory	Traces trauma theory's evolution	Theoretical	Lacks cultural adaptation or application in lowresource schools	Puts trauma theory within historical limits and updates
Maynard et al. (2017)	Trauma-informed approaches in schools	Systematic review showing mixed evidence of effectiveness	Empirical	Need for more robust and longitudinal evidence	Adds a rationale for long-term study in Kakuma schools
Herman (2015)	Trauma and Recovery	Outlines trauma's impact and recovery models	Theoretical	Clinical focus with little application to school systems	Applies trauma recovery models to classroom setting
Forslund & Duschinsky (2021)	Attachment theory and research	Compilation of evolving attachment studies	Theoretical	Emphasis on clinical settings, less on classrooms	Adapts modern attachment perspectives to education

El Zaatari & Maalouf, 2022	School Belonging & Engagement	Teacher-student interactions and peer relationships influence school belonging and engagement	Empirical	Limited research linking microsystem factors with traumainformed teaching in refugee classrooms	Examines teacher-learner relationships and peer support as part of trauma-informed strategies
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Sources	Area of Study	Study Findings	Type of Gap	Knowledge Gap	How Current Study Addresses Gap
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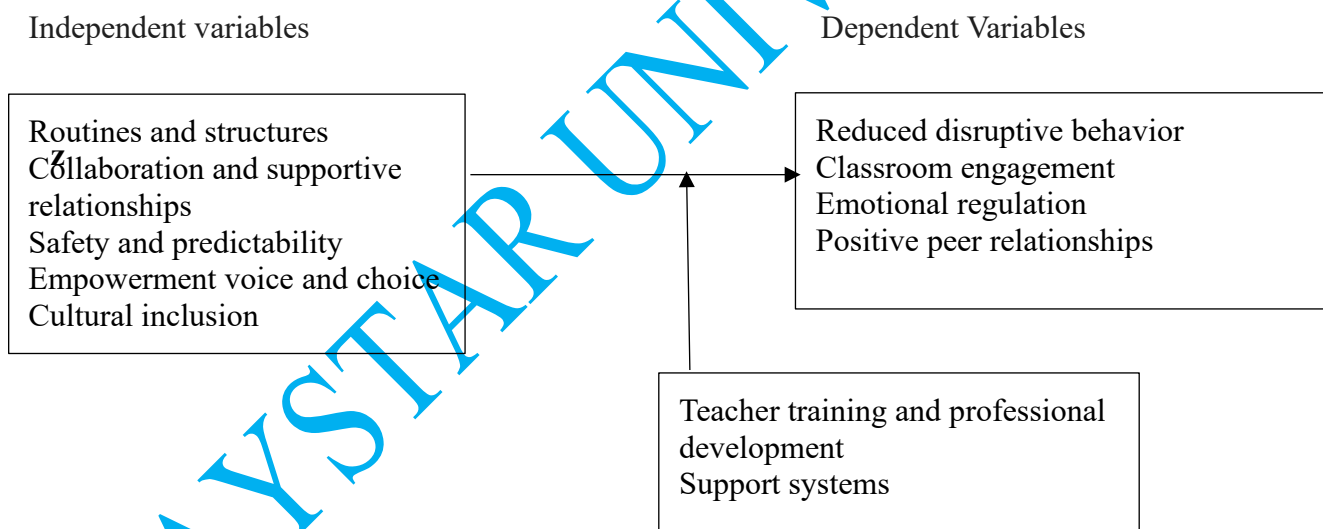
Guy-Evans, 2024	Child Development	Immediate environment directly affects child's wellbeing	Theoretical gap	Few studies apply ecological system theory to address behavioral problems.	Uses ecological system theory to improve classroom behavior and improve the systems in place
Epstein, 2010	School-Family-Community Partnerships	School-familycommunity partnerships enhance student well-being and engagement	Implementation gap	Limited application of mesosystem insights in refugee education.	Integrates parental and community involvement into trauma-informed teaching.

*Source: Researcher 2025*

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## Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is an organized depiction of the main ideas, factors, and connections that support a research project. It serves as a map that guides the research by illustrating how independent and dependent variables interact, based on existing theories and empirical evidence (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The researchers' knowledge of the current connection between the independent and dependent variables is illustrated in the conceptual framework that follows. Trauma-informed teaching strategies have a great impact on classroom behavior management. The intervening variables indicates that when teachers are knowledgeable on what is TITS, its symptoms and the manifestations in the classroom settings, they are likely to implement what they know hence better classroom outcomes.



*Figure 1. Conceptual Framework Source: Researcher 2025*

Intervening Variables

## Discussion

The above conceptual framework indicates the relationship between trauma informed teaching strategies and classroom behavior management. Implementation of trauma informed strategies principles has a great effect on the classroom behaviour positively and lack of it leads to adverse consequences. In their comprehensive literature analysis, Wilson-Ching et al contend that establishing trauma-informed practices in educational contexts requires solid, ongoing connections between teachers and students (Wilson-Ching & Berger, 2024). According to their results, when teachers implement trauma informed teaching strategies which includes ensuring safety, predictability, routines and structures, collaboration, creating inclusive classroom, and reinforcing empowerment and choice, this leads to admirable classroom behaviors (Kim et al., 2021). TITS eventually leads to reduced aggressive behaviors, increases classroom engagement, strengthens healthy peer relationships and selfemotionally regulated learners.

Classroom behaviour is highly dependent on whether teachers are professionally trained on trauma informed teaching strategies and whether implementation is done. Teachers with TITS skills are well equipped to handle challenges, prevent problems before they happen or worsen the classroom behaviour by reacting to trauma symptoms instead of responding. Teachers trained in trauma-informed approaches significantly report fewer disruptive behaviors from their students and a discernible increase in student-teacher connection. According (Loomis et al., 2024), even brief, targeted professional development can enhance important behavioral and relational elements in early childhood classes.

The intervening variables which were teacher training and professional development and support systems play a huge role on implementation of TITS. For example, Brunzell et al.,( 2019) acknowledges that teachers who are trained and are knowledgeable in TITS are in

better place in addressing behavioral problems in the classroom. Supportive systems for both teachers and learners is reinforced through classroom behaviour, consistency and responsiveness provided through routines and structures plays a huge role in building secure base attachments (García-Rodríguez et al., 2023). Learners who may have poor social relationships benefit a lot from teachers who put an effort in building trusting and transparent relationships.

### Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed theoretical and empirical literature, general studies, and the conceptual framework. The study was guided by trauma theory, attachment theory and ecological theory. While literature acknowledges the positive impact of trauma-informed approaches, gaps remain particularly in evaluating classroom outcomes in refugee settings where complex trauma is common, few schools have assessed the effects on classroom behavior or included learners' perspectives in such evaluations.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

Research methodology is the process that clearly describes the methods that was used in carrying out this study. This chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted for the study. It includes the philosophical foundations, research design, population and sampling procedures, data collection instruments, data analysis, and ethical considerations among others. The methods selected align with the research objectives of assessing how traumainformed teaching strategies influence classroom behavior in Kakuma refugee schools.

#### Philosophical Underpinning

The study adopted pragmatism which supports the use of both qualitative and quantitative data to get a deeper understanding of complex educational environments, such as refugee schools. In addition to producing quantifiable results, pragmatism permits the employment of mixed methods to gather more in depth of participants experiences which is key in this study (Lehto, 2024). According to (King, 2022), pragmatism is more concerned with practical solutions than abstract theory, which made it particularly appropriate for this study. The pragmatic approach allowed this study to combine behavior observations, focused group discussion, and teacher interviews to determine the effectiveness of trauma-informed teaching strategies in Kakuma. To support the practical view point of pragmatism, this study to examine teacher's practical experiences, real behavioral problems, challenges and thereafter provide practical knowledge and recommendations to improve school and classroom learning environments.

## Research Design

Research design is the plan, organization, and techniques of the study in order to control variation and find answers to the research objectives (Kumar & Praveenakumar, 2025). The research design framework outlines how a study was carried out, with the target population, methods and techniques, data collection and interpretation tools, and other essential components that are necessary for the study's success (Rosen, 2019).

The study used a descriptive mixed survey research design to assess how trauma-informed teaching practices affect classroom behavior in refugee schools in Kakuma. Descriptive approach seek to observe, and record elements of a situation as it naturally arises (King, 2022). The researcher systematically gathered data from a specific population using the descriptive survey methodology, which is suitable for this study since it allows the researcher to characterize current circumstances, behaviors and practices without changing any the variables. The mixed methods allowed the researcher to separately gather quantitative and qualitative data, examine the results independently, and then combine them during the interpretation phase. To provide an in-depth understanding of the effects of trauma-informed teaching, a variety of data sources was gathered through school behavioral data records, questionnaires, focused groups discussions and thorough observations. Creswell (2023) postulates that mixed method guarantees that both quantifiable trends and a deeper contextual knowledge are recorded in addition to improving the validity and dependability of the findings.

## Study Population

A population is an essential part of research methodology, denoting a collection of individuals with similar characteristics in a certain institution or region (Willie, 2024). The foundation of research technique is a population, which is a larger group of people or

components related to the study topic or phenomena of interest. The African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC, 2025) estimate that there are about 25 primary schools in the Kakuma Refugee Camp, hosting up to 72,000 students and 700 instructors. In order to provide a representative sample of the refugee education situation in Kakuma, participants were selected from 21 accessible schools located within the camp. The study focused on teachers, administrators, counselors, and students. These individuals were chosen because they include all of the important parties involved in managing behavior in the classroom and putting trauma-informed teaching methods into practice. According to the LWF EMIS data report the total population of the 21 primary school is approximately 51072 which includes 50,456 learners, 566 teachers, 21 head teachers, 21 deputies and 18 community school counsellors. The study was conducted in the schools shown in the table below:

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*Table 2: Study Population*

School	Learners total population	Teachers population
Hope	3768	30
Peace	4879	45
Elliyes	3028	30
Newlight	2902	30
Fuji	3439	34
Horseed	2239	25
Gambella	3886	35
Shebelle	2056	40
Palotaka	3675	35
Alnuur	2130	31
Lokitaung	3255	30
Unity	1571	19
Ngundeng	3553	37
Fashoda	712	14
Bhar-el-naam	1188	19
Jebelmara	791	18
Malakal	1580	21
Kadugli	2440	27
Cush	1429	25
Shambe	1689	22
Angelina	246	8
Total	50,456	566

*Source: Researcher 2025*

#### Target Population

A target population is subset of the larger population under investigation, the target group is defined by particular characteristics or standards that are directly related to the research question (Willie, 2024). Finding the target group allows researchers to better tailor their sample plans and research goals to the goals and objectives of the study. The target group comprised of community school counsellors, head teachers, deputies and teachers trained on trauma informed teaching strategies and students in upper primary (Grades 8 to 9) classes who were able to comprehend the English and Swahili languages.

Grade 8-9 are learners who had been schools for quite some time and are at a developmental stage where behavioral issues are likely to manifest as a result of compounding effects of past experiences, current developmental changes and school work. Cognitively grade 8 and 9 learners were able to reason and identify strategies teachers are putting in place to address behavioral problems. Teachers are directly involved in implementing TITS in the classrooms and have firsthand information when it comes to behavior challenges in the classroom. The community school counsellors provide psychosocial services to both teachers and learners hence well informed with behavioral themes in their respective schools. The head teachers and deputies are directly involved when addressing behavioral problems, they influence policies and systematic structures that govern the school

#### Sample Size

To estimate the characteristics of the complete population, sampling involves choosing a subset of individuals from within a specific group (Rosen, 2019). This study employed Yamane's (1967) formula, census for smaller groups. According to Hasan & Kumar (2024) using Yamane's (1967) formula is more preferable when calculating a sample size for large population which in this study includes learners and teachers

To derive a scientifically viable sample, Yamane's method's theoretical foundation highlights the significance of the confidence level, margin of error, and total population size. Using this theoretical framework as a guide, the study calculated the sample size for learners and teachers using Yamane's formula where  $n$  represents the sample size,  $N$  for the population and  $e$  for the margin error. A 95% confidence level with a 10% margin of error ( $e = 0.10$ ) was chosen for the learner population of 50,456.

$$n = 1 + \frac{N}{1 + N(e_2)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{50456}{1 + 50456(0.10^2)}$$

$$\text{Learners} = \frac{50456}{1 + 504.46}$$

$$\text{Learners} = 100$$

$$n = \frac{566}{1 + 566(0.10^2)}$$

$$\text{Teachers} = \frac{566}{6.6}$$

$$\text{Teachers} = 85$$

*Table 3: Sampling Frame*

Respondents category	Population	Sample Size
Learners	50,456	100
Teachers	566	85
Head teachers	21	21
School deputies	21	21
Community school Counsellors	18	18
Total	51,072	245

*Source: Researcher 2025*

As indicated, from the calculation a sample size of 100 students was derived at, which is statistically representative of the total population and offers a high degree of accuracy. A more practical 90% confidence level with a 10% margin of error ( $e = 0.10$ ) was applied to the 566-teacher population, yielding a sample size of 85 instructors. This choice was made while maintaining a fair amount of generality and considering pragmatic factors like time, accessibility, and available resources. For populations that are small and controllable, a census was used where complete coverage is both desirable and possible. A census method was used to include all the 21 head teachers, 21 deputies and 18 community school counsellors in this study whereas quota sampling was used to get the sample size of teachers. The study engaged 245 respondents.

