

Improving Teaching and Learning Resources in the Implementation of Life Skills Education in High Schools in Lesotho



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ABSTRACT

The effective implementation of Life Skills Education (LSE) in high schools is crucial for equipping learners with the necessary skills to navigate personal, social, and academic challenges. In Lesotho, however, the lack of adequate teaching and learning resources has hindered the successful delivery of LSE. This study investigates the current state of resource availability in implementing LSE in selected high schools across Lesotho. The study explores the challenges LSE teachers face and identifies strategies to improve resources. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews using a qualitative research approach. Eleven participants were purposively selected from four schools in the Maseru and Mochale Districts. The findings reveal that most schools lack essential materials, including updated textbooks, visual aids, lesson guides, and interactive tools. Additionally, many LSE teachers report insufficient training and limited support from the Ministry of Education. Hence, key resources such as LSE books, updated syllabi, teaching aids, and posters are mandatory. The results suggested a need for continuous supervision and support during LSE implementation. Furthermore, the study revealed that LSE's contribution to passing marks, the appointment of LSE-qualified teachers, the creation of LSE grants, and the use of appropriate teaching methods could improve its implementation in schools. Engaging LSE specialists would also be beneficial. This study recommends the provision of sustainable investment and innovation in educational resources to ensure that the full potential of LSE is realised. The study concludes that providing relevant, learner-centered, and culturally appropriate teaching materials, along with ongoing teacher support and capacity-building, is vital for the effective integration of LSE.

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INTRODUCTION

Generally, education is formed on four pillars: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together.¹ On this basis, more specific skills are needed within LSE to prepare adolescents to learn and live positively in schools and communities. According to Nair and Ranjan, life skills

¹ UNESCO, "Learning: The Treasure within. Report for UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century.," 2004, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002273/227373e.pdf>; Lalbiakdiki Hnamte and F Lalrinzuali, "The Four Pillars of Education and the Models of Teaching," *Mizoram Educational* 1 (2018).

strengthen individuals' psychological and social growth; hence, they are called psychosocial competencies.² These competencies include an individual's ability to manage daily life's demands and challenges effectively. Such competencies could help individuals maintain mental well-being and demonstrate it through adaptive, positive behaviours when interacting with other cultures and environments.³ LSE has been implemented in Lesotho, though no adequate resources have been allocated. Principals and teachers reported they were not well-trained in LSE and are incapable. Apart from their abilities, they also reported that they lack the additional resources needed.

According to Tsiu, teaching and learning resources refer to all available materials to support school services.⁴ Notably, these schools' resources enhance teaching and learning, making them more interactive, engaging, and accessible, catering to various learning styles and abilities, and ultimately improving learners' performance. They help create a productive environment that leads to fewer stressful occurrences.⁵ In addition, adequate resources empower teachers to perform their best and overcome rising challenges.⁶ Teachers and principals were interviewed to explore the LSE requirements for developing relevant teaching and learning resources to support the effective implementation of LSE in high schools in Lesotho. That will be achieved by exploring the teaching and learning resources in implementing LSE and the relevant teaching methods.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching and learning resources for implementing LSE

Books

It is essential to consider that teaching and learning resources could enhance the successful implementation of LSE. Enough evidence revealed a need to improve LSE implementation in high schools.⁷ Schools must provide materials and resources to implement LSE successfully. For example, storybooks are needed since they help learners acquire a broad knowledge of LSE while improving their reading skills.⁸ The availability of books might inspire learners to continue their schoolwork even in the absence of teachers.⁹ Hence, books are critical educational tools because they help learners create scenarios that strengthen their critical thinking and analytical skills.¹⁰ Similarly, storybooks help transfer core values, including sharing and tolerance.¹¹ Enough books should also be provided, as almost every syllabus recommends books as part of the learning. These materials and resources must accommodate every learner so they can read independently. Apart from fostering critical thinking, information literacy contributes to sustained learning. Thus, it improves learners' ability to give meaning to experiences.¹²

Syllabus

A syllabus is essential for teachers to organise their work and consider the helpful teaching aids needed for each topic. It refers to a detailed summary of objectives to be completed in the curriculum. It is used as a guide in any subject, providing a roadmap of the activities to be done. Additionally, it provides the

² A Radhakrishnan Nair and Ms Sunitha Ranjan, "Life Skills Education: Origin and Development of the Concept," *International Journal of Life Skills Education* 6, no. 2 (2020): 5–23.

³ Nair and Ranjan, "Life Skills Education: Origin and Development of the Concept."

⁴ Nthofela Tsiu, "Teachers' and Principals' Challenges in Implementing Life Skills Education at Secondary Schools in Lesotho," *International Journal of Studies in Inclusive Education* 1, no. 1 (September 1, 2024): 52–57, <https://doi.org/10.38140/ijisie.v1i1.1284>.

⁵ Karina Nielsen et al., "Workplace Resources to Improve Both Employee Well-Being and Performance: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis," *Work & Stress* 31, no. 2 (April 3, 2017): 101–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02678373.2017.1304463>.

