

**Teachers' Perceptions on their Preparedness to Implement Integrated  
Curriculum in Lesotho Primary Schools**

**By**

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for the award of the degree of Masters of Education at the  
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**CERTIFICATION**

**This is to certify that this dissertation has been read and approved as having met the requirements of the Faculty of Education, the National University of Lesotho for the award of Masters in Education (M.ED).**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Marearabetsoe Matsaba-Mabea, declare that “Teachers’ perceptions on their preparedness to implement the integrated curriculum in Lesotho Primary Schools” is my work, and that all the sources used have been acknowledged using references. In the case of failure to comply entirely with the mentioned declaration, I apologize and confirm that it was not my intention to do so. This dissertation was not previously submitted for qualifications at any other institution.

Marearabetsoe Mats’aba-Mabea

30 July 2019

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

BEEd	Bachelor of Education
CE	Creativity and Entrepreneurship
DEP	Diploma in Education Primary
DRT	District Resource Teachers
ECoL	Examinations Council of Lesotho
EO	Education Officer
FPE	Free Primary Education
IC	Integrated Curriculum
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LCE	Lesotho College of Education
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
NUL	National University of Lesotho
PTC	Primary Teaching Certificate
IEC	Integrated English curriculum (IEC)

## **ABSTRACT**

The Lesotho government introduced a new curriculum (Integrated Curriculum - IC) which was first implemented in primary schools in 2013. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of their preparedness to implement an integrated curriculum in Lesotho primary schools. A qualitative approach was used, and the research questions revolved around the issues of; teachers' interpretations of the integrated curriculum, how teachers implement integrated curriculum in the classrooms in Lesotho, teachers' views on how they were prepared to implement integrated curriculum in the classrooms in Lesotho, and teachers' views about how their perceptions on their preparedness influence their classroom practices. Qualitative data was collected through the semi-structured interviews from a purposive and convenience sample of 6 teachers in 3 schools. Data were analyzed using a qualitative thematic approach.

The results indicated that teachers seemed to understand what integrated curriculum entails, as well as its demands. However, the study established that teachers were not prepared enough to implement an integrated curriculum. According to the findings of the study, insufficient and inadequate training of teachers on integrated curriculum, overcrowded classrooms, high content level of an integrated curriculum for learners, inadequate time allocation, as well as insufficient teaching and learning materials impacted negatively on the implementation of this curriculum. Apart from the mentioned factors, the implementation of an integrated curriculum appeared to be compromised due to lack of support from both schools and interested bodies such as the parents and the government through Ministry of Education during the implementation process. Therefore, teachers recommended that they should be provided with the intensive and continuous professional development programs on integrated curriculum, and with necessary support and resources by the schools and all stakeholders. Teachers equally recommended that the content level of the integrated curriculum should be lowered for learners to benefit from IC.

# **CHAPTER 1: STUDY BACKGROUND**

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The study sought to explore teachers' perceptions of how they have been prepared to implement an integrated curriculum in Lesotho primary schools and how their perceptions influence their classroom practices. For many years, as observed by Raselimo and Mahao (2015), Lesotho has engaged in several curriculum reforms which have had minimal success. In 2013, the government has again introduced another change, integrated curriculum, in the school basic education program. With an integrated curriculum, teachers should use approaches that highlight life challenges and contexts in which a learner is expected to function as an individual and as a member of society. With this new reform also, traditional subjects are grouped into learning areas to enable integrated teaching and learning approaches. Thus, both teachers and learners should use connections between ideas and concepts, within and across the disciplines rather than teaching and learning facts in isolation. This chapter is divided into the following sections: Introduction (this section), background, problem statement, the purpose, and justification, as well as the research questions that guided this study. The chapter also defines the key concepts that emerged from the review and provides an outline of the dissertation.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND**

This section gives a brief history of education and curriculum reforms in Lesotho. The following topics are presented as the sub-sections: pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial education, and the factors which have been influencing unsuccessful reforms in Lesotho.

### **1.2.1 Pre-colonial education**

The pre-colonial education can be viewed in two types: indigenous and missionary education.

#### ***Indigenous education***

Basotho indigenous education existed before Lesotho was colonized by Britain in 1830s. The indigenous education was informal and offered by the elders, and doctors of medicine (traditional doctors) in the communities (Ansell, 2002). They trained boys and girls separately at

the informal institutions or initiation schools for less than a year (Ministry of Education, Sports & Culture, 1982). The focus and emphasis of indigenous education were to promote:

- Cultural heritage and personality development of individuals by instilling moral and traditional values and beliefs (Ansell, 2002).
- Development of character, and awareness of the origin of Basotho amongst the youth.
- Patriotism
- Physical development, communal life and development, personal and family roles and responsibilities, and world view at large. For example, boys were physically trained on practical activities such as fighting with sticks to protect their country from attacks, while girls were taught craftwork, respect and taking care of families (Selepe, 2016).

Indigenous education emphasized practical activities, and it was driven by the needs and values of Basotho local communities (Muzvidziwa & Seotsanyane, 2002). Teachers are also expected to accommodate these changes in their already existing loads.

### ***Missionary education***

When the missionaries arrived in Lesotho in 1833, they brought with them a new type of knowledge, and at this time, indigenous education began to weaken (Thelejane, 1990). Among many changes, the missionaries brought along with them the western-based education. It was first offered by the French Protestant Christian Missionaries and later by all Missionaries who built schools. This type of information was then referred (even today) to as formal education while Basotho indigenous education was (and still is) referred to as non-formal education (Raselimo and Mahao, 2015). The Missionaries' education was offered in the formal institutions (schools) whereby learning took place in the classrooms with teachers being the facilitators and role models (Letseka, 1992). This type of education formed the foundation for colonial and post-colonial education. For example, Salia-Bao (1987) is of the view that the role of the missionaries in the provision of formal education in Africa at large, has been noted to be critical for shaping today's education in Africa.