#### Sampling Technique

A sampling technique is the procedure the researcher used to gather people for the study (Divakar, 2021). The research utilized the purposive sampling technique, stratified sampling

techniques and simple random sampling. Purposively sampling technique is mostly used in qualitative studies and is deliberate in choosing specific characteristics that meet research objective (Divakar, 2021). The researcher initially used purposive sampling to choose a specific group of participants who met study-related criteria, in this case teachers implementing trauma-informed teaching and students in grades 8 to 9.

Within the selected schools, stratified sampling was used to ensure representation across gender and grade levels for learners. Due to the individual differences among teachers and to ensure gender and age appropriate responsiveness, the researcher categorized the participants according to their genders and grade level. This guarantees that every subgroup is sufficiently represented in the sample, enabling insightful comparisons between various demographic groups. For example, the researcher met grade 8 male learners separately from grade 8 female learners and apply the same to the ninth-grade target.

Simple random sampling was used to choose participants within each stratum following stratification. This implies that every student in a certain gender and grade level had an equal opportunity to be a part of the study. To prevent bias, the random selection procedure was carried out utilizing random number generators. This multi-layered sampling strategy maintained a balance between objectiveness, diversity, and relevance. Random sample improved the validity and generalizability of the results to comparable refugee school contexts, stratification guaranteed equal representation, and purposeful sampling focused on the right demographic group.

### Sampling Criteria

Inclusion criteria outline the necessary qualities that research participants must have in order to qualify. By specifying who is eligible to participate, inclusion criteria assist

guarantee that the chosen participants are suitable for achieving the study's objectives (Keung et al., 2020).

Since the study's focused on trauma-informed teaching practices, participating schools must be actively putting them into practice TITS principles. Due to their cognitive capacity to describe classroom experiences in focus group discussions and other data collection activities, students in Grades 8 through 9 was included in these studies. Additionally, in order to guarantee that they have sufficient exposure to and knowledge with trauma-informed techniques, only teachers who had taught at the chosen schools and in the specific classes were involved. Teachers who had not yet implemented trauma-informed practices were excluded based on the exclusion criteria. Due to developmental factors and language barriers that can restrict their capacity to fully engage in the study process, learners below Grade 6 learner and below were not allowed to participate. Newly recruited teachers and those who have not received training was not participate in the study.

#### Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments are the tools that researchers use to collect data from study participants or other sources that are pertinent to a research topic in a methodical manner (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The researcher gathered data through structured questionnaires, interview guides and observation. Teachers responded to questionnaires via google forms to evaluate their use of trauma-informed teaching practices and the behavioral shifts they see in their students whereas learners were engaged in FGDs using face to face interviews.

The teacher's questionnaire was divided into section A, B, C and D. Section A of the questionnaire seeks to collect demographic data which includes, age, gender, working duration among others. Section B has multiple choice questions that sought to identify

teacher's general knowledge on TITS, specific strategies they have been applying, and effectiveness and section C mostly sought to find out the current classroom behavioral problems. Question three on section C on teacher's questionnaire sought to examine the challenges and question two section C sought to evaluate the effectiveness of trauma informed teaching strategies on classroom management in Kakuma refugee schools.

Section D of the research instrument was standardized test. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) behavioral assessment tool for children ages 2 to 17 by Goodman (1997) was administered to teachers. It had twenty-five items are divided into five subscales: Prosocial Behavior, Conduct Issues, Hyperactivity/Inattention, Emotional Symptoms, and Peer Relationship Issues. It comes in self-report, teacher, and parent versions. This study employed the teacher's version to examine the disruptive behaviors among learners.

The head teacher's questionnaire consisted of section A that is to collect biodata that included their names, genders, working duration and age among others. section B question 1&2 of the questionnaire sought to establish the behavioral problems whereas, section B question five, sought to examine the challenges and question 3 & 4 sought to find specific strategies and effectiveness through changes observed.

To evaluate the effectiveness of trauma informed teaching strategies on classroom management in Kakuma refugee schools question 3&4 of head teacher's questionnaire sought to find the specific strategies being implemented and changes observed. Both questionnaires had questions that sought to find the support systems in place and recommendations from the respective respondents. Question 7,8 and 9 sought to find how the systems including parents, policies, organizations support TITS in schools.

To gather detailed information from learners' experiences, interview guides were used for focus group discussion (FGD) with students. FGDs consists of interviewing and behavior observations which encourages social interactions, clarity and high responses (Taherdoost., 2021). The interview guide consists of section A and B. Section A sought to collect demographic data from the learners. Section B seeks to gather information on classroom behaviors, application of trauma informed principles, effectiveness of TITS, challenges and what learners considered as better approaches to improving classroom learning experiences.

Goodenow (1993) created the Psychological Sense of School Membership (PSSM) Scale to measure school belonging among adolescents. This 11-item questionnaire assessed how learners feel about being welcomed, respected, and included at school using a 5-point Likert scale (1 being completely false and 5 being completely true). Both positive and negative remarks were included in the items; the latter are reverse-coded. Better emotional and social ties to the school are indicated by higher ratings, which also represent a stronger sense of belonging. These tools are intended to work in harmony with one another to guarantee the analysis of data for reliability and validity. School records was used to collect data on behavioral problems reported from the respective classes. Open ended and close ended questions were employed which according to Taherdoost (2021) are useful when collecting both qualitative and quantitative data.

#### Types of Data

Primary data refers to original and actual material that has been gathered directly by the researcher for the first time with the express intent of answering a current study subject or problem. It is regarded as real-time data, and direct approaches including surveys, observations, experiments, questionnaires, and in-person interviews are used to acquire it.

Secondary data is information collected from already existing collections including books, records, journals among others (Ajayi, 2023) .

The study employed qualitative data and quantitative data which was gathered through questionnaires, interviews and school records. Primary qualitative data was collected through questionnaires, focused group discussions and checklists from classroom observations. The researcher also used interview guide in focused groups which included discussions, follow up questions and observations on nonverbal communications. Quantitative data was collected from numerical analysis for example number of recorded cases by the head teacher, deputies and community school counsellors and specific behaviors addressed.

#### Data Collection Procedure

Data collection is the practice of gathering specific information in order to support or contradict certain facts. During the study, to ensure credibility and participant protection, the researcher ensured the data gathering techniques adhere to ethical and methodological best standards. The study commenced after permission from relevant bodies. To guarantee compliance with institutional and research ethics guidelines, after approval from the supervisors. Prior to requesting clearance from the National Commission for Science and Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), the researcher first sought approval from the Daystar University School of Applied Human Sciences, Daystar University Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee (DU-ISERC). The researcher proceeded and sought permission from LWF education department through the Human Resource Manager who supported through making communications to the school administration.

Due to language barriers and other unavoidable circumstances, the researcher conducted meetings with all the parents/caregivers whose children was participating in the FGD in the 5

zonal areas where they were briefed on the purpose of the study and thereafter given consent forms to sign prior to the study. The identified teachers were given the opportunity to seek clarification so as to address any concerns before the study. Once the researcher was given the consent and introductory letter, questionnaire was shared to the group with a google form link where those who consented proceeded to answer the research questions.

FGDs was conducted to learners at zonal level in school safe spaces to allow them feel comfortable share their experiences. Only the learners whose parent/caregivers signed the consent forms, participated in the FGDs. A separate group that incorporated the head teachers, deputies and community school counsellors was created where they were briefed and questionnaire was shared through google link where they clicked and continue with the activity.

#### Pretesting of the Research Instruments.

Pretesting is the process of evaluating research tools such as questionnaires, surveys, or interview guides on a limited group of participants before their use in the primary study. Pretesting is done to find and fix any possible problems with the instruments, such phrasing errors, unclear questions, or response choices that don't fully capture the required data (Denscombe, 2017). Perneger et al recommends 10%-20% of sample size to increase the possibility of spotting any design or understanding difficulties before to the primary data collection (Perneger et al., 2015). A pretesting was conducted in Kalobeyei settlement primary school. Kalobeyei is an extension of Kakuma refugee Kakuma camp that hosts an overflow of refugees. 15 learners and 4 teachers, 2 head teachers, 2 deputies and 2 school counsellors was engaged in the pretest study. In cases where gaps are identified adjustments was made before the actual study.

The teacher's questionnaire was updated to improve efficiency and respondent engagement after participating instructors provided input on the questionnaire's length and time requirements. Without compromising the tool's content validity, repetitive questions were eliminated and similar were combined. The updated questionnaire was brief, easy to use, and feasible to do in less time while keeping the major focus on trauma-informed teaching methods, classroom behavior, and associated difficulties.

### Validity and Reliability

While reliability is the consistency and stability of measurements across time, validity is the degree to which a study measures what it is intended to measure, ensuring that the results are trustworthy and pertinent. (Mira Andersson, 2024). The validity and reliability of the research tools was established in order to guarantee the precision and coherence of the study's findings. To ensure that the tools sufficiently cover key aspects of trauma-informed teaching practices and observable the content validity of questionnaires, observation checklists, and FGD guides was evaluated by the experts in the counselling department. Detailed descriptions of data, validation from experts, methodological alignment, and clear role definitions for the researcher was adhered to ensure of validity. The researcher provided adequate contextual information for transferability and further seek for expert assessments to ensure careful data reliability purposes and detailed checks.

### Operationalization and Measurement of Study Variables

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of trauma informed teaching strategies in addressing classroom behavioral problems among refugee students in Kakuma. The independent variable is the trauma informed strategies whereas Classroom behavior is the independent variable.

*Table 4: Operationalization and Measurement of Study Variables Table*

Variable	Operational definition	Indicators	Data source
Trauma informed teaching strategies	Teacher's use of specialized classroom approaches, such as routines, safe places, quiet corners, mindful techniques, music, play therapy and empathetic language	Integration of SEL techniques, play therapy, mindfulness, classroom safety and routines, Recognition of trauma symptoms, Collaboration	Questionnaires
Classroom behavior Management	Maladaptive behaviors that learners adopt to maneuver in their current classroom environment	Classroom participation. Aggression levels, peer relationships, school attendance, classroom attention, emotional regulation, bullying, low self esteem	Interview guides, school records and observations
Teacher training and professional development	Teachers' knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards trauma and its impact on learners	Skills gained, number of units taken, refresher trainings	Questionnaires, School records
Support systems	Initiatives that provide technical, and emotional peer support to teachers and learners	Mentorships, peer clubs, counselling services, Parental involvement, community collaboration, policies etc.	Questionnaires Interview guides

*Source: Researcher 2025*

#### Unit of analysis

Unit of analysis is the entity that can be studied including persons, groups, organizations of environments so as to make conclusions and generalizations (Babbie, 2021).

During the study, the learners in Kakuma refugee schools was the individual entities to assess the behavioral outcomes in the study whereas, teachers and community school counsellors was used to evaluate the effects of trauma focused approaches in Kakuma refugee primary schools.

### Data Analysis Plan and Data Management

Data analysis is the process of converting collected data into useful information is known as data analysis (Taherdoost, 2020). In order to examine the connections between trauma-informed teaching practices and student behavioral outcomes, SPSS was used to compute descriptive statistics. The first objective was to identify the current specific classroom behavioral patterns among primary school learners in Kakuma primary schools who have experienced trauma. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics whereby tables with percentages and frequencies was utilized to analyze the data and identify the common classroom behavioral patterns among learners who have experienced trauma. Structured summaries and thorough field notes were used to assess qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions thematically. Reviewing the notes revealed any recurrent themes in the events, perspectives, and noted behavioral changes. using specific TITs.

The second objective examine the challenges teachers, encounter in effectively implementing trauma-informed teaching practices in the classroom. With this objective thematic analysis was utilized to examine the challenges. Descriptive statistics and charts were used to display the main challenges teachers encounter in implementing the TITS. The third objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of trauma informed teaching strategies in mitigating classroom behavioral problems among refugee students in Kakuma. Inductive

thematic analysis was employed to identify the specific types of strategies teachers implement, how they apply the strategies and its effectiveness. Frequencies and percentages were calculated to indicate the proportion of teachers

Every questionnaire was examined to ensure it is comprehensive. All the completed online questionnaires responses were safely kept to the google drive where the researcher can only access. Other physical confidential documents were locked safely to ensure safety and confidentiality.