⁶ Paul Jiménez, Bianca Winkler, and Anita Bregenzer, "Developing Sustainable Workplaces with Leadership: Feedback about Organizational Working Conditions to Support Leaders in Health-Promoting Behavior," *Sustainability* 9, no. 11 (2017): 1944.

⁷ Muhammad Jamil, Hina Zahra, and Farah Fida, "Integrating Life Skills in Secondary Education: Teachers' Perspectives and Challenges," *Journal of Social & Organizational Matters* 3, no. 4 (October 17, 2024): 01–10, <https://doi.org/10.56976/jsom.v3i4.112>.

⁸ Hazaymeh Wafa'A and Moath Khalaf Alomery, "The Effectiveness of Visual Mind Mapping Strategy for Improving English Language Learners' Critical Thinking Skills and Reading Ability," *European Journal of Educational Research* 11, no. 1 (2022): 141–50.

⁹ Madoda Cekiso et al., "Factors Affecting Grade 6 Learners' Reading Performance in a Rural School in Maluti, South Africa," *Reading & Writing-Journal of the Reading Association of South Africa* 13, no. 1 (2022): 327.

¹⁰ Fethi Turan and Ilkay Ulutas, "Using Storybooks as a Character Education Tools.," *Journal of Education and Practice* 7, no. 15 (2016): 169–76.

¹¹ Turan and Ulutas, "Using Storybooks as a Character Education Tools."

¹² Colin Mang, Natalya Brown, and Linda Piper, "'Old School' Meets 'New School': Using Books and Tablets to Improve Information Literacy and Promote Integrative Learning among Business Students," *The International Journal of Management Education* 15, no. 3 (2017): 449–55.

expected product for learners' development. Aliponga emphasised that a syllabus helps teachers monitor and track students' progress towards the set objectives of the curriculum.¹³ Hence, teachers achieve the objectives by providing support and guidance and creating a conducive learning environment. Teachers, therefore, learn to use their skills and experiences to blend students' learning with content to make concepts understandable.¹⁴ Gannon indicated that a syllabus is a supplementary tool that does not serve only as a worksheet.¹⁵ It is considered to set the tone for the course, as it clarifies learners' roles in the learning process. Gannon indicated that, while creating a syllabus, a teacher should consider it an invitation to engage students in the learning process.¹⁶ As much as teachers control the learning environment, Gannon still holds that regardless of how long teachers have been teaching, a syllabus will remain helpful as it provides resources and recommendations that may enhance learning and motivation.¹⁷

Posters

It is important to note that posters are a useful communication device between schools, learners, parents, and other stakeholders. Providing teaching aids, such as posters, could help improve LSE in schools. According to Setiawati et al., a poster advertisement of ideas is created for information accessibility.¹⁸ Posters must always be attractive and capture learners' attention. They help encourage discussions among learners since they are visual. This engagement could help learners to discern every detail. They are also beneficial as they allow learners to debate what they see depending on their views. According to Kumar, learners responded out of curiosity and enthusiasm whenever asked to define what was shown on the poster.¹⁹ Thus, posters could stimulate learners' participation by helping them easily exercise their thinking abilities. Since LSE is a flexible programme that employs various learning methods, posters are essential because they provide additional access to new knowledge.

Teaching methods in LSE

Learner-centered approach

The usage of appropriate methods could help with the successful implementation of LSE. For example, the learner-centered approach has been identified as an effective approach for several reasons. And Reigeluth asserts that the learner-centered model is one of the most essential approaches to learning because it focuses on developing real-life skills, such as collaboration, higher-order thinking, and problem-solving.²⁰ In this regard, teachers are expected to have high expectations for all students and pay close attention to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes each student brings into the classroom. Dibapile suggests that teachers need to use more effective techniques, such as modeling, coaching, and fading, in LSE.²¹ Those skills enable the teacher to assist learners in completing necessary tasks through active engagement. Modern education has purged written learning and focused more on creativity and critical thinking in different learning areas. Ciobanu adds that teachers are encouraged to create a supportive classroom environment to encourage involvement, as this stimulates learning and personal development among students.²² This approach has been found effective because it involves experiential learning, a constructivist approach.

¹³ Jonathan Aliponga, "Reading Journal: Its Benefits for Extensive Reading," 2013, <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:62497331>.

¹⁴ Kevin Gannon, "How to Create a Syllabus," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2018, 2018–19.

¹⁵ Gannon, "How to Create a Syllabus."

¹⁶ Gannon, "How to Create a Syllabus."

¹⁷ Gannon, "How to Create a Syllabus."

¹⁸ Eti Setiawati et al., "Scrutinizing Pictures, Essentializing Ecological Care: Analysis of Ecological Linguistic Landscape on Environmental Education Posters in Schools," *Journal Homepage: Http://Journal2. Um. Ac. Id/Index. Php/Jisllac* 4, no. 1 (2020).

¹⁹ Pradeep Kumar, "Morality and Life Skills: The Need and Importance of Life Skills Education," *International Journal of Advanced Education and Research* 2, no. 4 (2017): 144–48.