According to Selepe (2016), the education that was introduced by the Missionaries was mainly vocational and religious, and its purpose was to provide literacy to Basotho. The reasons for promoting numeracy and literacy are observed by Salia-Bao (1987) and Selepe (2016) as the following;

- To encourage people who could read and write so that they could interpret the Bible into the local language. This was important for the Missionaries because their purpose was to promote Christianity and its values among Basotho, and they were using the Bible as a tool.
- To train teachers, preachers, and people who could be interpreters and clerks in the colonial administration

The education brought by the Missionaries also promoted the Europeans culture and habits, including clothing, eating, and living habit (Salia-Bao, 1987).

### **1.2.2 Colonial education**

When Lesotho became a British colony in 1868, it inherited the Missionaries' education system and continued with it as a recognized formal education. However, colonial education had different educational goals from those of the Missionaries. For example, the aims of colonial education were mainly to:

- produce people of an appropriate standard to be employed in the government administration as well as in churches as teachers and catechists.
- train people for few job opportunities in trade and commercial agriculture.
- produce literate police, interpreters, and clerks (Muzvidziwa & Seotsanyane, 2002).

At the end of the colonial rule in 1966, in attempting to change the colonial education to the one relevant for Basotho, and the development of the country, the government developed new educational policies.

### **1.2.3 Post-colonial education system**

The post-colonial education has a series of reforms of which include 1978, 1988, and 2000 National Educational reforms. The 1978 National Educational Reform aimed at teaching children practical subjects, the spirit of self-reliance, patriotism, respect, self-discipline, and self-sacrifice. It also focused on health and religious issues as well as fostering of scientific attitudes.

The 1988 National Education Reform goals were to transform school governance and to offer an education system that responds to the needs of the nation. It also emphasized self-reliance (Muzvidziwa & Seotsanyane, 2002).

The 2000 National Educational Reform introduced a Free Primary Education policy. The Free Primary Education (FPE) Policy was rolled out from 2000 to 2006. According to Ministry of Education (2000), the main goal of this reform was to improve education access to all Basotho children by offering free education without fees charged to parents with the ultimate goal of poverty reduction. The educational goals of this reform were:

- to provide essential and necessary resources that would enable and support learners to complete the primary cycle of education;
- to provide pupils with opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy, basic life skills, and basic general knowledge of health and nutrition.

As observed by Muzvidziwa and Seotsanyane (2002), despite the efforts of the government of Lesotho to reform education, there hasn't been much change in the educational system in Lesotho. The system is still challenged with schools which have limited resources, learners whose literacy and numeracy skills are below the aimed quality, and children who drop out of school even before they complete the basic primary education programme (Ansell, 2002).

#### **1.2.4 Factors influencing unsuccessful curriculum reforms in Lesotho**

Some of the factors that have been identified to be responsible for the ineffective reforms include school ownership, insufficient and complicated educational resources, focus on examinations, failure to address nations' needs, and lack of coordination by stakeholders, as well as teachers' and learners' preparedness (Salia-Bao, 1987; Thelejane, 1990; Letseka, 1992; Ishumi, 1994; Khalanyane, 1995; Ansell, 2002; Muzvidziwa & Seotsanyane, 2002; Selepe, 2016). These factors are discussed briefly hereafter.

##### ***1) School Ownership and financial constraints***

Khalanyane (1995) and Letseka (1992) observed that the conflict of the church and government over the control of school education in Lesotho had been a major stumbling block to effecting structural changes in education for many years. Churches had full control of the school administration as well as the curriculum offered in schools as the government could not fund education. Church missions financed and managed several schools by providing teaching resources, developing national curriculum and syllabi of subjects taught, monitoring quality education, and by paying teachers' salaries (UNESCO, 2000). Since educational policies and

general curriculum directions remained in the hands of the church missions, churches did not cooperate in implementing the reforms because they were not ready to let go of schools. They considered the changes to be undermining their authority (Muzvidziwa & Seotsanyane, 2002).

### ***2) Insufficient and complicated educational materials***

Ishumi's (1994) study revealed that the educational reforms in Lesotho were unsuccessful because there haven't been enough teaching materials, physical facilities, and equipment for schools and teacher training programs. According to Salia-Bao (1987), there have been limited resources and facilities for teachers, supervisors, and other workers in the field. Teachers and learners also found the educational materials recommended for classroom use difficult because they were unrelated to the culture and philosophy of Basotho. Ansell (2002) also observed that where teaching and learning materials were provided, if they got damaged, schools could not even afford to replace them.

### ***3) Failure to address national needs***

Many studies show that education reforms in Lesotho have failed to succeed because they were foreign and irrelevant to the needs of Basotho and for the development of the nation. As a result, they have been unable to produce citizens who can meet the challenges in their environment (Thelejane, 1990).

According to Thelejane (1990), the other factor that has led to unsuccessful reforms was their cultural orientation. He explained that most of these reforms were rooted in the Westminster inspired curriculum, not African culture. Therefore, they promoted the white supremacy and served the interests of the white minority, leaving little choice for adaptation to the local conditions. They were not designed or organized in a way that they could improve the welfare of Basotho or liberate Basotho from poverty, but they only promoted Christianity. Letseka (1992) also pointed out that the indigenous educational experiences were lost, and Basotho's cultural practices, including initiation, were discouraged as they were considered to be against Christianity. The values and the norms of the Basotho nation were embodied in this type of education.



#### ***4) Focus on the examinations***

Ansell (2002) also explained that reforms mainly used examination results to assess schools, students, and overall performance of Lesotho's education. They undermined the attainment of particular educational objectives that were critical for the country's economic development. Selepe (2016) also supported this view by indicating that very little attention was given to matters about economic growth, democratic governance, social justice, and good citizenship, development of patriotism, responsibility, accountability, Sesotho principles, and personal loyalty. In addition to these observations, The Ministry of Education and Training (1982) acknowledged that the reforms neglected essential skills such as commercial and technical skills, the spirit of cooperation and teamwork, and the development of moral, socially and conscious character.