#### Diagnostic Tests

The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS Version 27.0, while the qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. In SPSS, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations were generated to summarize the data. Parametric tests were used to compare group differences where appropriate. The qualitative data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns, concepts, and themes relevant to the study objectives. Findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses were then triangulated to enhance the validity and comprehensiveness of the study results.

For qualitative data gathered from focus group conversations, the research employed essential techniques of qualitative consistency to ensure trustworthiness. Triangulation of several data sources including observations, questionnaires, and focus group discussions, participant member checks, and extended fieldwork was all used to assure credibility. Giving detailed, in-depth explanations of the participant histories, the refugee school context, and the type of trauma-informed strategies used in the study would improve transferability.

## Ethical Considerations

The researcher took responsibility in ensuring adherence to the ethical guidelines. The researcher sought approval from Daystar University School of Applied Humanities Sciences and there after ethical clearance letter from Daystar University Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee. Thereafter the research proceeded to seek permission from National Commission for Science and Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The researcher also sought a go ahead from the county government before proceeding to school administration. After receiving the needed documents, the researcher also got consent from school administration through the organization that manages primary school that is LWF.

Respondents, including teachers, school counselors, deputies, head teachers and learners, were fully informed about the purpose, objectives, procedures, potential risks or benefits of the study. The participants were given the opportunity to ask questions for clarifications purposes and deeper understanding. A written informed consent form was provided, and participants was required to voluntarily sign it prior to participation. For learners, assent was obtained alongside consent from parents or guardians through the school administration. The participant's autonomy was respected during the research. Respondents were told that their participation is fully optional, and that they can choose to answer questions or step down from the research at any time without penalty. The cultural context of Kakuma refugee schools was carefully considered to ensure that the study is carried out in accordance with community norms and traditions.

To ensure confidentiality, participants were assured that all identifiable information such as school names, personal names, was tagged or anonymized in all records and publications. No personally identifiable information was included in reports or presentations.

Collected data was securely saved in encrypted digital files and backed up to a password protected external device. Hard copy records were stored in a secured cabinet.

All sessions were held in a safe and secure space while ensuring anonymity. The researcher ensured debrief before and after the focused groups was offered to both learners and teachers. The study findings and recommendations were shared with the LWF education department and academic community through reports and publications. All sources were cited and supervisor of this study acknowledged to avoid plagiarism

### Chapter Summary

This chapter's primary goal is to provide an overview of the research techniques that was used in this study. An overview of the research design, study location, target population, sample strategies, data collection strategies, sampling procedures, how the data was evaluated, and how ethical guidelines was adhered to and upheld are among the topics discussed. The study was descriptive in nature, and the researcher is aware that there was no control over study factors.

## CHAPTER FOUR DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected to evaluate the effectiveness of trauma-informed teaching strategies on classroom behavior management in Kakuma refugee schools. The study employed a descriptive mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative survey data from teachers and school administrators with qualitative data from focus group discussions with learners to provide a comprehensive understanding of

current behavioral problems, implementation challenges, and the effectiveness of traumainformed teaching strategies. The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS version 27.0, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. The chapter is organized into sections covering response rates, demographic characteristics of participants, quantitative analysis addressing the three research objectives, qualitative findings from focus group discussions and administrator surveys, and integration of findings to provide evidence-based recommendations for enhancing trauma-informed teaching practices and classroom behavior management in refugee education settings.

### Data Analysis and Presentation

#### Response Rate

The study targeted teachers, school administrators (head teachers, deputy head teachers, and community school counsellors), and learners from 21 primary schools located in Kakuma refugee camp, Turkana County, Kenya. The distribution included all refugee primary schools where trauma-informed teaching strategies have been introduced and are currently being implemented. A calculated sample size of 245 participants was targeted, comprising 85 teachers, 21 head teachers, 21 deputy head teachers, 18 community school counsellors, and 100 learners from grades 8-9. The researcher successfully collected data from all 21 schools in Kakuma refugee camp. A total of 230 questionnaires and interview responses were completed out of the targeted 245 participants, representing an overall response rate of 93.9%. Table 5 presents the detailed response rates by participant category. The 15 participants were either due to relocations to their country of origin, teachers on sick leave and four participants who were not willing to participate in the study due to issues related to differentiated assistance

*Table 5: Response Rate by Participant Category*

<u>Participant Category</u>	<u>Target Sample</u>	<u>Achieved Sample</u>	<u>Response Rate (%)</u>
Teachers	85	80	94.1%
Head Teachers	21	17	81.0%
Deputy Head Teachers	21	19	90.4%
Community School Counsellors	18	14	77.8%
Learners (Grades 8-9)	100	100	100.0%
Total	245	230	89.8%

*Source: Researcher 2025*

The achieved overall response rate of 93.8% falls within the excellent range according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), who indicate that a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting, 60% is good, and 70% and above is excellent. Learner participation achieved a perfect response rate of 100%, with all 100 targeted learners from grades 8-9 participating in focus group discussions. This excellent response was facilitated by face-to-face data collection during school hours, strong collaboration with school administration, and learners' willingness to share their classroom experiences. Head teachers and community school counsellors demonstrated strong participation rates of 81.0% and 77.8% respectively, ensuring that key decision-makers and mental health support providers were adequately represented. Teachers achieved an excellent response rate of 94.1%, with 80 out of 85 targeted teachers participating. Deputy head teachers achieved a 90.4% response rate. The overall sample of 230 participants provided adequate representation across all 21 schools and ensured diverse perspectives from teachers, administrators and learners for meaningful statistical analysis and valid conclusions about trauma-informed teaching strategies in Kakuma refugee schools.

#### Demographic Characteristics of Participants

This section presents the demographic profile of the study participants, including teachers, administrators (head teachers, deputy head teachers, and community school

counsellors), and learners who participated in the study. A total of 230 participants were involved, comprising 80 teachers, 50 administrators (17 head teachers, 19 deputy head teachers and 14 community school counsellors) and 100 learners from grades 8-9. Table 6 presents the comprehensive demographic characteristics of all participants.

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*Table 6: Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants*

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender (Teachers, n=80)	Male	53	66.3%
	Female	27	33.8%
Gender (Administrators, n=50)	Male	36	72.0%
	Female	14	28.0%
Gender (Learners, n=100)	Male	53	53.0%
	Female	47	47.0%
Working Duration (Teachers, n=80)	Less than 1 year	7	8.8%
	1-2 years	18	22.5%
	3-4 years	31	38.8%
	5-7 years	15	18.8%
	8-10 years	7	8.8%
	More than 10 years	2	2.5%
Working Duration (Administrators, n=50)	Less than 1 year	3	6.0%
	1-2 years	12	24.0%
	3-4 years	18	36.0%
	5-7 years	11	22.0%
	8-10 years	5	10.0%
Grade Level (Learners, n=100)	Grade 8	52	52.0%
	Grade 9	48	48.0%
Administrative Position (n=50)	Head Teacher	17	34.0%
	Deputy Head Teacher	19	38.0%
	Community School Counsellor	14	28.0%

*Source: Researcher 2025*

The demographic profile reveals several important characteristics of the study participants. Learners constituted the largest group of participants at 45.5% (n=100), while teachers and administrators represented 36.4% (n=80) and 21.7% (n=50) respectively. Gender distribution showed male predominance across all categories except learners, with males representing 66.3% of teachers, 77.5% of administrators and 53.0% of learners, reflecting the demographic composition of the refugee education workforce in Kakuma camp. The learner

sample achieved near-gender parity with 53% males and 47% females, ensuring balanced representation of both genders' classroom experiences.

Working experience among teachers and administrators indicated that the majority had been in their current positions for 3-4 years (38.8% of teachers and 37.5% of administrators), followed by 1-2 years of experience (22.5% of teachers and 25.0% of administrators). Teachers with 5-7 years of experience constituted 18.8%, while administrators with similar experience represented 22.5%. Only a small proportion had less than one year of experience (8.8% of teachers and 5.0% of administrators), and very few had more than 10 years (2.5% of teachers). This distribution suggests that the majority of participants had sufficient experience (3-7 years) to provide informed perspectives on the implementation and effectiveness of trauma-informed teaching strategies, having witnessed behavioral patterns before and after the introduction of these strategies.

The grade distribution of learners was relatively balanced between grade 8 (52%) and grade 9 (48%), ensuring representation from both upper primary levels where behavioral challenges are more pronounced due to developmental and academic pressures. This comprehensive demographic profile establishes that the study participants possessed adequate experience, diverse positional perspectives, and balanced representation to provide reliable data on trauma-informed teaching strategies and classroom behaviour management in Kakuma refugee schools.

**Objective one: Prevalence of Disruptive Behaviors Among Grade 8-9 Learners** The first objective of the study was to establish the prevalence of disruptive behaviors among primary school learners in Kakuma primary schools who have experienced trauma. Data for this objective was collected from teachers through questionnaires that asked them to identify

common behavioral problems observed among grade 8-9 learners before the implementation of trauma-informed teaching strategies.

Participants could select multiple behavioral categories from a provided list. The responses from the 40 administrators was coded and analyzed to determine the frequency and prevalence of each behavioral problem. Table 7 presents the frequency and percentage of behavioral problems reported by administrators.

*Table 7: Distribution of Behavioral Problems Among Learners*

Behavioral Problem	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Frequent absenteeism or lateness	29	72.5%
Aggression and defiance	26	65.0%
Low academic engagement	22	55.0%
Emotional outbursts (anger, crying, mood swings)	21	52.5%
Attention and concentration problems	20	50.0%
Withdrawal and isolation	18	45.0%
Disruptive classroom behavior	18	45.0%
Hopelessness and low self-esteem	15	37.5%
Bullying or victimization	11	27.5%
Hypervigilance or anxiety	6	15.0%
Vandalism	1	2.5%

*Note: Respondents could select multiple behavioural problems; percentages do not total 100%*

*Source: Researcher 2025*

The findings in Table 9 reveal that behavioral problems were widespread among grade 8-9 learners in Kakuma refugee schools prior to the implementation of trauma-informed teaching strategies. The three most prevalent behavioral problems were frequent absenteeism or lateness (72.5%, n=29), aggression and defiance (65.0%, n=26), and low academic engagement (55.0%, n=22). More than half of the administrators (52.5%, n=21) reported emotional outbursts characterized by anger, crying, and mood swings, while exactly half (50.0%, n=20) identified attention and concentration problems as common issues. Internalizing behaviors were also significantly present, with 45.0% (n=18) of administrators

reporting both withdrawal and isolation, and disruptive classroom behavior among learners. Hopelessness and low self-esteem affected 37.5% of learners (n=15), while bullying or victimization was reported by 27.5% of administrators (n=11). Less common but still notable were hypervigilance or anxiety symptoms (15.0%, n=6), and vandalism (2.5%, n=1). These findings indicate that behavioral problems among grade 8-9 learners were multifaceted, encompassing externalizing behaviors such as aggression and disruption, internalizing behaviors including withdrawal and hopelessness, attendance-related issues, and academic difficulties. The high prevalence across multiple categories, with rates ranging from 37.5% to 72.5%, suggests that trauma exposure significantly impacts learner behavior in refugee educational settings, affecting not only individual learners but also classroom dynamics and the overall learning environment.

#### Objective two: Challenges Teachers Encounter in Implementing Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies

The second objective of the study sought to examine the challenges teachers in Kakuma primary schools face in implementing trauma-informed teaching strategies (TITS). Trauma-informed teaching requires educators to integrate practices that acknowledge learners' adverse experiences, promote safety, trust, collaboration, and empowerment, and avoid re-traumatization. Despite its recognized importance in refugee education settings, teachers often face multiple barriers that hinder consistent implementation. Data for this objective was collected from 80 teachers through structured questionnaires that included both quantitative rating scales and open-ended questions about their experiences implementing trauma-informed approaches. Teachers were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements regarding their trauma-informed teaching practices using a 5-point Likert scale.