²⁰ Yun-Jo An and Charles Reigeluth, "Creating Technology-Enhanced, Learner-Centered Classrooms," *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education* 28, no. 2 (December 2011): 54–62, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2011.10784681>.

²¹ Waitshega Tefo Smitta Dibapile, "A Review of Literature on Teacher Efficacy and Classroom Management," 2012.

²² Nicoleta Ramona Ciobanu, "Active and Participatory Teaching Methods," *European Journal of Education* 1, no. 2 (July 17, 2018): 69, <https://doi.org/10.26417/ejed.v1i2.p69-72>.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming has also been identified as suitable for delivering LSE in schools. This approach allows learners to generate ideas quickly and helps students use their imagination and think out of the box. It is also a good discussion starter because the class can generate ideas creatively. It is essential to evaluate the pros and cons of each idea or rank ideas according to specific criteria. As Elsharkawy points out, brainstorming creates a learning environment by allowing learners to generate ideas through discussion.²³ This can help learners discover their abilities, including problem-solving skills. It enables students to deepen their understanding of the topic and personalise their connection while developing listening, assertiveness, and empathy skills.

Role play

In addition, it is relevant to consider that the role plays could also be a critical element in improving the successful implementation of the LSE. Roleplays are considered fun activities that demand the whole class to be active through participation. They provide an excellent strategy for practicing skills and experiencing how one might handle a potential situation in real life. They increase empathy for others and their perspectives, and generate insight into their feelings. As Clapper describes, role play is another form of simulation that allows learners to get involved rather than be told.²⁴ In that way, they truly experience what is being rehearsed. This interaction makes information processing possible at different levels, and knowledge is easily internalised. Role plays help learners explore real-life situations and practice responses. Role play is a highly effective teaching method in Life Skills Education because it actively engages learners in realistic scenarios, helping them practice and internalise essential skills. Thus, role-play involves learners in hands-on experiences, making learning more dynamic and memorable than passive methods like lectures. By acting out real-life situations, learners are challenged to think on their feet, assess options, and make decisions in key life situations.

Educational games and simulations

Educational games and simulations were similarly identified as approaches that may be critical in implementing LSE in schools. Using games in class could promote fun, active learning, and rich discussions as participants work hard to prove their points or earn points. However, they require a combination of knowledge, attitudes, and skills to allow students to test assumptions and abilities in a relatively safe environment. As Wang et al. explain, simulation leads to effective learning by providing standardised, repeated practice.²⁵ Storytelling could help students think about local problems and develop critical thinking and creative skills to write or interact to tell stories.

Storytelling

Storytelling lends itself to drawing analogies, making comparisons, and helping discover healthy solutions. It also enhances attention and listening skills and develops patience and endurance. Spaulding observes that storytelling discourages teacher-centered approaches, where the teacher seems to be the winner. Instead, it encourages a learner-centered approach, putting students at the forefront.²⁶ Hence, storytelling has a unique power since the listener can naturally sink into the shared idea. This view emphasises the need for teacher training to help them provide opportunities to address a particular issue in depth and creatively.

Debates

Debates allow students to defend a position that may be important to them. They offer opportunities to practice higher-order thinking skills. Wason and Southall point out that debates encourage creative

²³ Mohamed Elsharkawy, "The Effectiveness of Using Brainstorming Strategy Style of Cooperative Learning on the Development of Creative Thinking Abilities and Speed of Learning Some Skills Kinetic Padres Physical Education," *International Journal of Sports Science and Arts* 011, no. 011 (October 1, 2019): 44–65, <https://doi.org/10.21608/eijssa.2019.72942>.

²⁴ Timothy Clapper, "Role Play and Simulation: Returning to Teaching for Understanding," *Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review*, January 4, 2010.

²⁵ Ryan Wang et al., "A Systematic Review of Serious Games in Training Health Care Professionals," *Simulation in Healthcare* 11, no. 1 (2016): 41–51.

²⁶ Amy E Spaulding, *The Art of Storytelling: Telling Truths through Telling Stories* (Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2011).

thinking to compel participants to discuss their ideas competitively.²⁷ In that way, learners do not become passive in class discussions. They become wise in decision-making. Debates are helpful when the time is limited, as they maximise student input. They allow students to interact and get to know one another better, thus enhancing team building and teamwork.