#### ***5) Lack of coordination***

Lack of commitment by the different stakeholders involved in curriculum policymaking, implementation and evaluation resulted in poor coordination among such stakeholders, and it was identified as one of the influencing factors that have led to unsuccessful curriculum reforms attempts made by Lesotho's government (Letseka, 1992). For example, lack of coordination in the implementation process of reforms, led to failure to develop shared understanding between the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and the Examination Council of Lesotho (ECoL) that guided implementation. Raselimo and Mahao (2015) are of the view that the repercussions of poor coordination in the implementation stage have also resulted in a tension between policy reform intentions and policy implementation in schools.

#### ***6) Teacher and learner related factors***

Teacher-related factors were also identified in the literature to be responsible for the unsuccessful implementation of curriculum reforms in Lesotho (Selepe, 2016). These teacher-related factors included teachers' lack of skills and knowledge relevant to the implementation of the reforms, teachers' unwillingness to change, the additional workload and demands that were placed on teachers and students, and insufficient teaching and learning resources that supported both.

### ***7) Teachers' lack of clarity about the reforms***

Muzvidziwa and Seotsanyane (2002) also showed that there were a limited number of experts that could guide teacher practices in the implementation of these reforms. They argued that teachers implemented only the elements of the improvements which they felt comfortable and familiar with, and this had completely different outcomes from those that were expected by the curriculum reformists.

### ***8) Lack of trained teachers and learners***

In 2016, Selepe concluded that apart from the lack of clarity of the reforms, teachers were not able to implement the changes due to the lack of knowledge and skills on the reforms. She further noted that learners equally were not knowledgeable about the reforms; hence, it was not possible that the reforms succeeded.

### ***9) Teachers' unwillingness to change***

Ansell (2002) also observed the lack of a desire to change among teachers in schools in Lesotho. According to Ansell (ibid), this was brought about by the mismatch between proposed innovations and the local contexts in Lesotho. That is, the knowledge teachers have about these contexts influence teachers' beliefs about what is likely to work in their teaching and learning contexts. As a result, teachers are expected to ignore what in their view is already doomed to fail (Selepe, 2016).

### ***10) Teachers' and learners' additional workload***

Every time the reforms are introduced, more workload is added to the curriculum. Teachers are also expected to accommodate these changes in their already existing loads. For example, teachers are expected to acquire relevant knowledge, and to change their pedagogy and assessment practices in such a way that they match the proposed change. As a result, the student-teacher ratio, which usually is not favored by the reforms, impacted negatively on teachers' effort to respond to the curriculum reforms introduced (Raselimo and Mahao, 2015).

### ***11) Curriculum orientation that is not aligned with the learner's background***

All curriculum reforms introduced in the educational system in Lesotho have not been able to get rid of cultural elements and values of the Western countries which were embedded in the

previous forms of curricula (Raselimo & Mahao, 2015). Since learners have limited knowledge about Western cultures and values, and there are limited opportunities that allow them to use their African cultural orientation in curricula, learning became complicated for these learners. Hence, they often resort to memorization of facts and theories which they were required to learn (Salia-Bao, 1987). The situation has also been confirmed by the Ministry of Education (1992) who observed that even where learners had positive attitudes towards the introduction of some practical subjects, such reforms had little impact on their career aspirations or their subject preferences. According to the Ministry of Education (*Ibid.*), learners could not connect the introduced practical subjects to the needs in their personal lives.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

In 2009, there has been another attempt by the Ministry of Education to reform curriculum to that which will address the needs of a learner and will be relevant to the life of a learner, in a personal capacity and as a member in a community. The Curriculum and Assessment policy framework introduced in 2009 advocates for the integrated curriculum. This curriculum was first introduced in schools in Lesotho in 2013 at foundation phase (Grade 1-3) of education and was progressively rolled out to Grade 7. Some of the changes that are brought along by this new reform require teachers to use integrated teaching and learning approaches which could be interdisciplinary or thematic.

In Lesotho Educational system, the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECoL) are the bodies that are responsible for curriculum implementation. NCDC's focus is mainly on the teaching and learning aspect of the curriculum while ECoL main agenda is assessment. It is the responsibility of these two bodies to provide teachers with training that enable them to implement the proposed changes relating to teaching, learning, and assessment. Therefore, it is logical to assume that before the integrated curriculum was introduced in schools, NCDC and ECoL provided training that equipped teachers with knowledge and skills that are required by the new curriculum for teaching, learning and assessment practices.

However, in the few years that the new curriculum has been introduced in Lesotho schools, there have been increasing concerns among stakeholders that the new curriculum is not implemented

in the schools as intended. This has also been confirmed by Selepe (2016) who has established that teachers' level of understanding of integrated curriculum differs and many teachers show limited clarity on the implementation process. It could be assumed that these signs exhibited by the teachers, as observed by Selepe (*ibid.*), are an indication that teachers have not been adequately prepared through training for the implementation of the integrated curriculum. In the literature, information about teachers' views regarding the training that prepared teachers for integrated curriculum in Lesotho schools is limited.

According to the existing literature on teachers and curriculum reforms, teachers' perceptions about reforms play an essential role regarding the success or failure of such reforms (Yates, 2007). Perceptions are influential on teachers' response to curriculum reforms. Some of these perceptions can include teachers' views about the relevance and adequacy of training they receive in preparation for the implementation of a reform. Therefore, this suggests that, for the success of these reforms, it is crucial to establish teachers' views on how they have been prepared through training for the implementation of an integrated curriculum in the classrooms in Lesotho. Therefore, the proposed study seeks to explore teachers' perceptions of the training they received in preparation to implement an integrated curriculum and to establish how their perceptions influence their instructional practices.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The purpose of this study was to establish teachers' perceptions of their preparedness to implement an integrated curriculum in Lesotho primary schools and how their perceptions influence their classroom practices. Therefore, the main research question for this study was: what are teachers' perceptions of their preparedness to implement the new curriculum? For data collection purposes, these sub-questions were used:

1. What are teachers' interpretations of the integrated curriculum?
2. How do teachers implement an integrated curriculum in the classrooms in Lesotho?
3. What are teachers' views on how they were prepared to implement an integrated curriculum in the classrooms in Lesotho?
4. How do teachers' views about how they were prepared for the integrated curriculum influence their classroom practices?