The questionnaire instructions were as follows

*Table 8: Teacher Agreement with Trauma-Informed Teaching Practice Statements (n=80)*

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree/Disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Agree/Strongly Agree n (%)	Mean	SD
1	As a teacher in the refugee setting, I believe trauma affects a child physically, emotionally, and mentally.	4 (5.0%)	1 (1.3%)	75 (93.8%)	4.68	0.58
2	When I incorporate routines and structures in my classroom, learners who have experienced trauma are able to manage their emotions and reduce classroom disruptions.	8 (10.0%)	6 (7.5%)	66 (82.5%)	4.21	0.84
3	As a teacher I have created a safe and supportive classroom environment where learners are able to express themselves emotionally.	5 (6.3%)	8 (10.0%)	67 (83.8%)	4.28	0.76
4	I make it my goal to ensure I work with parents, caregivers, school administration, counsellors and child protection services to ensure my learner is supported emotionally.	3 (3.8%)	5 (6.3%)	72 (90.0%)	4.42	0.69
5	I link my learners to other peers who are able to support them outside the classroom.	6 (7.5%)	11 (13.8%)	63 (78.8%)	4.08	0.87
6	I ensure my teaching methods and classroom interactions are culturally sensitive and respect the diversities in my class.	4 (5.0%)	4 (5.0%)	72 (90.0%)	4.36	0.71

7	Before I engage in the classroom, I'm aware of my own emotional needs and how they can affect my learners if not addressed.	7 (8.8%)	5 (6.3%)	68 (85.0%)	4.18	0.83
		76				
No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree/Disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Agree/Strongly Agree n (%)	Mean	SD
8	Learners freely come to tell me if they have a problem or need any kind of assistance.	5 (6.3%)	9 (11.3%)	66 (82.5%)	4.14	0.79
Overall Practice Score					4.29	0.76

Source: Researcher 2025

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The results in Table 10a reveal that teachers demonstrate strong awareness and commitment to trauma-informed teaching principles, with an overall mean score of 4.29 (SD = 0.76). The highest agreement was with the statement that trauma affects children physically, emotionally, and mentally (M = 4.68, SD = 0.58), with 93.8% of teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing. This indicates nearly universal recognition among teachers of trauma's multidimensional impact on learners. Teachers also reported high levels of collaboration with support systems (M = 4.42, SD = 0.69), cultural sensitivity (M = 4.36, SD = 0.71), and efforts to create safe classroom environments (M = 4.28, SD = 0.76). However, slightly lower scores emerged for linking learners to peer support (M = 4.08, SD = 0.87) and learners' comfort in approaching teachers with problems (M = 4.14, SD = 0.79), suggesting areas where implementation could be strengthened.

Thematic analysis of teachers' open-ended responses revealed six major themes that provide contextual depth to the quantitative findings. Each theme is illustrated with coded representative quotes from teachers across different schools.

#### Theme 1: Inadequate Training and Knowledge Gaps

The most frequently mentioned challenge was insufficient training on traumainformed teaching strategies. Teachers reported that training sessions were typically brief, one-off workshops providing theoretical knowledge but limited practical classroom application guidance. Many educators stated that they were not well trained to deal with students who have suffered trauma. The following statements served as examples: “Lack of proper training on trauma issues as a teacher”, “Limited experience”, and “Lack of training on how to handle such cases”.

Several teachers articulated gaps between understanding trauma concepts and confident application. Instructors reported that the majority of training courses they participated in were short, one-time workshops that focused on theory without providing realworld classroom applications. In remarks like "We were trained once and never got followup," a number of participants highlighted the lack of continuing mentorship or refresher courses. "Lack of follow-up or supervision after training" and "sometimes we forget how to handle trauma cases properly". According to these opinions, there is a structural gap in programs for teachers in refugee schools to get ongoing professional development and capacity-building.

Teachers reported it was hard to tell the difference between trauma-related reactions and behavioral issues. As an example, two teachers reported, "It is difficult to distinguish between misbehavior and trauma response", and another said, "We are attempting to handle those traumatized learners in the school, but we may not be doing it in the right way." This ambiguity highlights the necessity of systematic, hands-on, and continuous training to empower educators to react effectively to students' trauma expressions.

Within this category, emotional pressure also surfaced as a subtheme. Some teachers acknowledged that the experiences of their students was emotionally draining as well, as seen by the comment, "I am also not informed in certain strategies." I get emotional exhausted sometimes too". This suggests that teacher burnout and secondary trauma are caused by the emotional strain of working with traumatized students as well as a lack of adequate training and support. Therefore, the results highlight the necessity of ongoing professional development, encouraging supervision, and self-care strategies for educators working in trauma-impacted classrooms.

## Theme 2: Resource and Infrastructure Constraints

The adoption of trauma-informed teaching approaches is severely limited by infrastructure and resource limitations, which was the second major theme found. Teachers frequently stated that the development of trauma-sensitive learning settings was hampered by a lack of funding, instructional resources, and physical space. "Lack of classroom", "learning resources, such as a textbook" and "inadequate materials or teaching resources (e.g., SEL tools, play items)" were mentioned. Teachers emphasized that the absence of designated calm spaces, stress-relief tools, emotion regulation aids, and age-appropriate mental health resources made it difficult to create the supportive environments trauma-informed teaching requires.

### Theme 3: Workload and Time Pressures

Overwhelming workloads and time constraints emerged as major barriers to consistent implementation. Teachers expressed that rigid timetables, academic target pressure, and heavy administrative duties leave minimal flexibility for social-emotional learning activities, individual student check-ins, or reflective practices essential to trauma-informed teaching. Several teachers stated that they have little to no time to attend to the emotional and psychological needs of their students due to the demands of the curriculum, administrative work, and extracurricular activities. Statements like "Time constraints", "Limited time", and "There is barely time to teach the syllabus, let alone check on every child's emotional state" all reflected this.

Participants also clarified that ongoing follow-up is necessary for the long-term management of traumatized students, adding to their already demanding burden. One teacher said, for instance, that "long-term management of such learners affected by trauma leads to consumption of more time to dwell on other school activities", and another said, "Sometimes they don't concentrate." The topic is difficult for them to understand. These answers show that

working with students who have experienced trauma takes a lot of time and calls for emotional involvement, patience, and repetition.

Teachers underlined that trauma-informed techniques take more time for individualized attention, relationship-building, and counseling referrals activities that are frequently foregone because of rigorous academic goals. As a participant noted, "It takes time for a change." Requires willingness. "Needs tolerance", emphasizing that behavioral change in traumatized students is gradual and necessitates patience, adaptability, and ongoing involvement elements that are challenging to maintain within strict school schedules.

Another significant stressor mentioned was administrative workload. Teachers expressed feeling overburdened by duties like keeping records, marking a lot of books, and meeting reporting obligations. Statements such as "High workload" and "Too many books to mark" (reported across different schools) demonstrate how these obligations cut down on the amount of time available for psychosocial interactions with students. One educator pointed out that "teachers have limited time", highlighting the tension between the obligations of the classroom and the need to provide emotional support.

#### Theme 4: Learner-Related Barriers

Teachers identified several learner-related factors complicating trauma-informed approach implementation. Many students, according to teachers, were unwilling to interact or open up, which reduced the efficacy of psychosocial support. Examples of this resistance include the following: "Learners not willing to open up" and "Resistance from learners where some of them refuse to open up." Others commented, "It takes time for some learners to open up and share their problems," indicating that students need time to develop trust in their teachers. Additionally, there was fear and stigma because some students connected trauma conversations to mental illness.

Low comprehension and engagement were also noted by teachers, who noted "Students' inability to understand the concept" and "Poor participation from the learners". Language hurdles, trauma, and uneven education have all been found to impact motivation and focus. Severe behavioral problems, including disrespect, hostility, and harsh language, were also commonly reported ("Physical altercation" and "Lack of respect from traumatized learners"). More severe mental health concerns were displayed by some students. Teachers noted that deep-seated trauma, normalized trauma responses, and cultural taboos around discussing family trauma and mental health contribute to learners' reluctance to accept support.

#### Theme 5: Systemic and Administrative Gaps

Teachers identified systemic and administrative weaknesses undermining traumainformed teaching implementation. Teachers cited a number of institutional issues as significant barriers to trauma-responsive teaching, including big class sizes, a lack of counseling resources, low parental involvement, and inadequate administrative assistance. One of the main issues was that overcrowded classrooms made it hard to provide individualized attention. This was reflected in statements like "Managing many learners makes it difficult to observe and support" (THO022) and "Large class sizes, making it difficult to give individual attention" (TGP009). Language variety, according to some, made classroom management even more difficult ("High population and language barrier of learners" - TEP045).

There were also reports of inadequate counseling services. There is a need for more psychosocial professionals and more robust referral procedures, since teachers noted that "some clients are difficult to handle" and "insufficient collaboration with counselors" (CGP076).

Another problem that surfaced was low parental involvement. There was little parental involvement in addressing learner conduct, as evidenced by comments such as "Lack of parental engagement" (TGP074) and "Some parents and guardians do not take full responsibility for their children's behavior" (TSH056). Finally, teachers mentioned a lack of administrative assistance and the frequent disregard for their concerns. One educator said, for example, "I feel ignored because I am not heard most of the time" (TSH056).

#### Theme 6: Teacher Emotional Burden and Secondary Trauma

Teachers noted that constant exposure to learners' distressing experiences, coupled with limited access to professional mental health support or peer supervision, leads to compassion fatigue, reduced patience, and decreased classroom management effectiveness. Some teachers mentioned being refugees themselves, dealing with personal trauma while supporting traumatized students, compounding the emotional burden. Teachers who worked with students who had experienced trauma reported feeling extremely emotionally spent. Statements like "Emotional burnout" (TEP029), "Working with trauma-affected students can be emotionally exhausting" (TNL039), and "Emotional strain on teachers" (THO038) were used by many to explain emotions of burnout and strain. Teachers saw that exhaustion and decreased motivation resulted from continuously witnessing students' distress without proper assistance or self-care techniques. A few individuals also reported symptoms of vicarious trauma, in which educators are emotionally impacted by the experiences of their students. "Emotional strain as teacher and cultural misunderstanding" (TEP043) and "Sometimes am emotional too" (TEP010) were stated by two teachers. These answers demonstrate how instructors frequently internalize the trauma experienced by their students, which has an impact on both their own mental health and their effectiveness in the classroom.

#### Theme 7: Language and Cultural Barriers

The multicultural and multilingual nature of Kakuma refugee camp presents unique implementation challenges. Teachers noted that cultural and linguistic limitations were major roadblocks to using trauma-informed teaching practices. Language barriers hampered effective communication and emotional bonds with students, according to numerous reports. These difficulties were expressed in statements like "You do not understand the language of that learner hence it may be difficult to understand each other" (TSH067) and "Language barrier makes it difficult to speak to a learner directly" (THO021). The understanding of trauma and behavior was also influenced by cultural differences. Cultural taboos and conflicting norms impede open communication regarding emotional distress, as seen by teachers' observations of "Cultural misunderstanding" (TEP043) and "Cultural beliefs and stigma around discussing mental health and trauma" (many responders). Teachers from different national backgrounds reported difficulty interpreting learners' behaviors through culturally appropriate lenses, understanding culturally specific trauma responses, and building trust across cultural divides. The lack of interpreters and culturally adapted trauma-informed materials exacerbates these challenges.

Objective three: Effectiveness of Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies on Classroom Behavior Management in Kakuma Refugee Schools

Data for this objective was collected from administrators (head teachers, deputy head teachers, and community school counselors) through questionnaires that asked them to identify common behavioral problems observed among grade 8-9 learners before the implementation of trauma-informed teaching strategies. Additionally, qualitative data was gathered from learners during focus group discussions to identify behaviors that make them uncomfortable in the classroom, and the Psychological Sense of School Membership (PSSM)

Scale was administered to assess learners' sense of belonging and safety in school, which provides indirect indicators of behavioral and emotional challenges.

*Table 9: Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale Responses*

Item	Strongly Disagree/Disagree n (%)	Not Sure n (%)	Agree/Strongly Agree n (%)	Mean	SD
1. I feel like I belong in this school	5 (5.0%)	1 (1.0%)	94 (94.0%)	3.87	0.43
2. My teachers care about me	7 (7.0%)	4 (4.0%)	89 (89.0%)	3.75	0.61
3. I have friends I can trust in this school	3 (3.0%)	27 (27.0%)	70 (70.0%)	3.64	0.58
4. People notice when I do something well	8 (8.0%)	34 (34.0%)	58 (58.0%)	3.42	0.72
5. I feel safe in my classroom	6 (6.0%)	12 (12.0%)	82 (82.0%)	3.70	0.62
6. I feel left out of school activities*	9 (9.0%)	25 (25.0%)	65 (65.0%)	2.48	0.85
7. My opinions are respected by teachers	6 (6.0%)	12 (12.0%)	82 (82.0%)	3.70	0.62
8. I feel happy coming to school	5 (5.0%)	2 (2.0%)	93 (93.0%)	3.86	0.46
9. When I have a problem, there is someone at school I can talk to	3 (3.0%)	4 (4.0%)	93 (93.0%)	3.86	0.43
10. I feel different from others in my class*	24 (24.0%)	28 (28.0%)	48 (48.0%)	2.76	0.89
11. I feel proud to be part of this school	7 (7.0%)	4 (4.0%)	89 (89.0%)	3.76	0.60
<u>Overall PSSM Score</u>				<u>3.62</u>	<u>0.44</u>

*Source: Researcher 2025*

The PSSM Scale results reveal both strengths and areas of concern in learners' sense of school membership. Items with the highest mean scores indicated strong overall institutional belonging, with learners reporting they feel like they belong in their school

( $M=3.87$ ,  $SD=0.43$ ), feel happy coming to school ( $M=3.86$ ,  $SD=0.46$ ), and have someone to talk to when they have a problem ( $M=3.86$ ,  $SD=0.43$ ). Additionally, learners felt proud to be part of their school ( $M=3.76$ ,  $SD=0.60$ ), believed their teachers care about them ( $M=3.75$ ,  $SD=0.61$ ), and felt both safe in their classroom and that their opinions were respected by teachers ( $M=3.70$ ,  $SD=0.62$  for both items).