Group discussions

Group discussion is a powerful and effective method in Life Skills Education because it fosters active engagement, social interaction, and personal reflection. Learners practice expressing their thoughts clearly, listening to others, and giving feedback. This builds verbal communication, active listening, and interpersonal skills. Learners can therefore analyse different viewpoints and reflect on their beliefs. Hearing others' opinions and experiences teaches learners to respect differences and understand diverse perspectives. This helps develop empathy, tolerance, and conflict resolution skills. Learners learn from each other's ideas, mistakes, and experiences. This promotes cooperation, teamwork, and collaborative learning. Sharing personal experiences and opinions also helps learners better understand themselves.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Jack Mezirow's transformative Learning theory is adopted in this study to enable teachers to critically reflect on their beliefs, assumptions, and experiences, thereby changing their perspective and behaviour towards LSE. Teachers are provided with support to examine their attitudes, biases, and teaching approaches. Teachers who engage in transformative learning remain open to new strategies and continual professional growth. Transformative Learning Theory helps teachers grow not just as educators but as reflective practitioners who can inspire meaningful change in their students. This theory emphasises critical reflection, perspective transformation, and personal growth, all of which are essential for effective teaching. The theory promotes adaptive thinking by helping teachers become more flexible and open to change. Thus, the theory strengthens Student-Centered Approaches by enabling teachers to understand how learners transform their thinking. The theory also helps teachers build emotional intelligence by teaching them to navigate sensitive topics with care and to create safe spaces for dialogue and personal growth.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative approach. According to Udo and Rädiker, the qualitative approach refers to non-numerical, unstructured data used in the social sciences.²⁸ This approach focused on obtaining data through open-ended questions and conversational communication.²⁹ This approach was appropriate for this study as it explores individual thinking and understanding, and why they think the way they do.³⁰ The qualitative approach is especially relevant when exploring teacher resources, as it allows researchers to delve into educators' lived experiences, perceptions, and contextual realities. It also helps uncover how teachers use resources, what they value, and what challenges they face. It is advantageous as it helps explore behaviours and experiences through various methods, such as focus groups and one-on-one interviews.³¹ Crowe et al. highlighted that the qualitative approach could yield an in-depth, multifaceted understanding of a complex issue by unpacking it and relating it to a real-life context.³² It is disadvantageous because the findings cannot be generalised to the entire population, as they are based on a small sample.³³

²⁷ Hilary Wason and Jane Southall, "Using Innovative Assessment to Enhance Student Engagement and Develop Critical Thinking Skills: The Case of The Big Debate," *Student Engagement in Higher Education Journal* 1, no. 1 (2016).

²⁸ Udo Kuckartz and Stefan Rädiker, "Introduction: Analyzing Qualitative Data with Software," in *Analyzing Qualitative Data with MAXQDA: Text, Audio, and Video* (Springer, 2019), 1–11.

²⁹ Kuckartz and Rädiker, "Introduction: Analyzing Qualitative Data with Software."

³⁰ Kuckartz and Rädiker, "Introduction: Analyzing Qualitative Data with Software."

³¹ Kuckartz and Rädiker, "Introduction: Analyzing Qualitative Data with Software."

³² Sarah Crowe et al., "The Case Study Approach," *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 11, no. 1 (December 27, 2011): 100, <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-11-100>.

³³ D C N Sodhi, *Research Methodology: Concepts and Cases* (Vikas Publishing House, 2011), https://books.google.com.gh/books?id=Rg_yjgEACAAJ.

Research paradigm

This study employed an interpretive paradigm to understand how to improve the teaching and learning resources in implementing LSE in schools. This paradigm is relevant because it views reality and meaning creation as socially constructed and acknowledges that people understand social realities.³⁴ It helps to understand the phenomenon by exploring the nature of interaction among individuals and their historical and cultural contexts.³⁵ It further helped to interpret the individuals' views of the world and their life experiences.³⁶ This study believed that subjective factors influence human behaviours. However, the data collected may be biased by participants' views. Although the model is flexible enough to rely on participants' understanding and thoughts, the findings cannot be generalised.³⁷ In any case, the actions and interactions of human beings lie at the center of qualitative research, aligning their experiences with the aim of this study.

Research design

This study adopted a case study design to explore teachers' and principals' views on implementing LSE. This design was advantageous because it created an opportunity to understand the complexity of life by breaking it into digestible parts. In addition, case studies scrutinise people, events, and decisions, examining the current situation and seeking to understand events from a historical perspective.³⁸

Data collection instruments

Semi-structured interviews

Data were collected through semi-structured telephone interviews. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, many educational institutions were adjusting their teaching approaches and continuing face-to-face interactions. It is advantageous to use the telephone since it is convenient and affordable. However, one disadvantage of telephonic interviews is the lack of visual cues, which forces the interviewer and interviewee to rely on verbal communication to convey their messages.³⁹ This technique used open-ended questions about participants' biographical details, such as gender, age, and teaching experience at LSE. These questions focused on teachers' perspectives on improving and implementing LSE in high schools. Each interview session lasted about forty-five minutes. The interviews were audio-recorded for later reference. This study believes that semi-structured interviews are a suitable data collection tool, as they provide insights to improve teaching and learning resources for implementing the LSE in schools.

Participants

Eleven participants were conveniently and purposively selected from four schools in the Maseru and Mhales' Hoek districts, Lesotho. The two schools were in the urban area, while the others were in the rural area. This study identified seven LSE teachers and four principals as the most knowledgeable and reliable informants for improving teaching and learning resources in the implementation of LSE in schools. Participants were from the Basotho culture, and their teaching experiences were taken into account when implementing LSE.

³⁴ F Tuli, "The Basis of Distinction Between Qualitative and Quantitative Research in Social Science: & Reflection on Ontological, Epistemological and Methodological Perspectives&," *Ethiopian Journal of Education and Sciences* 6, no. 1 (April 13, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.4314/ejesc.v6i1.65384>.