## **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The proposed study will provide information that will be useful, first to NCDC and ECoL, which are responsible for curriculum implementation in the schools in Lesotho. These bodies can use the information that will be generated by this study to design teachers training programs that will enhance their participation in these new curriculum reforms. Other stakeholders whose work is directly linked with teachers in Lesotho, such as the Inspectorate Department and the Lesotho Association of Teachers, will also find this information useful. The findings of this study will also benefit teacher education providers in Lesotho. It will provide the educational institutions by providing data that will be helpful when these organizations review and design their teacher education programs to align them with the demands of the new reform. Also, that this study is an academic exercise, it will contribute to the existing literature on teachers and curriculum change, as well as the effects of curriculum change of learners as they are the direct recipients of the curriculum.

## **1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

The key concepts in this study are teachers' perceptions, curriculum, and teachers' preparedness. All the fundamental concepts are discussed below, with teachers' readiness forming the conceptual framework for this study.

### **1.6.1 Teachers' perceptions**

Described by Gibson (2009), teachers' perceptions are simply the way teachers regard, understand or interpret something. Postman, Bruner, and McGinnies (1948) noticed the same and add that teachers' perceptions could be shaped or distorted by several factors which reside in teachers, the object or the situation they perceive, and the context in which such objects or situations are seen. Since human behavior is based on how human perceive or understand things (Eggen & Kauchak, 2002), it is important to understand the meanings that teachers have constructed from their preparedness to implement integrated curriculum, and how such meanings influence the way they teach the integrated curriculum.

## **1.6.2 Curriculum**

As a concept, the curriculum does not have an accepted global definition. It is defined differently by individuals. For example, Dello-Lacavo (2009) explained the curriculum as a systematic arrangement of the total selected experiences planned for a defined group of students to attain the aims of an educational programme. On the other hand, Pinar (1998) viewed curriculum as a body of knowledge and practices in subject matter areas that teachers teach and that students are supposed to learn and that generally consists of a scope or a content that is arranged in concepts and activities for learning in a given subject area. Contrary to these definitions, Oliver (1997) described curriculum as anything that is determined at schools and beyond the school setting, or a set of subjects, performance objectives or materials, and teaching methods, as well as a content to be taught. In this study, the curriculum is defined as the content that learners are to be taught in a school setting, as well as the methods to employ in the teaching process (Hoadly, 2013).

### ***1) Curriculum Reform***

Curriculum reform is a change brought about in a curriculum. Such change may be in the subject content, teaching modes, and strategies (Pinar, 1998). Curriculum reform also involves alteration of aims and objectives, reviewing the material to be included, revising instructional methods, and re-thinking curriculum evaluation (ibid.). Shao (2005) indicated that curriculum change does not seem concerned on curricula matter only, but influence the other aspects of schooling such as teaching, learning, administration, and culture of the school.

### ***2) Curriculum implementation***

Curriculum implementation refers to the processes and practices used to put the reforms into effect (Liebttag, 2013). It is how the planned or officially designed course of study is translated by the teachers into the syllabi, schemes of work, and lessons to be delivered to students (Good, 1973). In implementing the curriculum reforms, teachers usually shift from old instructional practices to new ones. As a result, Beane (1995) urged that teachers should be supervised and assessed during curriculum implementation so that their weaknesses can be dealt with in time.

### **1.6.3 Integrated curriculum**

According to McPhail (2018), the curriculum designs which are followed in educational institutions are the subject-curriculum, core curriculum, teacher-centered curriculum, or learner-centered or integrated curriculum. The integrated curriculum has become dominant and popular all over the world (*ibid.*), and it has just been introduced in the schools in Lesotho. The focus of this study is on the Integrated curriculum; it will be broadly discussed below.

The definition of the integrated curriculum included its (integrated curriculum) pedagogy and assessment, as well as its benefits and challenges. Examining the pedagogy and assessment for integrated curriculum contributed to the understanding of how teachers' instructional practices ought to change, and how such instructional practices have changed as a result of teachers' preparedness perceptions.

Integrated curriculum is the interdisciplinary or thematic teaching approach which combines both subjects and content, and themes or projects, bringing together various aspects of the curriculum into the meaningful association to focus upon broad areas of study (Beane, 1995). This link brings about the relationship and continuity of concepts as they build on each other with learners broadly exploring knowledge on life problems or broad-based areas of study in various subjects related to certain aspects of their environment (*ibid.*). Good (1973) asserted that an integrated curriculum approach applies methodology and language from more than one discipline to examine a central theme, issue, problem, topic, or experience. As also observed by Kysilka (2006), in an integrated curriculum, knowledge is applied in an integrative manner, not in bits and pieces. For example, Beane (1997) pointed out that an integrated curriculum brings together learning and personal experiences, social issues, and knowledge.

#### **1) Pedagogy in an integrated curriculum**

Integrated curriculum is learner-centered by nature. In this curriculum, most of the learning activities are done by learners (Tabulawa, 2009). This is why, according to Westbrook, Durrani, Brown, Orr, Pryor, Boddy and Salvi (2013), integrated curriculum is sometimes referred to as learner-centered or child-centered pedagogy, activity-based learning, participatory or inquiry promoting learning. In an integrated curriculum, a teacher facilitates learning by creating an environment that fosters learning. Also, this teacher uses the teaching methods that are learner-

centered, and which allow learners to take responsibility for learning new concepts (Good, (1973). This is supported by Piaget (1964) who alluded that unlike other curriculum types which pacify the learner's active engagement, integrated curriculum actively engages children in discovery learning, and teachers do not give direct instruction but facilitate learning. How learning is approached in the integrated curriculum is in line with Kysilka's (2006) view that learners should be taught how to think and should not be taught as though they only have to absorb facts that are presented by a teacher.

## **2) *Assessment in an integrated curriculum***

Integrated curriculum advocates for continuous assessment which should include formative assessment. Continuous assessment is the assessment that is done for learning, it is linked or integrated with teaching, and teachers use it to diagnose learners' difficulties, and to identify areas requiring remediation or extra attention, as well as to determine the intended instruction (Curriculum and Assessment Policy, 2009). Both continuous assessment and formative assessment are ongoing, tightly integrated with daily teaching and learning process, and they monitor learner's progress. Formative assessment is mainly achieved through remedial work, and learners' achievements are tested in different abilities, including art and sports (MoET, 2009).