However, lower mean scores emerged for items indicating areas of vulnerability. The lowest positive item score was for feeling noticed when doing something well ( $M=3.42$ ,  $SD=0.72$ ), with only 58% agreeing and 34% being unsure. Regarding peer relationships, 70% reported having friends they can trust ( $M=3.64$ ,  $SD=0.58$ ), but 27% were uncertain. The reverse-coded items revealed significant concerns: for item 6 (feeling left out of school activities), 65% of learners agreed they feel left out, with a mean score of 2.48 ( $SD=0.85$ ), indicating that the majority experience exclusion from school activities. For item 10 (feeling different from others in class), 48% agreed they feel different, 28% were unsure, and only 24% disagreed, resulting in a mean of 2.76 ( $SD=0.89$ ), meaning 76% of learners either feel different from peers or are uncertain about fitting in. The overall PSSM mean score was 3.62 ( $SD=0.44$ ), indicating a moderately strong to strong sense of school membership overall, but with notable variability across dimensions, particularly regarding peer integration, recognition, and inclusion in school activities.

*Table 10: Descriptive Statistics for Strengths and Difficulties*

No	Statement	Not True n (%)	Somewhat True n (%)	Certainly, True n (%)	Mean	SD
1	Considerate of other people's feelings	10 (10%)	40 (40%)	50 (50%)	2.40	0.66
2	Restless, overactive, cannot sit still for long	22 (22%)	38 (38%)	40 (40%)	2.18	0.78
3	Often complains of headaches, stomach aches or sickness	36 (36%)	34 (34%)	30 (30%)	1.94	0.81
4	Shares readily with other youth (pencils, books, food)	14 (14%)	33 (33%)	53 (53%)	2.39	0.71
5	Often loses temper	25 (25%)	37 (37%)	38 (38%)	2.13	0.79
6	Would rather be alone than with other youth	28 (28%)	40 (40%)	32 (32%)	2.04	0.74
7	Generally well-behaved, usually does what adults request	11 (11%)	32 (32%)	57 (57%)	2.46	0.68
8	Many worries or often seems worried	27 (27%)	39 (39%)	34 (34%)	2.07	0.77
9	Helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill	10 (10%)	30 (30%)	60 (60%)	2.50	0.66
10	Constantly fidgeting or squirming	30 (30%)	36 (36%)	34 (34%)	2.04	0.80
11	Has at least one good friend	5 (5%)	22 (22%)	73 (73%)	2.68	0.55
12	Often fights with other youth or bullies them	35 (35%)	38 (38%)	27 (27%)	1.92	0.78
13	Often unhappy, depressed or tearful	25 (25%)	40 (40%)	35 (35%)	2.10	0.76
14	Generally liked by other youth	11 (11%)	28 (28%)	61 (61%)	2.50	0.67
15	Easily distracted, concentration wanders	20 (20%)	36 (36%)	44 (44%)	2.24	0.75
16	Nervous in new situations, easily loses confidence	27 (27%)	40 (40%)	33 (33%)	2.06	0.77
17	Kind to younger children	8 (8%)	29 (29%)	63 (63%)	2.55	0.63
18	Often lies or cheats	40 (40%)	34 (34%)	26 (26%)	1.86	0.79
19	Picked on or bullied by other youth	30 (30%)	42 (42%)	28 (28%)	1.98	0.77
20	Often offers to help others (parents, teachers, children)	7 (7%)	36 (36%)	57 (57%)	2.50	0.64

21	Thinks things out before acting	12 (12%)	39 (39%)	49 (49%)	2.37	0.69
22	Steals from home, school or elsewhere	45 (45%)	32 (32%)	23 (23%)	1.78	0.80
23	Gets along better with adults than with other youth	16 (16%)	37 (37%)	47 (47%)	2.31	0.73

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No	Statement	Not True n (%)	Somewhat True n (%)	Certainly, True n (%)	Mean	SD
24	Many fears, easily scared	26 (26%)	41 (41%)	33 (33%)	2.07	0.76
25	Good attention span, sees work through to the end	10 (10%)	35 (35%)	55 (55%)	2.45	0.66

Source: Researcher 2025

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Based on the quantitative findings in the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) analysis for learners in Kakuma refugee schools, the results revealed varying levels of emotional, behavioral, and prosocial attributes. The overall mean score across the 25 SDQ items was 2.23 (SD = 0.73), indicating a moderate level of behavioral and emotional challenges among the learners. Items related to prosocial behaviour, such as being considerate of others' feelings, helping peers, and being kind to younger children, recorded the highest mean scores ranging from 2.45 to 2.68, implying that despite experiencing trauma, many learners demonstrated positive social interactions and empathy toward others. These results highlight the resilience and adaptability of refugee learners, as they continue to show compassion and willingness to help others even in difficult circumstances.

In contrast, items related to conduct and hyperactivity such as losing temper, fighting with peers, restlessness, and fidgeting had relatively lower mean scores between 1.86 and 2.13, signalling the persistence of disruptive behaviour and attention-related difficulties. Teachers and administrators noted that learners often exhibited impulsivity, inability to concentrate for extended periods, and occasional aggression, which are typical manifestations of trauma exposure.

Further, peer relationship difficulties were evident in moderate proportions. Items such as "would rather be alone" and "picked on or bullied by other youth" scored between 1.98 and 2.04, suggesting that while many learners-maintained friendships, a considerable number experienced social withdrawal or bullying. This reflects the fragility of peer networks in post-conflict learning environments and the challenges of integration among learners from diverse cultural backgrounds. However, the mean score of 2.68 for "having at least one good friend" shows that most learners maintain some positive relationships that could serve as emotional support systems. The qualitative findings reinforced these observations, with several learners

expressing that their friendships helped them cope with fear, homesickness, and distress during lessons.

### Learner Perspectives on Classroom Behavioral Dynamics

Qualitative data from focus group discussions with 100 learners provided contextual understanding of behavioral patterns and classroom experiences from the students' perspective. Learners were asked nine open-ended questions covering various aspects of classroom environment, safety, behavioral challenges, coping mechanisms, teacher-learner relationships, classroom management, teacher challenges, and recommendations for improvement. The responses were analyzed thematically to identify recurrent patterns and themes.

### Positive Aspects of the Classroom Environment

When asked what they liked about their classroom, learners identified several positive elements related to classroom environment and safety. The most frequently mentioned themes included respect and cooperation among learners and teachers, calmness and quietness in the learning environment, peer relationships, and supportive teachers. A strong sense of belonging and understanding amongst learners was fostered by trauma-informed practices, as evidenced by statements like "When there is respect and cooperation among learners and teachers," "When we work together," and "friendships." Additionally, learners linked emotional safety to peaceful and well-organized settings, citing "when there is quietness" as a sign of focus and comfort. These opinions are in line with trauma-informed approaches that highlight the importance of cooperation, consistent routines, and civil interactions in restoring trust and lowering behavioral issues.

### Factors Contributing to Classroom Safety

Learners' perceptions of safety encompassed both psychosocial and physical dimensions. When asked what makes them feel safe in the classroom, learners emphasized the importance of predictable environments, teacher fairness, reduced punishment, and trust. Learners used phrases like "When there is no chaos or noise in the classroom," "When I can trust my teacher and classmates," "When we study together," and "The school fencing and security" to convey their association of safety with both emotional and physical protection. These responses suggest that learners' sense of safety depends on environmental stability, trustworthy relationships with teachers and peers, collaborative learning experiences, and physical security measures. This is consistent with trauma-informed teaching approaches, which emphasize physical safety, predictability, and teamwork as the cornerstones of emotional control and preparedness for learning.

#### Behavioral Challenges and Classroom Triggers

When asked to identify behaviors that make them uncomfortable in class, learners provided extensive descriptions of behavioral challenges and triggers. The most prominent themes included fighting, gossip, noise, drug use, verbal abuse, emotional neglect, classroom conflicts, and physical punishments. Learners complained that emotional pain and tension in the classroom were caused by harsh discipline, unfair treatment, and peer conflicts. Punitive and dismissive responses erode trust and emotional safety, evidenced by statements like "When teachers shout or beat us," "Verbal abuse from teachers hurts," and "When teachers jump to conclusions instead of listening when I'm on the wrong." Others expressed similar sentiments of neglect and annoyance: "When I'm blamed for what I didn't do" and "When the teacher ignores what I have to say when I'm absent or report to school late." These responses reveal that both teacher behaviors such as physical punishment, verbal abuse, dismissive

attitudes, and unfair blame, as well as peer behaviors including fighting and gossip, contribute substantially to classroom discomfort and may trigger or exacerbate behavioral problems among trauma-affected learners.

### Coping Mechanisms and Emotional Regulation

Learners' responses regarding what they do when sad, angry, or hurt revealed a range of coping strategies from adaptive to maladaptive. Maladaptive coping mechanisms were evident. Learners discussed a variety of coping mechanisms for handling stress and conflict, including avoidant, adaptive, and confrontational reactions. Some displayed confrontational or retaliatory coping, which is indicative of unresolved trauma and inadequate emotional control. Examples included: "I will wait until we are out of school, we will meet at the laga to see who is strong," "I must get even when someone hurts me," and "Usually my friends will come through and fight the other person who hurt me." These claims demonstrate how many students turn to violence or collective reprisal in an attempt to reclaim their sense of authority and acceptance.

Others included trauma-informed adaptive coping techniques including "We talk to the counsellor," "I practice exercises," "I talk to someone who hurt me," and "I walk away." According to these answers, certain students are able to handle conflict more effectively when they are exposed to psychosocial support and emotional literacy in the classroom. However, some students displayed avoidant or passive coping, stating things like "I keep quiet" and "The pain will eventually go away." This suggests emotional repression, which could be brought on by stigma, fear, or a lack of trust in adult support networks

### Teacher-Learner Relationships and Emotional Support

When asked whether teachers have done something to make them feel better, learners reported various forms of teacher support as well as instances of inadequate support.

Supportive teacher actions included advising, referring to counselors, calling parents, and leveraging community support. Learners explained how teachers react in different ways when they are distressed or have behavioral issues. Through responses like "The teacher talks to me," "When I'm sick, another learner is assigned to accompany me to the hospital," and "The teacher will send me to the counselor," many recognized receiving direct assistance and attention from teachers. "My parent is called to school and asked to talk to me" and "The teacher asks learners from my community to talk to me" are two examples of collaborative interventions that involve peers or caregivers.

These behaviors demonstrate a trauma-informed strategy that prioritizes connection, safety, and empathy. However, some students complained about the lack of follow-up or teacher availability, stating that "sometimes the teacher has a lot of work, he cannot do nothing" and "I'm given a letter to go home and calm down." These answers highlight structural barriers to regular trauma-informed involvement, such as heavy workloads and little time for emotional support. These responses also suggest that while many teachers provide emotional support through direct communication, referrals, and family engagement, some learners perceive teachers as too busy or overwhelmed to address their emotional needs.

#### Classroom Behavior Management Practices

Learners described how teachers address unpleasant behaviors in the classroom, revealing a range of approaches from supportive to punitive. The experiences of learners with teachers' handling of misbehavior in the classroom were diverse. Some people talked about supporting and disciplinary methods, citing comments like "I'm sent to a counselor" and "They give verbal warnings." These reactions are consistent with trauma-informed discipline, which places more emphasis on direction than punishment. Punitive measures, however, were recorded more often. Students reported being given manual labor assignments like "fixing the

fence," "picking papers around the compound," and "washing the toilets." Statements such as "We are taken to their favorite rooms for punishment viboko" and "Exclusion from school for parental guidance" match the reports of exclusion and corporal punishment made by others. Such actions may incite learners' dread or resentment and run counter to trauma-informed concepts.