³⁵ James Scotland, "Exploring the Philosophical Underpinnings of Research: Relating Ontology and Epistemology to the Methodology and Methods of the Scientific, Interpretive, and Critical Research Paradigms," *English Language Teaching* 5, no. 9 (July 25, 2012), <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n9p9>.

³⁶ Nasrin Pervin and Mahani Mokhtar, "The Interpretivist Research Paradigm: A Subjective Notion of a Social Context," *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development* 11, no. 2 (April 25, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPEd/v11-i2/12938>.

³⁷ Scotland, "Exploring the Philosophical Underpinnings of Research: Relating Ontology and Epistemology to the Methodology and Methods of the Scientific, Interpretive, and Critical Research Paradigms."

³⁸ Gary Thomas, "How to Do Your Case Study," 2021.

³⁹ Muhammad Bilal Farooq and Charl de Villiers, "Telephonic Qualitative Research Interviews: When to Consider Them and How to Do Them," *Meditari Accountancy Research* 25, no. 2 (June 5, 2017): 291–316, <https://doi.org/10.1108/MEDAR-10-2016-0083>.

Research sites

This study was conducted in four high schools in Lesotho's urban and rural areas, the Maseru and Mochale's Hoek districts. Three schools were from Maseru, while the other was from Mochale's Hoek in Lesotho. School 1 was a Christian school in the rural district of Maseru, near a mountainous area with many trees. This school accommodated girls in grades 8-11. School 2 was in Maseru and was situated in a highly populated area near the factories. It accommodated both boys and girls. However, it lacked a boarding facility, so most students walked to the school. The government managed it well because it was one of the best-performing schools. The library and the sports grounds were also available. The school did not have a feeding scheme. The classes ranged from grade 8 to 11. School 3 was located in the urban area of another district, Mochale's Hoek. The government governed the school. The buildings were old and not well-maintained. The school was found in the village some distance away from the road. There was no secretary's office in use. It accommodated both girls and boys, but there was no boarding facility for students; there were houses for the teachers. Many students who lived far away from the school lived in the hostels. Most of the students walked to school. It was one of the middle-performing schools. The school had a feeding programme. It provided classes from grades 8 to 11.

School 4 was a public school in the capital town of Maseru. However, it was recognised as a rural area far from the main road. A long, gravel road led to the school, and it was mountainous. The gravel road went through a dense forest, and a river had to be crossed before it reached the school. A few taxis were used as public transport. Many students lived in the village and walked to the school daily. Some students who came from faraway places lived in the hostels. There were houses for the school's staff. The school had playgrounds and school gardens. The school accommodated both boys and girls. The school's performance was deficient. The school had a feeding programme. It comprised classes from grades 8 to 11.

Data analysis

This study employed thematic analysis to analyse qualitative data. This technique identified themes and patterns of meaning that respond to the research questions across the collected data. However, the collected data were grouped into meaningful units to elicit different perspectives and to gain insight into improving teaching and learning resources for the effective implementation of LSE. This analysis interpreted data to detect and identify similarities and differences in issues raised by the participants. It further defined and refined the theme during analysis to identify new meanings, ideas, and codes, and began to be explored. This analysis organised components into a data breakdown, enabling both inductive and deductive methodologies. Researchers ensured the credibility of the results by following all ethical steps required before data collection.

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance permission was obtained from the University of the Free State ethics committee. Approval was granted by the Ministry of Education and Training to conduct research at high schools in Lesotho. Permission was obtained from the school principals to access the school premises. The researchers met the school principals, who made the connection with the teachers. The researchers met with participants to explain the aim of the study and their role in it. Its participation was voluntary, and participants had the right to withdraw at any time they felt they had discontinued the process. Four schools were approached. After the participants agreed, appointments were set to continue with interviews with the principals and teachers. Consent forms were issued to the participants to sign before interviews were conducted. It is noteworthy that most interviews did not take place at the first appointment. They were postponed several times due to teachers' commitments. However, the interviews were finally conducted successfully. Before conducting an interview, the researcher would ask the participant whether they could continue. If the interviewee was unavailable, the appointment was postponed until they were ready.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Biographic results

Table 1: Biographic results from participants

BA Ed: Bachelor of Education

Participants	Gender	Age	Residential areas	Highest qualifications	Teaching experience at LSE	Marital status	School district
Teacher 1	Female	41	Rural	Hons PC	2 years	Married	School 1, Maseru
Teacher 2	Female	50	Urban	B.A	4 years	Married	School 2, Maseru
Teacher 3	Female	22	Urban	B.Ed Sed	<1 year	Single	School 3, Mhales Hoek
Teacher 4	Female	34	Urban	PGDE, BA PCC	4 years	Married	School 3, Mhales Hoek
Teacher 5	Female	47	Urban	BEd	4 years	Married	School 2, Maseru
Teacher 6	Female	51	Rural	B.Ed, Hons. Ed	4 years	Married	School 4, Maseru
Teacher 7	Female	47	Rural	Hons. Ed	4 years	Married	School 4, Maseru
Principal 1	Male	52	Urban	Hons. Ed	1 year	Married	School 2, Maseru
Principal 2	Female	50+	Rural	BA	2 years	Married	School 1, Maseru
Principal 3	Male	50+	Urban	BEd	5 years	Married	School 3, Mhales Hoek
Principal 4	Male	50+	Rural	BEd	6 years	Married	School 4, Maseru