## **3) *The benefits of integrated curriculum***

The following have emerged from the literature as the benefits that are brought about the integrated curriculum (Lake, 1994; Jacobs, 1989; MoET, 2009; Selepe, 2016; Ferna'ndez, 2017):

The integrated curriculum enhances learners' understanding of concepts and the construction of knowledge. According to Lake (1994), the teaching that is situated in the integrated curriculum enables learners to quickly understand the concepts because these concepts are not learned in isolation as they are taught across the learning areas, and are related with the previous experiences and societal issues. In contrast, McPhail (2018) argued that it is less clear how and what students gain from the integration of curriculum because IC is still subject-centered; that the only difference is that it has abolished the subject boundaries units from independent subjects, diffusing such subjects together around themes. According to McPhail (2018), integrated curriculum is not as easily implemented as others suggest because of large numbers of



learners in classrooms that hinder one-to one or small classroom groups teaching. Hence, there will always be a subject-based or teacher-centered curriculum.

Students' performance can be enhanced through the integration of the curriculum only if teachers have knowledge and skills to bring the subjects that will create a link together (*ibid.*).

Integrated curriculum motivates learners to learn. According to Jacobs (1989), integrated curriculum is linked with higher attendance, higher levels of homework completion and better attitudes towards school. Furthermore, Jacobs (1989) assured that this type of teaching motivates learners because it creates a learning environment where teachers and learners build a healthy relationship. Learners get motivated to acquire new knowledge in different subject areas, and they cover topics in more depth because they look at many and varied perspectives from which an issue can be explored, as well as comparing concepts across subject areas (Malik & Malik, 2011).

Again, the integrated curriculum promotes self-reliance in learners, both in the classroom and in a real-life situation. It is also the view of Kysilka, (2006) that integrated curriculum is democratic, learner-centered, encouraging life-long learning, and promoting work-related competencies which lead to the ability to solve practical problems, and to strive for self-reliance in the classroom. MoET (2009) highlighted that integrated curriculum enhances autonomy in learners as it equips learners with skills, attitudes, and values that promote personal and social development, as well as quality life for everyone. Beane (1995) also argued that an integrated curriculum improves the higher-order skills that are needed by citizens to understand the complex and interrelated world.

In using an integrated curriculum, time is saved. According to Good (1973), teachers do not take too much time in planning for integrated curriculum for they do not plan everything in isolation. Again, teachers' working pace is improved because of the positive and collaborative learning environment created by the integrated curriculum (*ibid.*).

However, some researchers have a different view of the integrated curriculum. For instance, Hargreaves and Moore (2000) contended that even though integrated curriculum makes connections with society, it is silent about the controversial social and political issues of today that are relevant to students' present and future lives.

#### **4) Challenges of integrated curriculum implementation**

The integrated curriculum appears to be challenging to teach. This is confirmed by MackMath (2001), who contended that even though the integrated curriculum is commonly used in education; it is challenging to define and to implement. Challenges of Integrated curriculum have been studied over a number of years (for example see Fuller & Snyder, 1991; Chere- Masopha, 2011; UNESCO, 2012; Westbrook, Durrani, Brown, Orr, Pryor, Boddy and Salvi, 2013; Amupala, 2014; Raselimo & Mahao, 2015; Selepe, 2016). According to these studies, most of these challenges are the result of:

- large classes and overcrowded classrooms;
- high student-teacher ratios;
- teachers’ limited knowledge on integrated curriculum;
- lack of support for teachers from the leadership and all stakeholders;
- lack of teaching and learning resources;
- teachers’ instructional practices and their resistance to change.

### **1.7 SUMMARY**

This chapter looked at the background of the study, statement of the problem, and the significance of the study. The next chapter focuses on the related literature.

### **1.8 THESIS STRUCTURE OUTLINE**

The following section presents the outline of the chapters of this report, indicating briefly an overview of what each chapter entails. The study is organized into five chapters.

#### ***Chapter one***

Chapter one introduces the study. It provides a background to the study, the problem statement, significance of the study, as well as the research questions that guided this study.

#### ***Chapter two***

Chapter two reviews the relevant literature on teachers’ perceptions of their preparedness to implement the integrated curriculum. It includes different studies on the factors that influence the successful implementation of an integrated curriculum.

#### ***Chapter three***

Chapter three explains the research methodology employed in this study. The chapter begins with the discussion of the paradigm, methods, population, and selection of participants. It further presents the ethical considerations, research instruments, as well as data collection and analysis procedures. Lastly, the chapter presents the trustworthiness of the study.

***Chapter four***

Chapter four focuses on data presentation and discussion, or the findings followed up with the relevant literature to address the research questions that inform this study. The discussion is based on the interviews conducted for each participant.

***Chapter five***

Discussions, conclusions, and recommendations for future studies are found in Chapter five.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the study was to investigate teachers' perceptions on their preparedness to implement the integrated curriculum in Lesotho primary schools, and how such perceptions influenced their instructional practices. This chapter reports on the literature that was reviewed to inform this study. The chapter begins with the discussion of teacher's preparedness as a concept that framed this study, and this is done in Conceptual Framework section. This is followed by, the report on the review of the studies that have been carried out, being presented under the Empirical Literature section.

### **2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The conceptual framework is generally based on preparedness as one of the key concepts for this study. The choice of this framework developed from the value placed on preparing teachers for the success of any curriculum. According to Holmes (2011), preparedness is the process of designing the documented formal plans such as policies and procedures that are to be followed in order to achieve specific goals. Siwatu (2011) elaborated that preparedness involves all stakeholders who work together to formulate all plans, and to undertake activities in a coordinated way. Activities and resources are components of preparedness (*ibid.*). Preparedness involves continuous consultation of experts (Ferna'ndez, 2017).