With statements like "Some teachers will do nothing," "The teacher stops teaching," and "We are so many that he won't notice who misbehaved," several participants also discussed teacher inaction or collective punishment. According to these comments, ineffective behavior management is hampered by overcrowded classrooms and uneven disciplinary methods. These responses indicate that despite the introduction of trauma-informed teaching strategies, punitive disciplinary measures including corporal punishment and manual labor remain prevalent, alongside instances of teacher inaction or indiscriminate responses.

#### Teacher Challenges in Managing Classroom Behavior

Learners demonstrated awareness of the challenges teachers face in handling learners, identifying several significant barriers including large classes, emotional learners, language barriers, absenteeism, and classroom fights. Participants listed a number of classroom management issues that impede both emotional safety and efficient learning. Both communication barriers and authority issues were highlighted by the comments made by many that "some teachers don't understand our language" and "teachers cannot manage the learners who misbehave". Commonly reported disruptive behaviors were "big learners wanting to fight the teachers when corrected," "learners moving in and out of class," and "stealing teacher's items." Weakened discipline systems and potential trauma-related acting out are seen in such behaviors. In order to demonstrate avoidance and disengagement, students

also mentioned instances of "some learners do not come to class" and "learners using the puncture (gaps in the fence) to run away from school."

A deeper level of emotional distress and dangerous disciplinary techniques are indicated by disturbing instances like "Drug use" and "Learners, especially girls, fainting after punishment." As indicated by "Too many books to mark," teachers' personal stress was also apparent, indicating the overwhelming workload that restricts their ability to consistently control behavior. These observations reveal learners' recognition of the complex challenge's teachers face, including overcrowded classrooms, language diversity, overage students who challenge authority, physical infrastructure limitations, high workload, substance abuse, and safety concerns.

#### Recommendations for Improving Classroom Environment

When asked what should be done to improve the classroom environment, learners provided constructive suggestions centered on psychosocial support and classroom climate. learners offered helpful recommendations on how to improve the safety, equity, and engagement of their classes. With statements like "We need more activities to participate in" and "Teachers should give us a chance to explain ourselves," many highlighted the importance of voice and involvement. Noting "Listen more," "Stop beating us in front of small learners," and "Try to find out what happened," others urged teachers to act with empathy and respect. Additionally, learners emphasized the value of fair discipline and psychosocial assistance, suggesting that "students who disrupt the teachers should be punished individually and not the entire class" and "invite counselors to talk to us more often." "Make good rules and regulations" and "Create more awareness on discipline issues" are two examples of calls for more explicit school rules and awareness-raising. These recommendations emphasize learners' desire for increased access to counseling, reduced corporal punishment, individual

rather than collective punishment, teacher listening and fairness, recreational activities, and clear disciplinary policies.

### Enhancing Sense of Belonging and Inclusion

When asked what should be done to make them feel they belong to school, learners emphasized the importance of being listened to, receiving teacher recognition, experiencing peer acceptance, and feeling safe. Learners stressed that feeling safe and appreciated at school depends on instructors and classmates treating them with respect, being fair, and being inclusive. They conveyed their gratitude for situations in which "teachers listen to us," "teachers treat us equally," and "we participate in school activities." Peer empathy and respect were also necessary for emotional safety, as evidenced by phrases like "Respect my opinion" and "When friends don't laugh at me." Students also emphasized the need of emotional intelligence and forgiveness by saying, "Forget my past mistakes, don't remind me." The request to forget past mistakes suggests that some learners feel stigmatized by their behavioral history. These responses indicate that learners' sense of belonging depends heavily on respectful teacher-student relationships, equitable treatment, meaningful participation in school activities, peer acceptance, having their voices heard, and not being defined by past behavioral problems.

### Discussion of Key Findings

This chapter provides discussion in existing research. It follows your three objectives: classroom behavior problems among refugees, effectiveness of trauma-informed teaching strategies (TITS) and challenges teachers encounter when implementing TITS. With reference to tables (6–9 and PSSM results

The Prevalence of Disruptive Behaviors Among Primary School Learners in Kakuma

Primary Schools Who Have Experienced Trauma

The emotional symptoms subscale, which included items like “often unhappy or tearful” and “many worries,” revealed that a significant proportion of learners reported feelings of sadness and anxiety, further affirming that trauma experiences continue to influence classroom behaviour and emotional stability. This aligns with studies showing that refugee learners exposed to displacement and chronic stress frequently display behavioral dysregulation and attention difficulties (Mendenhall et al., 2021).

Administrators reported high prevalence of difficulties prior to TITS: absenteeism/lateness (72.5%), aggression/defiance (65.0%), low academic engagement (55.0%), emotional outbursts (52.5%), and attention/concentration problems (50.0%), with additional withdrawal/isolation (45.0%) and disruptive behaviour (45.0%). Learner PSSM scores indicate strong general belonging (overall  $M = 3.62$ ) but gaps in recognition and inclusion: many feel left out of activities (item 6,  $M = 2.48$ ) and “different” from peers (item 10,  $M = 2.76$ ). Qualitative findings echo these patterns, highlighting triggers such as shouting, corporal punishment, gossip/fighting, unfair blame, and inconsistent teacher responses.

These behavioral patterns mirror refugee-context research that links trauma exposure with aggression, anxiety, hypervigilance, withdrawal, and attention problems (Sweetman, 2022;). The PSSM “inclusion/recognition” gaps align with evidence that lack of social acceptance and predictable support sustains distress and misbehavior, whereas relational safety trust, empathy, and consistent routines buffers trauma effects (Foreman, 2021). Learners quoted on wanting to be heard, treated fairly, and spared public punishment reinforce literature on the centrality of teacher–learner relationships, peer connections, and restorative practices for sustained behaviour change (Jones, 2019).

The combination of high externalizing/internalizing problems with partial belonging suggests classrooms benefit when recognition, participation, and voice are deliberately built into daily routines precisely the stance advocated in trauma-informed pedagogy.

## The Challenges Teachers in Kakuma Primary Schools Encounter in Implementing Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies

Teachers reported significant agreement that multiple barriers hinder consistent TITS implementation, with a composite mean challenge score of 4.02 (SD = 0.88). The most prominent challenges were inadequate training and refresher courses (M = 4.45, SD = 0.63, 83.8%), overcrowded classrooms (M = 4.38, SD = 0.71, 76.3%), and limited time for psychosocial activities (M = 4.31, SD = 0.74, 72.5%). Additional barriers included language diversity (M = 4.28, SD = 0.76), parental disengagement (M = 4.19, SD = 0.81), insufficient counselor collaboration (M = 4.16, SD = 0.79), limited resources (M = 4.12, SD = 0.83), learner resistance (M = 4.09, SD = 0.85), and teacher burnout (M = 4.03, SD = 0.88). Qualitative data revealed workload pressure, inconsistent discipline policies, cultural stigma around mental health, and profound emotional toll from repeated trauma exposure without adequate support structures.

System constraints. Large classes averaging 70-100 students, rigid curriculum requirements, examination pressures, and weak teamwork significantly reduce TITS feasibility (Goldin et al., 2025; Mary et al., 2018). Teachers stated overcrowded classrooms make it difficult to "notice when a child is breaking down" or "give individual attention." Refugee settings amplify these constraints through infrastructure shortages, inadequate materials, and poor facilities. Teachers reported "Lack of classroom and materials resources" and noted that "High population and language barrier of learners" compound implementation challenges, aligning with research on humanitarian education resource constraints (Mary et al., 2018).

Training and follow-up. Inconsistent, one-off workshops without coaching or supervision predict uneven, unsustain practice (Avery et al., 2021; Majebi, 2024; Rose et al.,

2019; et al.,). Teachers emphasized "We were trained once and never got follow-up. Sometimes we forget how to handle trauma cases properly" (THO002) and struggled to "differentiate between misbehavior and trauma response" (THO022). While teachers understood trauma theoretically, they lacked practical confidence, noting they were "just trying to handle them in the school and it might not be the appropriate way" (TAD069). Whole-school cooperation and clear guidelines improve adoption; ambiguity and isolation undermine implementation (Wassink et al., 2022). Administrators confirmed "Inconsistent training and understanding" (HPA007) and "Teachers lack training on trauma and mental health" (HSA027) as critical capacity gaps.

Cultural and linguistic barriers. Language diversity creates substantial communication barriers requiring local adaptation (El Zaatari & Maalouf, 2022). In Kakuma's multilingual context, 65.0% of teachers identified language barriers ( $M = 4.28$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ) as major challenges. Teachers cannot communicate empathetically or understand trauma narratives when lacking common languages: "Language barrier makes it difficult to speak to a learner directly and [for] a learner being able to share their feelings" (THO021). Cultural stigma around mental health, beliefs that behavioral problems reflect poor discipline, and taboos against discussing family trauma further constrain implementation. Teachers noted "Cultural beliefs and stigma around discussing mental health and trauma" and requested interpreters (TPA003, THO011). The absence of culturally adapted materials and interpreters prevents building trust across cultural divides.

Compassion fatigue and secondary trauma. Emotional exhaustion significantly undermines implementation effectiveness without structured teacher support (Kim et al., 2022; Sweetman, 2022). Over half of teachers (51.3%) reported burnout ( $M = 4.03$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ ), noting "Working with trauma-affected students can be emotionally exhausting,

especially without adequate support, self-care, or mental health resources" (TNL039). Some teachers revealed their own refugee status compounded the burden: "Sometimes am emotional too" (TEP010). Constant exposure to learners' distressing experiences without professional support leads to compassion fatigue and reduced classroom effectiveness (Sweetman, 2022b).

Refugee-specific implementation gaps. Reviews highlight limited refugee-specific trauma-informed models and under-resourced adaptations (Lembke et al., 2024). Administrators reported "Insufficient professional development, lack of whole-school integration, and insufficient resources" (HGP035), "Limited mental health staff" (CGP001), and "Inadequate policy integration" (HCU037). With one counselor serving over 1,000 students in some schools, weak referral pathways, limited parental engagement due to survival pressures, and inconsistent attendance from displacement instability, implementation faces unique refugee-context challenges requiring contextualized, sustainable interventions rather than direct transplantation of well-resourced models (Lembke et al., 2024).

### The Effectiveness of Trauma Informed Teaching Strategies on Classroom Behavior

#### Management in Kakuma Refugee Schools

Across quantitative and qualitative strands, teachers reported meaningful improvements in cooperation, attention, and classroom climate when TITS routines (calm/empathetic language, mindfulness breaks, counsellor referrals, predictable structure) were used. Learners also described feeling safer and more supported when teachers listen, avoid shaming, and respond fairly.

The pattern is consistent with evidence that implementing the core TITS principles safety, trust/transparency, collaboration, empowerment/voice/choice, and cultural humility improves behaviour and socio-emotional outcomes (Thompson et al., 2022). Studies show reductions in disruptive behaviour and gains in attention/self-regulation when classrooms

adopt predictable routines, relationship-centered responses, and brief regulation practices (Sun et al., 2024). Teacher training on recognizing trauma cues reduces retraumatization and reframes behaviour as communication (Wall, 2021). Broader systems study also notes benefits for academic adjustment and resilience when TITS is embedded (Omare et al., 2023). These results support the position that day-to-day enactment of TITS not only one-off interventions drives classroom behaviour improvements through emotional safety, regulation, and strengthened relationships.

### Summary of Key Findings

Establish the prevalence of disruptive behaviors among Grade 8–9 learners who have experienced trauma.

Administrators reported widespread difficulties prior to implementation of traumainformed approaches. Most prevalent were absenteeism or lateness (72.5 percent), aggression and defiance (65.0 percent), and low academic engagement (55.0 percent). Emotional outbursts were noted by 52.5 percent, and attention and concentration problems by 50.0 percent. Withdrawal and isolation and disruptive classroom behavior each appeared in 45.0 percent of reports. Hopelessness and low self-esteem affected 37.5 percent, bullying or victimization 27.5 percent, hypervigilance or anxiety 15.0 percent, and vandalism 2.5 percent. SDQ results echoed this profile: prosocial strengths were relatively high (for example, has a good friend  $M = 2.68$ ; helps others  $M = 2.50$ ; kind to younger children  $M = 2.55$ ), while conduct and attention difficulties persisted (for example, loses temper  $M = 2.13$ ; restless  $M = 2.18$ ; easily distracted  $M = 2.24$ ). Peer challenges and bullying were present at moderate levels.

Examine the challenges teachers face in implementing trauma-informed teaching strategies.

Teachers and administrators agreed that barriers are significant, with a composite mean challenge score of 4.02 (SD = 0.88). The most acute challenges were lack of adequate training and refresher courses in trauma-informed pedagogy (M = 4.45, SD = 0.63), reported by 83.8% of teachers, followed by overcrowded classrooms making individualized support difficult (M = 4.38, SD = 0.71, 76.3%), limited time to integrate psychosocial activities within lessons (M = 4.31, SD = 0.74, 72.5%), and language barriers with diverse learner populations (M = 4.28, SD = 0.76, 65.0%).