BA HEE: Bachelor of Human Ecology in Education

BA: Bachelor in Art

BA: Pastoral Care and Counselling

Bed SEd: Bachelor in Education, Special Education

Hons PC: Honours in Pastoral Care

Hons. Ed: Honours in School Guidance & Special Education

PGDE: Postgraduate Diploma in Education

Thematic results

Improving teaching and learning resources in implementing LSE

Books

The results showed that providing books could be a critical element in improving the implementation of LSE in high schools. Participants declared that compiled, written, and published material usually includes information on specified issues. It has been found that teachers and learners need books to read to acquire more knowledge. Learning the ability to read could improve their analytical thinking. The following responses from the interview sessions support this:

“We need to be provided with different life story books and TV sets so that we can discuss something visual. It should not be something they just listen to” (Principal 1).

“We lack resources because we only have one workbook and a learner's guide, which were provided when it was first introduced. Learners do not have any material to refer to” (Teacher 6).

Teaching and learning materials, such as storybooks, are needed to help students gain greater exposure to social problems and to exercise problem-solving skills. This concurs with the findings from related literature.

Syllabus

The results indicated that providing a syllabus to learners could be important in improving the implementation of LSE in high schools. This guides teachers on the content activities to engage in to achieve the set goals. Participants noted that providing teachers with syllabi is necessary to align with LSE content. They stated that teaching without the appropriate syllabus may be challenging. The abstract of one participant shared this.

“The first thing is that they should give us a syllabus so that when we continue, we may know how deep we should go. They should also supply us with materials. For instance, in some subjects we need books on human rights, but now we are forced to research online, which costs us because the school does not provide us with reading material. Provision of data would also make our work easier” (Principal 4).

The syllabus is a guide that describes a subject's components to achieve its objectives. It contains complete course information, including basic details, course goals, required materials, and assessment methods. The study revealed that the syllabus was only available to the lower classes, not to the upper classes. This could cause enormous challenges when teaching LSE at the high school level. Teachers are sometimes creative enough to continue using the study guide from the higher level.

Teaching aids

The results revealed that teaching aids could improve the implementation of LSE in high schools. Participants said that additional learning materials stimulate learning since students can easily relate to what they see visually. The abstract of one participant shared this.

“Some resources, such as posters relevant to LSE, especially those big enough to be placed in classrooms, so that learners may see certain relevant information that will keep updating them” (Teacher 8).

Based on the above-mentioned, teachers must be creative enough to use available materials. The extract of one participant illustrated this.

“The topics themselves guide us towards resources we need, and most of the time, they require available materials. From what I have seen, LSE requires more interaction in different ways, including playing games. So, at times, we meet such requirements ourselves. For instance, we assign cards made of any material and ask them to bring those materials from home. We try to be creative as much as possible” (Teacher 2).

Posters are an effective way to attract learners' attention and sustain their curiosity about the subject. Posters can persuade students to learn a specific topic by focusing on a particular idea or process. Having pictures for students to discuss promotes peer tutoring and support.

Ongoing supervision and support

The findings revealed that ongoing supervision and support could improve the implementation of LSE. These are periodic visits to provide teachers with continuous skill training services. Participants highlighted that these supports allow teachers to continue learning more about LSE, thus working towards improvement where necessary. The responses from two participants declared these.

“(Laughing) I wonder which one they are genuine in. I do not know which one it could be, except that I mentioned that if a teacher feels uncomfortable somewhere, there should be a platform where he or she can seek help from the other teachers, since we did not start at the same time.

Some of us were already ahead. In that way, they can offer support to other teachers so that they may deal with their challenges” (Teacher 2).

“I cannot go into details, but I want to believe those responsible should not only provide material resources, but they should also avail themselves to support effective implementation of LSE” (Participant 9).

This means ongoing support is needed to improve teachers’ knowledge and skills required in LSE. It could be provided in the form of short-course training and audio-visual aids.

LSE’s contribution to the passing marks

The findings showed that LSE’s contribution to passing marks could improve its effective implementation in schools. Participants noted that allocating time and effort to activities that do not affect learners’ results is very discouraging. They emphasised that the LSE must be open to learning intellectual differences. The LSE pass mark would significantly affect the overall pass rate of low-performing students. It is, therefore, vital to consider the results of LSE in the pass mark of learners’ performance. This would contribute positively to learners’ success and motivate teachers to put more effort into teaching LSE in high schools. The abstracts of participants declared these.

“The other thing that could improve LSE is to make it examinable and contribute towards their pass mark. It is discouraging for everyone, even if they would like to put all their efforts into it now, that it does not contribute towards a pass mark” (Teacher 2).

“The first problem is that teachers are already overloaded; subjects are also allocated according to their specialised subjects. So, in our school, we already have many subjects. Trying to fit in at LSE was difficult because the school runs from 8h00 to 16h00. During all these hours, the learners have certain subjects to complete. To fit it in between, we were forced to reduce lessons for other subjects per week” (Teacher 8).