Teacher preparedness on the other hand is the training and retraining of teachers as well as technical and financial assistance given to teachers in order to strengthen them as they prepare for their work (Humphreys, Post & Ellis, 1981). Teacher preparedness is also described as an important teachers' learning process whereby teachers familiarize themselves with the expectations of the educational innovations, including what learners are expected to know when coming and when leaving a grade, how they should interpret curriculum, as well as how they should use supplementary materials to address curricular gaps (Ferna'ndez, 2017).

Teacher preparedness benefits both teachers and learners. For example, Dello-Lacavo (2009) pointed out that it is important that teachers gain ownership and understanding of the reform before integrating such changes into their instructional practices. Thus, through preparedness,

teachers are equipped with both the latest skills to teach and the belief in their capacity to implement change effectively. According to Ferna'ndez (2017), when teachers are prepared to implement the reforms, such reforms are likely to be successful. This is why Shao (2005) insisted that teachers should be prepared for the reforms introduced in the schools.

Kaniuka (2012) is also of the view that teacher preparedness is linked with the successful implementation of the curriculum. For example, Kaniuka (*ibid.*) pointed out that when teachers are prepared to implement the new reforms, they usually develop interest and explore new ideas in their instructional practices. However, if they feel that they are not prepared; teachers simply resist the educational innovations. This view is supported by Sebatane (1985) who argued that when teachers are not prepared, the curriculum reforms do not succeed due to teachers' lack of interest and understanding on how to implement such reforms. Lack of teachers' preparedness for the new curriculum can result in a number of challenges during the implementation of such a curriculum (*ibid.*). Humphreys, Post and Ellis (1981) supported this argument by indicating that when teachers are prepared through quality training, it becomes easier for them to implement any introduced curriculum.

Teachers can be prepared through different stages of their profession: formal training which is often done at the beginning of a teaching profession for pre-service teachers; induction and mentoring for beginning teachers; and training activities for in-service teachers (Siwatu, 2011). Training programmes and activities for in-service teachers are often referred to as professional development activities or programmes.

Professional development is the process of improving in-service teachers' skills and competences needed to produce outstanding educational results for students, and or for preparing teachers for implementation of the curriculum and instructional innovations (Shao, 2005). In-service training is based on the assertion that even experienced teachers may struggle with a new skill or instructional technique being introduced (Gulamhussein, 2013). Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) indicated that in effective professional development programs, school leaders are also given a chance to learn from experts, mentors and their peers about how to become true instructional leaders. However, Riveros, Newton, and Burgess (2012) pointed out that for professional development programs and activities to be effective, they should be intensive and

ongoing; they should also match teachers' classroom needs, and should build and strengthen teachers' professional capacity by deepening their curriculum knowledge.

According to Shao (2005), many educational systems lack adequate teacher professional development. In such systems, it is often assumed that teachers understand policy messages and are capable of implementing changes. As a result, in these systems teachers are rarely engaged in the professional development activities after pre-service training. Riveros, Newton, and Burgess' (2012) observation is that in the educational systems where there are no professional development programs and activities for teachers, teachers are often frustrated by any developments and changes that are introduced. These views are also supported by Selepe (2016) who warned that limited knowledge on the reforms is influenced by the insufficient professional development.

In-service professional development is highly encouraged for successful implementation of the reforms. Gulamhussein (2013) asserted that teachers' knowledge on the demands of reforms is essential since this knowledge influences the implementation. In 2016 again, Selepe suggested that since teachers are the reform mediators only, rather than reform policy generators, their knowledge and perceptions of the reforms need to be increased by engaging them in the professional development activities and programmes. Gulamhussein (2013) further argued that since students' achievement is what matters in a school, teachers' professional development activities for the mastery of the new pedagogical skills or techniques is the best investment. Therefore, it is important that teachers are given a chance to engage in professional development programs in preparation for any curriculum reform (Chen, 2000). In Support of this, Shao (2005) also insisted that universities should be engaged in the professional development activities for teachers in order to increase teachers' knowledge of the reforms introduced.

Notably, there are others who do not believe in the effectiveness of professional development as an effective way of preparing teachers for the reforms. For example, Putnam and Borko's (2000) and Shao's (2005) study revealed that professional development programs did not change teacher practices nor improve students learning, and they did not meet the professional requirements of teachers. The effectiveness of professional development has also been criticized by Talbot and Campbell (2014) who argued that the positive effects of professional development on instructional practices are limited.

Strauss (2014) associated the ineffectiveness of professional development activities and programs with poor design of such programmes, and with the administrators who have forgotten what goes on in a classroom. Strauss has also been supported by Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) that funds are spent on professional development courses which are disconnected from the realities of classrooms and which offer very little help to educators who need to find solutions to day-to-day challenges they face in the classroom. Ferna'ndez (2017) has also waded in the debate that shows that the professional development activities or programs are overwhelming and not consistent, therefore, result in teachers who do not only lack familiarity with the reforms, but also struggle to familiarize themselves with such reforms during implementation.

Even though the value of teachers' preparedness has been indicated in the above discussions, it follows from both the background and conceptual framework that teachers struggle during the implementation of the reforms due to teachers' lack of clarity about such reforms. Among the challenges listed in implementing integrated curriculum also, there is teachers' limited knowledge on this curriculum (IC), as well as teachers' resistance to change.

## **2.3 EMPIRICAL LITERATURE**

This section explored the studies on the factors that influence the success of the curriculum reforms in schools. It also focused on the studies on the integrated curriculum as a new reform in Lesotho schools.

### **2.3.1 Factors that influence the success of reforms in schools**

A number of studies have looked into the factors that influence the success of the curriculum reforms in the schools. For instance, some studies have focused on the availability of resources and infrastructure, while others investigated the knowledge and skills of teachers in implementing the change. Other studies focused on teachers' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs towards the reform.

#### ***1) Availability and accessibility of resources and infrastructure***

Nevenghlosky (2018) examined the barriers to effective integration of phonics program in teaching at primary school level. The study was carried out at Southwest Private School in South

East Texas. This was a qualitative case study, and data was collected from 8 teachers and 2 administrators through questionnaires, interviews, and observations. The sampled teachers were those who interacted most frequently with the curriculum, from Grades K, 1, 2 and 3. The study revealed that some of the barriers to effective curriculum implementation included teachers' limited access to curriculum resources, limited time for collaboration, and a lack of professional development opportunities.