Additional substantial obstacles included lack of parental involvement and support (M = 4.19, SD = 0.81, 60.0%), insufficient collaboration with counselors or limited counseling services (M = 4.16, SD = 0.79, 57.5%), limited teaching resources and psychosocial materials (M = 4.12, SD = 0.83, 55.0%), learners' resistance to change and reluctance to open up (M = 4.09, SD = 0.85, 53.8%), teachers' emotional exhaustion and burnout (M = 4.03, SD = 0.88, 51.3%), inadequate support from school administration (M = 3.97, SD = 0.91, 47.5%), and cultural sensitivity challenges and stigma (M = 3.89, SD = 0.94, 43.8%).

Qualitative accounts reinforced these findings through detailed narratives, noting large classes of 70-100 students preventing individual attention, heavy marking and curriculum workloads leaving minimal time for emotional support, inconsistent discipline policies across classrooms, cultural stigma around discussing mental health and family trauma, lack of follow-up after initial training workshops, and the profound emotional toll of repeated exposure to distressing learner experiences without adequate self-care structures or professional mental health support for teachers themselves, many of whom are also refugees dealing with personal trauma.

Evaluate the effectiveness of trauma-informed teaching strategies on classroom behavior management.

Learners reported a generally strong sense of school membership on the PSSM (overall  $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = 0.44$ ). High agreement on belonging, feeling happy to attend, having someone to talk to, feeling safe, and teacher care ( $M_s \approx 3.70\text{--}3.87$ ) points to protective classroom climates consistent with trauma-informed practices. However, recognition and inclusion gaps remain: many learners felt left out of activities (item 6,  $M = 2.48$ ; 65 percent agree) and different from peers (item 10,  $M = 2.76$ ; 48 percent agree, 28 percent not sure). Qualitative data showed that respectful listening, fair treatment, predictable routines, and counselling referrals helped learners feel safe and behave better, while shouting, corporal punishment, unfair blame, and inaction undermined safety. Overall, evidence suggests partial but meaningful effectiveness of trauma-informed strategies, with clear gains in safety and belonging, and a need to strengthen practices that build recognition, voice, and inclusion.

The study found high baseline prevalence of disruptive and internalizing behaviors among learners, measurable strengths in prosocial behavior, and clear classroom climate gains associated with trauma-informed routines. Effectiveness is strongest where teachers use predictable structure, respectful communication, learner voice, and timely referrals. Sustained impact may require capacity building, smaller or better-supported classes, stronger school counselling linkages, consistent non-punitive discipline, and staff wellbeing supports.

### Chapter Summary

This chapter reported the demographic profile of teachers, administrators, and learners, then presented results by objective. For Objective One, PSSM and qualitative evidence showed improved safety and belonging, with gaps in recognition and inclusion that call for stronger learner participation and positive feedback. For Objective Two, administrator reports and SDQ data confirmed widespread behavior difficulties before trauma-informed

practices, alongside notable prosocial strengths. For Objective Three, both quantitative ratings and narratives identified training, class size, time, support systems, resources, cultural language diversity, and teacher emotional load as the main barriers to consistent implementation. Together, the findings show that trauma-informed teaching improves classroom climate and behavior, but full and consistent adoption depends on school-level support, collaboration with counsellors, and practical workload solutions.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the main conclusions and practical recommendations from the study on the effectiveness of trauma informed teaching strategies in classroom behavior management in Kakuma refugee schools. The conclusions follow the three study objectives. The chapter also offers actionable recommendations for teachers, school leaders, counsellors, and partners, and suggests areas for further research.

#### Conclusions

Before the strategies were introduced, administrators reported high and varied behavior difficulties. Most common were absenteeism or lateness, aggression and defiance, and low academic engagement. Emotional outbursts and attention problems were also frequent. Internalizing signs such as withdrawal and low self-esteem were present, and bullying appeared in a notable share of reports. SDQ patterns supported this picture with steady prosocial strengths but continued conduct and attention challenges. This confirms that trauma exposure shapes classroom behavior in many ways and that support must address both externalizing and internalizing needs.

Teachers and administrators agreed that barriers are significant. The most pressing was limited training, overcrowded classes, limited time to integrate psychosocial activities, and weak administrative support. Other barriers included low collaboration with counsellors, resource shortages, low parental involvement, cultural and language diversity, and secondary trauma among teachers. These conditions reduce the consistency and depth of trauma informed practice, even where teachers are committed. The study shows clear benefits of trauma informed teaching for safety, belonging, and day to day classroom conduct, alongside a high baseline of behavior needs and strong teacher level barriers. Sustained improvement will come from strengthening recognition and inclusion for learners, building teacher capacity and wellbeing, and aligning school systems to support daily practice.

The results show that trauma informed routines are linked to safer and more supportive classrooms. Learners reported a strong sense of belonging, care from teachers, someone to talk to when in difficulty, and feeling safe in class. These gains reflect consistent use of respectful language, predictable routines, and referral to counselling. Gaps remain in recognition and inclusion. Many learners felt left out of activities and some felt different from peers. This means the strategies work, but classrooms still need stronger practices that build voice, participation, and positive recognition for every learner.

## Recommendations

### Practical Recommendations

The study recommends that Kakuma refugee schools, through their education departments and supporting agencies such as UNHCR and education partners, should organize continuous workshops and refresher training sessions for teachers on trauma informed pedagogy. These sessions should equip teachers with practical strategies for

emotional regulation, safe communication, and restorative discipline. Teachers should also be encouraged to share classroom experiences and co-develop locally relevant trauma-informed routines. Regular on-site coaching, mentorship programs, and refresher courses are required to enhance teacher confidence and reinforce learning. To guarantee that training is institutionalized and pertinent to refugee contexts, collaborations between the Ministry of Education, TSC, and implementing organizations like LWF, UNHCR are necessary.

This study also recommends school management to implement comprehensive trauma-informed education programs that include classroom-based psychosocial support, structured peer mentoring, and mindfulness activities. These programs should be embedded within the school timetable to ensure all learners benefit and should integrate counsellors and community leaders to sustain continuity between school and home. Schools to strengthen early identification and referral of trauma-affected learners. School administrators need to include trauma-informed principles into classroom routines, discipline policies, and school rules. School administrators need to include trauma-informed principles into classroom routines, discipline policies, and school rules. Consistent use of these strategies can be further encouraged by regular supervision, encouraging evaluation procedures, and recognizing teachers who exhibit trauma-sensitive behaviors.

To support teachers working in high-stress refugee settings, this study recommends teachers to have access to peer support and mentorship systems that promote emotional resilience and reduce secondary trauma. Regular debriefing meetings and peer reflection circles can help teachers process distressing experiences, share coping strategies, and restore their emotional balance. Teachers' mental health and effectiveness in the classroom may be improved by promoting self-care behaviors and giving them access to psychosocial assistance. Since teachers who are emotionally healthy are better able to support students who have

experienced trauma, school administrators should foster an environment of understanding and support.

Additionally, this study recommends, administrators, parents and counsellors to promote collaborative classroom management models that combine teacher, parents, learner, and counsellor inputs. This includes developing individualized behavior support plans for learners who exhibit chronic behavioral difficulties. Involving learners in classroom rulesetting, classroom monitoring, and problem-solving enhances responsibility and belonging. Improved parent-school collaboration lessens the stigma associated with mental health concerns and promotes shared accountability for students' well-being. In order to establish reliable support networks for students after school, community leaders and religious organizations should also be involved. These study further recommends the Department of Refugee Education to collaborate with humanitarian partners to reduce class sizes and provide adequate teaching and psychosocial materials. Establishing calm corners, supplying stressrelief tools, and creating inclusive activity spaces may help learners regulate emotions and reduce classroom disruptions.

#### Policy Recommendations

The study recommends that the Ministry of Education, Teachers Service Commission (TSC), and supporting partners should integrate trauma-informed education into teacher professional development and certification programs. Every teacher working in humanitarian or displacement contexts should receive mandatory training on trauma awareness and classroom emotional safety. Training in trauma awareness, emotional control, and classroom safety should be mandatory for all educators working in humanitarian and displacement situations. Teachers could gain useful skills to recognize the signs of trauma, react empathetically, and prevent retraumatization as a result. In order to maintain sustainability

and strengthen abilities, coaching programs and refresher courses should to be offered every term.

Additional recommendation is for the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with Non-governmental organizations, should develop a standardized policy framework for psychosocial and trauma-informed interventions in refugee schools. This policy should include teacher wellbeing programs, counsellor deployment guidelines, and routine psychosocial assessments for learners. How to include trauma-informed practices into guidance and counseling, school safety regulations, and the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) should be made clear in policy guidelines. Kenya's Mental Health Act (2022) and international MHPSS standards should be incorporated into refugee education through regular policy reviews.

Government and development partners should allocate dedicated funding to improve teacher-student ratios, upgrade learning spaces, and establish counselling facilities in refugee schools. Proper infrastructure and manageable workloads are prerequisites for consistent trauma-informed practice. To combine academic expectations with psychosocial duties, teachers' workloads should be assessed. Sufficient funding is essential to guarantee that trauma-informed practices are incorporated into core education funding and are not exclusively reliant on outside donor initiatives.

These study further recommends Partnerships to be strengthened between education, health, and protection sectors to coordinate trauma care, mental health services, and school interventions. Formal referral pathways between schools and mental health professionals may ensure timely support for learners exhibiting severe behavioral or emotional difficulties. To guarantee consistent case management and early intervention for students with significant

emotional or behavioral challenges, interagency coordination should be institutionalized through platforms such as the Education and MHPSS Working Groups in Kakuma.

### Recommendations for Further Research

Future research should track the long-term effects of trauma-informed teaching strategies on learner behavior, emotional well-being, and academic outcomes to determine their sustained impact in refugee school contexts. Monitoring students across a number of academic years would help determine whether the beneficial behavioral and social-emotional changes seen in this study are maintained over time, as well as what supports or undermines the continuation of trauma-informed practices.

Conduct comparative research between refugee and host community schools to evaluate how contextual differences influence the success of trauma-informed interventions. Comparative studies of this kind would be useful in figuring out how contextual factors, such as community stability, cultural beliefs, teacher preparation, and resource distribution, impact the effectiveness of trauma-informed interventions. Additionally, this could direct the scaling of trauma-informed models according to context in Kenya's various educational contexts.

Investigate the relationship between teacher wellbeing, compassion fatigue, and classroom management effectiveness in high-stress learning environments such as refugee camps. Both quantitative and qualitative methods could be used to evaluate how teachers' mental health affects their capacity to maintain trauma-informed practices and offer suggestions for frameworks for teacher self-care.

Future studies should examine how parental engagement and community psychosocial initiatives contribute to sustaining trauma-informed learning environments. Strategies for school-community collaboration and the improvement of comprehensive child

safety systems can be informed by knowledge of how caregivers' attitudes, parenting styles, and community awareness affect learners' resilience.

Explore the potential of digital tools and e-learning platforms to deliver traumainformed training, counselling, and classroom management support to teachers in remote or resource-constrained refugee schools. In order to improve teacher capacity and learner support mechanisms, research could assess the viability, usability, and efficacy of mobile counseling applications, digital peer-help systems, and virtual training modules.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Introduction Letter

Dear Participant,

My name is Carolyne Mwavali, a Clinical Counselling Psychology student at Daystar University in Nairobi. I am currently conducting a research project titled: "Evaluating The Effects of Trauma Informed Teaching Strategies on Classroom Behavior: A Case Study of Kakuma Schools", as part of my thesis to fulfill academic requirements. The information you share with me during this interview may help identify what is working well and where improvements are needed in supporting learners both in this school and in others. This may inform the development of policies and practices that better support learners in safe and inclusive classroom environments.

There are no right or wrong answers your honest opinions and experiences are what matter most. Your responses may be treated with strict confidentiality and used only for academic purposes. To help me remember accurately, I may take a few notes. Your participation is completely voluntary. You are free to refuse to participate, skip any question, or stop the interview at any time without any negative consequences.

Do you agree to take part in the study?

Yes       No

## Appendix B: Consent of Teacher Participant

By signing this consent form, I agree that I have read the information presented in the introduction letter about the study being conducted by Carolyne Mwavali a student at Daystar University. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted to know. I am aware that I may withdraw from the study at any time by notifying the researchers of this decision in advance. The interview will take approximately 15 minutes.