“Training forms part of the preparation for any programme. Teachers need to be prepared and helped to see its importance, so considering that it does not contribute to their pass mark is another reason teachers hate the subject. They see it as wasting learners' time when we need it for subjects that will improve their pass mark” (Principal 1).

This means that although LSE is being examined, it does not contribute towards passing learners' marks. This could be why teachers do not take LSE seriously; they consider it a waste of time. LSE must be reviewed to assess its likelihood of inclusion in the pass mark.

Appointing LSE-qualified teachers

The findings showed that appointing LSE-qualified teachers could improve the implementation of LSE at high schools. Participants pointed out that teachers must undergo training and acquire specialised academic qualifications. Participants noted that well-trained LSE teachers are vital to establishing high-quality education standards. LSE demands advanced teaching approaches since it focuses more on practical and sensitive topics.

“You cannot in any way support a teacher without training. So training is the most crucial requirement” (Teacher 1).

“For LSE to be recognised and for students to take it seriously. I believe the government should engage qualified teachers, especially given the number of people in the country who can teach LSE. They do not take qualified teachers for now at my school; they just take untrained teachers” (Principal 1).

“LSE in schools was never catered for. For instance, the first thing is that there are no specific teachers for it. Hence, it is allocated to all teachers” (Principal 2).

“Apart from that, there are no qualified teachers. They would also have created grants if they were prepared. The fact that teachers are allocated based on their load shows that the government was unprepared and just imposed the programme” (Participant 11).

The nature of LSE content demands well-trained teachers, as it covers issues that require fully supportive teachers who can handle sensitive matters with care, while also offering strong support to help students overcome their challenges. Thus, engaging any teacher in teaching LSE might cause harm to learners.

Readiness accommodating the LSE

The findings suggested that school readiness in accommodating the LSE might improve its implementation at schools. Some participants noted that principals serve as gatekeepers because they oversee day-to-day school operations. Hence, they need to be approached first. However, it has been discovered that the attitudes of principals and teachers can also contribute to unpreparedness. Therefore, participants believe that although the Ministry of Education was prepared, the schools lacked adequate support and were unprepared for LSE implementation. The abstracts of participants declared these.

“I think the ministry was prepared, but the schools were not. The other thing I have observed is that, due to the current situation, learners need LSE more than any other subject, yet schools fail to accept it because the ministry and the people responsible for schools are fighting. That is why LSE is offered in schools. Schools were against it” (Teacher 6).

“Teachers do not support it. LSE can be taught by any teacher provided he is trained and is prepared to teach it” (Principal 3).

“LSE in schools was never catered for. For instance, the first thing is that there are no specific teachers for it, hence it is allocated to all teachers” (Principal 2).

“They need to be trained because I have heard from how they speak in the staff room about learners in general that they are not familiar with LSE, hence why they are so judgmental. The same problems we are trying to address seem to contribute to such problems. As I mentioned, instead of listening to learners when they have made a mistake, they punish them. Our teachers still hold on to the old educational system, believing things should only happen their way” (Teacher 4).

“Teachers need to be fully trained to support LSE implementation in schools” (Teacher 5).

“They need to be trained to change their negative attitude towards LSE. You can also learn from their attitude that they lack LSE themselves. LSE is important for everyone, so teachers need it like “(Teacher 6).

Sufficient stakeholder support could facilitate the effective implementation of LSE. To ensure the quality implementation of LSE, teachers entrusted with teaching LSE must have undergone relevant training. It is also apparent that not every teacher may be well-suited to teach LSE, even with training.

Creating LSE Grants

The findings demonstrated that creating LSE grants could improve LSE implementation in high schools. Looking at the current social issues, LSE needs to be recognised as a specialised programme with expert teachers. Relying on teachers who already have their subjects adds more work, and they consider LSE a burden. Such teachers are likely to attend LSE classes when they are free. The following responses from the interview sessions support this:

“(Beep sound) I think the first thing that needs to be improved is to create grants for LSE teachers. It should also be clear about its plan because being told on short notice that it would be examined was not good. I want to believe it is not good even for those students” (Principal 2).

“There is a need for additional teachers, grants, and buildings. The current setup should be improved because it does not allow grouping” (Principal 2).

“The other thing is that LSE has a lot of content, but it is allocated a minimum time” (Teacher 1).

“The time allocated is also limited, and it requires someone well trained to plan properly. And looking at the 80 minutes allocated, you understand it is limited” (Principal 1).

It is important to note that assigning teachers with LSE on top of the subjects they are already teaching is indeed overwhelming them. It is essential to engage specialised teachers at LSE who can create individualised approaches when students have problems. Otherwise, there is no reason to provide LSE, while responsible teachers may not have the time or the capabilities to guide and offer support when needed.

Specialists’ involvement

The findings indicated that involving specialists to train teachers could help improve the implementation of LSE in schools. Some participants suggested that specialists should provide training because they are more knowledgeable. It is assumed that engaging specialists to train and support teachers and principals would empower them to devote more effort to improving their teaching in LSE.