In (2016), Muindi investigated the challenges facing undergraduate students in the integration of English language and English Literature in Kenya. Observation and interviews were used to collect data from randomly selected 15 students who did their teaching practice in Nairobi in May-August 2015. The results revealed that even though the undergraduate students were expected to use the integrated approach in teaching English and Literature, the schools had insufficient teaching and learning resources, and that this factor negatively influenced the integration of English and Literature. According to this study, there was a lack of textbooks which had been recommended by schools to be strictly used when teaching specific content of English language and in teaching Literature. The shortage of the recommended textbooks inhibited teachers from comparing topics in varied books. As a result, the study established that English language and English literature were still taught as independent disciplines.

The study of Zhuwau and Shumba (2018) investigated the factors which limited the smooth implementation of new curriculum in rural schools of Zimbabwe, as well as to identify causes of the encountered challenges. A survey questionnaire was given to a sample of 59 participants drawn from three rural schools of Zimbabwe. Results revealed that the factors such as the shortage of resources including time and human capital, as well as teaching and learning materials were key to the challenges encountered in the implementation of the new curriculum in rural schools of Zimbabwe. Badugela (2012) also reported the same findings in South Africa, that the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement in various South African schools was affected by school infrastructure, insufficient resources and inadequate funding.

It is clear from all these studies that teaching and learning materials are scarcely available in schools to enable teachers to implement the curriculum reforms, including integrated curriculum.



## **2) Teachers' Knowledge and skills**

How teachers' knowledge and skills influence the implementation of curriculum reforms was also investigated by many studies. In 2018, McPhail carried out the study on curriculum integration in New Zealand. The purpose of the study was to explore teachers' understanding and implementation of curriculum integration in primary schools. Observations, interviews, focus group and a survey were used to collect data from 30 teachers and 12 students. The study established that even though teachers understood curriculum integration and its potential advantages, teachers did not integrate the curriculum because they lacked knowledge and skills to bring the subjects together for learners to make a link.

In 2014, Patius surveyed a sample of 287 participants (152 learners, 121 teachers, 14 head teachers) about the factors that influenced the implementation of curriculum in public primary schools in Ukwala division of Siaya County. The participants were selected using stratified random sampling and simple random sampling. The results from this study revealed that teachers did not have knowledge and skills that enabled them to use the integrated approach in teaching.

Another study is of Arnott (1994) which focused on the factors affecting the implementation of an elementary science curriculum in the three northern Saskatchewan primary schools. This qualitative study interviewed thirteen teachers. Data from this study indicated that despite the general idea the elementary teachers had about how to teach Science, these teachers lacked the needed skills necessary for the new curricula. The results of this study were in line with those of Harrell (2010) on the teaching of Integrated Science curriculum in Texas which revealed that teachers demonstrated lack of content knowledge and skills needed to successfully teach Science via integrated curriculum framework in Texas. Nevenglosky's (2018) study on the barriers to effective integration of phonics program in teaching, at Southwest Private School, equally established that teachers lacked knowledge and skills to integrate the phonics program in their teaching.

## **3) Teachers' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs towards curriculum reforms**

Other studies investigated how teachers' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs influence the successful curriculum reforms.

For example, Shriner, Bethanne and Libler (2010) explored teachers' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs regarding curriculum integration. The participants were 42 in-service elementary, middle, or high school teachers in Indiana who attended a three-day workshop conducted between October and December of 2007 as part of a larger project dedicated to improving teacher quality at the pre-service and in-service levels. The pre- and post-test measures were administered before and after workshop completion in order to capture changes in knowledge, attitude, and perception. The results revealed that before the workshop and at the beginning of such a workshop, teachers had negative feelings about curriculum integration. However, the findings indicated that by the end of the workshop, teachers had developed the positive attitudes towards curriculum integration, and were planning to integrate school subjects, including technology in teaching. The study concluded that teachers' preparation through training is important for influencing teachers' attitudes, which also in turn influence their willingness to implement the reforms. This result supported the study carried out in 1990 by Edgerton on integrated mathematics. The study indicated that 83% of teachers who participated in the study had positive attitudes towards integrated curriculum after being trained, and preferred to continue with the integrated program rather than returning to the traditional curriculum.

Wafula's (2012) study investigated factors that affected teachers in implementing the Oral Literature using the integrated teaching method. The purpose of the study was to explore teachers' attitudes towards the integrated method. The questionnaires, interviews and observation schedules were used to collect data from 67 teachers who were selected through random and convenient sampling techniques within Eldoret Municipality, in Kenya. The study established that English Literature and English teachers had negative attitude towards the integrated teaching method. They complained that the integrated approach had diluted Oral Literature, and had reduced it to a mere passage or to a listening and speaking skill. MacDonald, Barton, Baguley and Hartwig's (2016) study also reported the same results, that the Art teachers had negative attitudes towards the new Art curriculum because they perceived that the curriculum change was meant for the administrators since they were the ones who were more involved in designing this curriculum, and were equipped with more knowledge than teachers. Therefore, the Art teachers were reluctant to implement the new curriculum.

Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich, Sadik, Sendurur and Sendurur (2012) also investigated teachers' beliefs and technology integration practices. The purpose of the study was to examine the correspondence between teachers' classroom practices and teachers' pedagogical beliefs. This was a case-study of Twelve K-12 classroom teachers who were purposively selected based on their award-winning technology practices. Data was collected through interviews. The study established that the strongest barriers which prevented teachers from using technology were teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards technology, as well as teachers' levels of knowledge and skills. According to this study, teachers were reluctant to integrate technology in their teaching practices. Therefore, the study recommended that professional development efforts should focus on facilitating changes in teachers' attitudes and beliefs.