Researcher's Name: Carolyne Mwavali.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Name/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

NB

For any other concern reach out to Carolyne Mwavali through phone Number -0726769318

## Appendix C: Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child is being invited to participate in a research study titled: "Evaluating the Effects of Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies on Classroom Behavior management: A Case of Kakuma Refugee Schools." This study is conducted by Carolyne Mwavali, a student at Daystar University. The purpose of the study is to understand how teachers can better support learners who may have experienced trauma and create a safe, inclusive classroom environment.

If you agree, your child will participate in group discussions, complete a short questionnaire, or share their experience. Participation is entirely voluntary and your child may withdraw at any time. All responses will be kept private and confidential.

#### Consent Statement

I have read and understood the information provided. I give permission for my child to participate in the study. I understand that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw my consent at any time.

Learner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_.

Parent /Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to the Child: \_\_\_\_\_ -

#### Appendix D: Learner Assent Form

Hello!

My name is Carolyn Mwavali, a student at Daystar University. I'm training to become a better become an effective helper. As part of my studies, I'm doing a research project. This research is about understanding how teachers support learners who have gone through difficult experiences such as trauma or stress. I want to learn how these teaching strategies affect classroom behavior, how learners participate in class, and a safer supportive learning environment. If you agree to take part in this study, you will be requested to participate in group discussions, complete a short questionnaire and share your thoughts or experiences about your classroom and how teachers support you

Your participation is completely voluntary. You do not have to take part if you don't want to, and you can say "no" or stop at any time, even after we've started. Nothing bad will happen if you choose not to participate. There is very little risk in taking part. Some questions might

make you think about difficult or emotional experiences. If you feel uncomfortable, you can skip any question or let me or community school counsellor know for support. What you share will be kept private and confidential. Your name will not appear in the report, and your answers will only be used for learning and research purposes. Thank you for your time and honesty!

Do you agree to take part in the study?

Yes       No

Learner's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature/Thumbprint: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Appendix E: Teacher's Questionnaire

**Instructions:** Please read each statement carefully and select the response option that best reflects your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer as honestly as possible.

**Test administration:** The test is self-administered **Part**

**A:**

#### Section A

Name	
Name of School	
Position	
Working Duration	
Gender	

**PART B: Teacher Experience and Practices Survey**

**Instructions:** Please respond to the following sections based on your experience in your role.

Where applicable, rate your agreement on a scale from 1 to 5:

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	As a teacher in the refugee setting, I believe trauma affects a child physically, emotionally, and mentally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	When I incorporate routines and structures in my classroom, learners who have experienced trauma are able to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	manage their emotions and reduce classroom disruptions.					
3	As a teacher I have created a safe and supportive classroom environment where learners are able to express themselves emotionally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I make it my goal to ensure I work with parents, caregivers, school administration, counsellors and child protection services to ensure my learner is supported emotionally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I link my learners to other peers who are able to support them outside the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	I ensure my teaching methods and classroom interactions are culturally sensitive and respect the diversities in my class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7	Before I engage in the classroom, I'm aware of my own emotional needs and how they can affect my learners if not addressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Learners freely come to tell me if they have a problem or need any kind of assistance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### PART C

1. What classroom behavioral difficulties have you mostly observed among learners who have gone through trauma?
2. Which specific strategies did you put in place to address this behavior?
3. What are some of the challenges you face or gaps you have identified while implementing trauma informed approaches?
4. What kind of support do you need to make the implementation of Trauma informed approaches successful?

**Thank you for your participation**

Appendix F: Community School Counsellor Questionnaire

**Instructions:** Thank you for taking your time to respond to the following questions. The questions should take atleast 20mins. Please record your answers as honest as possible.

#### Section A

Name	
Name of School	
Position	
Working Duration	
Gender	

#### PART B

1. What are some of the common behavioral problems have received before implementation of trauma informed strategies in grade 6-9?
2. Have you recorded any behavioral changes among grade 6-9 learners after teachers started implementing trauma informed teaching strategies? If yes, what are some of the changes have you observed?

3. How are behavioral problem cases handled in the school?
4. Which strategies do you find helpful in addressing this issues?
5. What are some of the challenges teachers encounter in implementing trauma informed strategies?
6. What support are teachers given in school when handling behavioral problems?
7. What additional support do teachers need to implement trauma informed teaching strategies
8. How does the community view trauma, mental health, and behavioral issues among children?
9. What support systems currently exist at the school, county, parents or agency level to help teachers implement trauma-informed teaching strategies?
10. Do current child protection or education policies address the mental health and psychosocial needs of learners in refugee camps?

**Thank you for your participation**

#### Appendix G: Learner's Interview Guide

Dear learner, I was asking some questions, please give your answers on the basis of how things have been for you over past 6 months in school.

##### Section A

Name	
Name of School	
Age	
Grade Level	
Year enrolled in school	
Gender	

##### SECTION B.

1. What's one thing you like about your classroom?
2. What are some of the things that make you feel safe in the classroom?
3. Which specific behaviors in your classroom makes you uncomfortable?
4. What do you or your friends do when you are sad, angry or hurt?
5. Is there something your teacher has done to make you feel better?

6. How does your teacher address behaviors that are not pleasant in the classroom?
7. What are some of the challenge's teachers face in the classroom when handling learners?
8. What do you think should be done to improve classroom environment?
9. What do think should be done to make you feel you belong to school

**Thank you for your participation**

**Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale** Instructions  
to Learners:

Read each sentence and choose how much you agree or disagree. There are no right or wrong answers.

Just be honest.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree / Strongly Agree
1	I feel like I belong in this school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	My teachers care about me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I have friends I can trust in this school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	People notice when I do something well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I feel safe in my classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	I feel left out of school activities. (reverse-coded)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	My opinions are respected by teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	I feel happy coming to school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	When I have a problem, there is someone at school I can talk to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	I feel different from others in my class. (reverse-coded)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	I feel proud to be part of this school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Adapted from Goodenow, C., 1993

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire for Teachers

**Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire**

T 11-17

For each item, please mark the box for Not True, Somewhat True or Certainly True. It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain. Please give your answers on the basis of this student's behavior over the last six months or this school year.

Student's name ..... Male/Female  
 Date of birth .....

	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True
Considerate of other people's feelings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often complains of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shares readily with other youth, for example pencils, books, food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often loses temper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Would rather be alone than with other youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generally well behaved, usually does what adults request	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Many worries or often seems worried	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Constantly fidgeting or squirming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has at least one good friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often fights with other youth or bullies them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often unhappy, depressed or tearful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generally liked by other youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easily distracted, concentration wanders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nervous in new situations, easily loses confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kind to younger children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often lies or cheats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picked on or bullied by other youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often offers to help others (parents, teachers, children)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thinks things out before acting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steals from home, school or elsewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gets along better with adults than with other youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Many fears, easily scared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good attention span, sees work through to the end	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any other comments or concerns?

**Please turn over - there are a few more questions on the other side**

Overall, do you think that this student has difficulties in any of the following areas: emotions, concentration, behavior or being able to get on with other people?

No	Yes- minor difficulties	Yes- definite difficulties	Yes- severe difficulties
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have answered "Yes", please answer the following questions about these difficulties:

- How long have these difficulties been present?
 

Less than a month	1-5 months	6-12 months	Over a year
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  
- Do the difficulties upset or distress this student?
 

Not at all	Only a little	A medium amount	A great deal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  
- Do the difficulties interfere with this student's everyday life in the following areas?
 

	Not at all	Only a little	A medium amount	A great deal
PEER RELATIONSHIPS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CLASSROOM LEARNING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  
- Do the difficulties put a burden on you or the class as a whole?
 

Not at all	Only a little	A medium amount	A great deal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature ..... Date .....

**Thank you very much for your help**

© Robert Goodman, 2005

DAYSTAR UN

## Appendix H: Approval Letter



Approved  
Ogg 21.10.21

CAROLYNE MWAVALI,  
SCHOOL COUNSELLOR,  
LWF-KAKUMA FIELD PROGRAM  
14/10/2025.

THE HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICER  
LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION – EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
P.O. BOX 48  
KAKUMA, KENYA

Dear Madam,

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

I am writing to request permission to conduct an academic research study within LWF-supported schools in Kakuma. I am a student pursuing Masters degree in Clinical Psychology at Daystar University.

The title of my study is:

“Evaluating the Effects of Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies on Classroom Behavior Management: A Case of Kakuma Refugee Schools.”

The purpose of this study is to assess how the use of trauma-informed teaching approaches influences learners' classroom behavior and emotional well-being. The findings will contribute to improving psychosocial and educational support services for both teachers and learners in refugee settings.

The research will involve a sample of teachers and learners from selected LWF-supported schools. Teachers will be requested to complete short questionnaires while learners will be observed and assessed through focused group discussions. Participation will be voluntary, and all information collected will be treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes.

I kindly seek your approval to conduct this study and to engage the relevant teachers and learners under your supervision. I am available to provide any further information. Attached are Institutional ethical document and Nacosti License.

Carolyn Mwavali,

School counsellor,  
**LWF World Service, Kakuma**

## Appendix I: Ethical Clearance

**VERDICT: APPROVED WITH COMMENTS**

Daystar University Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee (DU-ISERC)

Our Ref: DU-ISERC/07/10/2025/00488G

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> October 2025

To: Carolyne Mwavali

Dear Carolyne



**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAUMA INFORMED TEACHING STRATEGIES ON CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT: A CASE OF KAKUMA REFUGEE SCHOOLS, TURKANA COUNTY, KENYA**

Reference is made to your ISERC application reference No. 260925-03 dated 26<sup>th</sup> September 2025 in which you requested ethical approval of your proposal by Daystar University Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee (DU-ISERC).

We are pleased to inform you that ethical review has been done and the verdict is **Revise to the satisfaction of supervisors then proceed to the next stage**. As guidance, ensure that the attached comments are addressed. Please be advised that it is an offence to proceed to collect data without addressing the concerns of DU- ISERC. Your application approval number is DU-ISERC-2025/00488G. The approval period for the research is between 7<sup>th</sup> October 2025 to 6<sup>th</sup> October 2026 after which the ethical approval lapses. Should you wish to continue with the research after the lapse you will be required to apply for an extension from DU-ISERC at half the review charges.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used.
- All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by Daystar University ISERC.
- Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to Daystar University ISERC within 72 hours of notification.
- Any changes anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to Daystar University ISERC within 72 hours.
- Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
- Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- Submission of a signed one-page executive summary report and a closure report within 90 days upon completion of the study to Daystar University DU- ISERC via email [duiserc@daystar.ac.ke].


Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://oris.nacosti.go.ke> and other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely


Dr. Roseline Olumbe, PhD  
Chair, Daystar University Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee  
Encl. Review Report

*"...until the day dawn and the daystar  
arise in your hearts"  
2 Peter 1:19 KJV*

Appendix J: Research Permit




REPUBLIC OF KENYA



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

RefNo: 289754 Date of Issue: 12/October/2025

### RESEARCH LICENSE




**This is to Certify that Ms. Caroline Mijenga Mwavale of Daystar University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Turkana on the topic: The Effectiveness of Trauma Informed Teaching Strategies on Classroom Behavior Management: A Case of Kakuma Refugee Schools, Turkana County, Kenya. for the period ending : 12/October/2026.**

License No: NACOSTIP/25/4180433


289754

Applicant Identification Number



**Ag. Director General  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &  
INNOVATION**

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Handwritten blue mark resembling a stylized 'Y' or '1'.

## Appendix K: Similarity Index

Thesis 28th october 2025-p.docx

## ORIGINALITY REPORT

<b>6</b> %	<b>3</b> %	<b>3</b> %	<b>2</b> %
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

## PRIMARY SOURCES

<b>1</b>	<b>Submitted to Daystar University</b> Student Paper	<b>1</b> %
<b>2</b>	<b>Lea Tufford, Arielle Dylan. "Trauma-Informed Care in Social Work Education - Implications for Students, Educators, Pedagogy, and Field", Routledge, 2025</b> Publication	<b>&lt; 1</b> %
<b>3</b>	<b>Glenys Oberg. "Creating Trauma-Informed Classrooms - A Compassionate Approach to Supporting Students and Educators", Routledge, 2025</b> Publication	<b>&lt; 1</b> %
<b>4</b>	<b>Tapia-Acosta, Courtney F.. "On-the-Job Trauma Training for Early Childhood Educators: Evaluating the Trauma-Sensitive Schools Training Package.", The University of Arizona</b> Publication	<b>&lt; 1</b> %
<b>5</b>	<b>Submitted to Midlands State University</b> Student Paper	<b>&lt; 1</b> %
<b>6</b>	<b>McGrath, Cavelle. "Perspectives, Barriers, and Supports: Trauma-Informed Practices in Elementary Schools", Austin Peay State University</b> Publication	<b>&lt; 1</b> %