“Strategies would be to invite outsiders or experts. Some experts can be invited to come and address the LSE. The other thing would be teamwork, where teachers may exchange lessons. It could be within the same or neighboring schools” (Principal 3).

“I want to believe that at one point in time, we might need a guest speaker” (Principal 2).

From those mentioned above, a teacher emphasised that rather than allocating ordinary inspectors. There is a need to engage experts in the field of LSE. Teachers who were formally untrained in LSE need enhanced training to acquire relevant techniques and strategies. This would improve their teaching methods at LSE.

Appropriate teaching methods

The findings revealed that the use of appropriate teaching methods could improve the implementation of ELS in schools. It is not easy for them to adjust to the demands of LSE without training. The following responses from the interview sessions support this:

“Training is the most important requirement. Teachers should be trained to allow them to use appropriate teaching methods. You cannot support a teacher without training” (Principal 1).

“Teachers are struggling a lot, so the only thing that could help is if teachers can go through training or the ministry should employ teachers who have specialised in LSE” (Teacher 4).

There is a need to ensure that teachers are trained to use appropriate teaching methods to achieve LSE's objectives. Teachers who are well-equipped will be able to help learners master the course content and apply it to their individual development. This, in turn, might benefit the rest of the schools and the community at large.

The study confirms that teaching and learning resources are crucial to improving the quality of LSE implementation in schools. Teachers need contextually relevant materials to connect LSE content with students’ experiences. The study reveals that LSE's teaching resources ensure effective instruction. Resources shape how knowledge is delivered, understood, and retained, whether in physical, digital, or human form. Throughout the study, it has been communicated that teaching resources boost engagement among teachers and learners. Interactive tools like multimedia, games, and hands-on materials make lessons more dynamic and enjoyable.

On the other hand, resources enhance teacher effectiveness, and prepared materials save time and allow teachers to focus on instruction rather than improvisation. On this note, the study finds that teaching resources, such as visual aids and digital platforms, improve learning outcomes in LSE. On the other hand, teaching and learning resources promote equity by helping bridge gaps for students in under-resourced areas or those with special educational needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends expanding in-service training and providing structured teaching resources to support implementation in rural and urban schools. Teachers need to be trained and supported to change their attitude towards LSE. Therefore, teachers must be equipped with strategies to teach sensitive topics with confidence and effectiveness. It is also recommended that the government provide basic resources such as class syllabi, posters, and storybooks. Such resources must be locally relevant and tailored to meet cultural and social realities in Lesotho to foster deeper engagement. Introducing e-learning options could also help overcome material shortages, especially in remote areas.

There is a need for resources, including specialised devices, to accommodate students with special needs, as the education system has adopted inclusive education. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be in place to assess how resources are used and their impact on teaching and learning. The government also needs to engage specialised, qualified teachers for LSE. There is also a need for enhanced teacher training and winning parental interest. Lastly, the study recommends policy reforms, improved funding, and collaboration between schools and communities to enhance resource availability and improve the quality of life skills education in Lesotho's high schools.

CONCLUSION

The study has explored the teaching and learning resources that are needed for the effective implementation of LSE. The study has established that the schools were not fully equipped with adequate resources in the LSE. Such resources included both human resources and teaching materials. It has been highlighted that training alone is insufficient; hence, emphasis has been placed on providing additional teaching material. However, the school principals are responsible for supporting teachers' professional development. The schools should also address teachers' concerns about LSE implementation. On the other hand, teachers who apply the indigenous principles in understanding adolescents' sexual behaviours and sexuality education must be supported to change their attitudes. This study highlights the essential role of teaching resources in enhancing instruction effectiveness and improving student learning outcomes. The findings demonstrate that when teachers are equipped with adequate and appropriate resources such as textbooks, teaching aids, digital tools, and reference materials, they can better plan lessons, engage learners, and cater to diverse learning needs. Providing teachers with the necessary materials is a fundamental requirement for quality education. Access to teaching resources fosters teacher creativity, boosts confidence, and reduces instructional challenges, especially in under-resourced environments. The research also shows that a lack of resources often leads to teacher frustration, decreased motivation, and reduced learner performance. Policymakers, school administrators, and education stakeholders must consistently and equitably prioritise the provision of LSE teaching resources. This investment directly contributes to teachers' overall professional capacity and students' academic success.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

This study has limitations due to experiences encountered during data collection. Data was collected telephonically because teachers and principals were not always available in schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Setting the appointment date delayed data collection because, at times, participants were still unable to be interviewed on that date. Although the plan was to interview twelve participants at the end of data collection, only eleven were interviewed. This is because the other participant kept postponing to the extent that she ignored phone calls. Network connections also caused communication breakdown, and at times, participants were at home, where disruptive noise was present. Failure to see non-verbal communication somehow limited the information collected. The interviewer would pick contextual data if interviews were conducted face-to-face. Some participants lacked information on specific areas because they were not directly involved in implementing LSE in high schools in Maseru and Mochale's Hoek

districts in Lesotho. On the other hand, using purposive sampling alone was a limitation because no other methods were used.

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