Linnet's (2014) equally surveyed the influence of English teachers' attitudes in implementing Integrated English curriculum (IEC) in Kenya. The survey questionnaires and interviews were administered to a group of 10 head teachers, 10 Heads of Departments, and 29 English language teachers who were selected through purposive sampling in Ekerenyo division. The findings established that in the division, there were many English teachers with the required academic and professional qualifications to implement IEC. However, the results showed that teachers had negative attitudes towards the Integrated English Curriculum. Based on the findings of this study, teachers' negative attitudes hindered the success of Integrated English curriculum. Therefore, the survey recommended that the attitudes of English teachers towards the implementation of IEC were to be addressed since such negative attitudes influenced learners' performance also.

#### ***4) Teachers' perceptions on their preparedness to implement curriculum reforms***

Teachers' perceptions on their readiness to implement the reforms were surveyed by Al-Awidi (2017). The purpose of the study was to investigate how primary school teachers in Kuwaiti perceived their readiness to implement digital curriculum in public schools, and the factors that affected Kuwaiti teachers' readiness to implement digital curriculum from their perspectives. The study surveyed and interviewed 532 teachers. The results demonstrated that Kuwaiti teachers were not ready to implement the digital curriculum. According to this study, teachers were moderately ready for implementation of the digital curriculum in both components of readiness (technical and pedagogical). According to this study, factors including knowledge and

skills, time constraints, infrastructures, as well as technical support were the main challenges for teachers in attempting to teach digital curriculum in public schools.

In 2013 also, Ng'eno, Githua and Changeiywo studied the perceptions of mathematics teachers on their preparedness to integrate Information Communication Technology (ICT) in secondary school Mathematics Instruction. A sample of 300 mathematics teachers was drawn from secondary schools in Rift Valley Province, in Kenya through systematic random sampling and stratified random sampling, and data was collected using self-report questionnaire. The findings of this study showed that teachers perceived themselves to be less prepared to integrate ICT in secondary school mathematics instructions. According to this study, teacher needed more training to integrate ICT in teaching Mathematics.

It can therefore be concluded that teachers' beliefs, attitudes and perceptions towards curriculum change, and towards their own preparedness to implement change influence such teachers response to curriculum reforms. Teachers have positive attitudes and belief when they have been adequately prepared for the curriculum reform, and they respond positively towards such reforms (Chere-Masopha, 2011). Similarly, where teachers' attitudes are negative towards the reforms, teachers are reluctant to implement change.

### **2.3.2 Integrated curriculum as a new reform in Lesotho schools**

Integrated curriculum was introduced as a new reform in Lesotho primary schools in 2013. This reform has brought along a number of changes such as restructuring or reorganizing subjects into learning areas, emphasizing the use of learner-centered pedagogies, and replacing summative assessment with continuous and formative assessment. Since the introduction of this reform, many scholars have shown interest in finding out its performance. Such scholars include Tankiso-Mphunyane (2014), Selepe (2016) Nhlapo, Moreeng and Malebese (2019).

In 2014, Tankiso-Mphunyane investigated teachers' understanding of the concepts of integrated curriculum in the teaching and learning situation. This was a qualitative case study which purposively selected 6 teachers and 9 students in three high schools in Butha-Buthe. The study used observation and interview methods for data collection. The results of this study showed that teachers had limited knowledge on integrated curriculum.

Selepe (2016) also explored the challenges that primary teachers faced in implementing this new reform (Integrated Curriculum). This study was qualitative in nature. The study used purposive sampling to select six teachers in three schools. The results of this study showed that teachers had limited clarity on the integrated curriculum and how it should be implemented. This limited knowledge and understanding negatively influenced teachers' response to this reform.

Nhlapo, Moreeng and Malebese (2019) also investigated teachers' challenges in implementing integrated curriculum in Lesotho. In this study, three teachers and two Educational Officers from nine schools participated in the semi-structured interviews. The results revealed that teachers lacked knowledge and skills, and that they did not have a common understanding of how integrated curriculum should be implemented. Therefore, teachers did not agree on a number of ideas. Thus, according to this study, teachers were not working in cooperation and teamwork as anticipated by the reform. According to this new reform, teachers of different disciplines should work as a team to enhance integration of subject content during teaching.

The situation in Lesotho classrooms that is described by these studies already suggest that this new reform is likely to fail. Therefore, there is a need to establish how best teachers can be assisted with skill and knowledge they require to implement the new reform. Based on the findings of the literature reviewed in this study, it has been established that sometimes teachers' perceptions about their preparedness to implement change are important. They can influence teachers' response positively or negatively. Even where teachers have basic skills and knowledge required to implement change, teachers' perceptions can influence teachers to view themselves lacking such knowledge and skills. Where teachers believe that they have not been adequately prepared, they may be reluctant to implement change, indicating that they do not have knowledge and skills. Thus, this study intended to investigate teachers' perceptions on their preparedness to implement the new reform, and how their perceptions influence their response to the new curriculum (such as using the professional skills teachers already have). Thus, this study explored teachers' perceptions on their preparedness to implement integrated curriculum in Lesotho primary schools.

## **2.4 SUMMARY**

This chapter reported on the reviewed literature. It broadly discussed factors that influence the successful implementation of integrated curriculum, as well as teachers' perceptions on their preparedness to implement curriculum reforms. The literature revealed that to a high extent, teachers' perceptions on their preparedness influence how teachers implement the reforms. Thus, when trained, teachers feel prepared with knowledge and skills to implement the reforms, and they put effort in implementing such reforms. On the other hand, when feeling less prepared, teachers feel reluctant to implement the changes brought by the reforms. Chapter three will then describe the methodology used to collect and analyze data for this study.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The study intended to examine teachers' perceptions on their preparedness to implement the integrated curriculum recently introduced in the schools in Lesotho, and how their perceptions influence their instructional practices. This chapter describes the methodology used to collect and analyze data for this study. This information is presented in the following sections: Introduction (this section), Research paradigm, Research design, Research methods, Population of the study, Sample and sampling procedures, Data collection methods, as well as Data analysis methods. The validity and reliability of the instruments used in this study, the ethical considerations, and the trustworthiness of this study are also discussed.

### **3.2 METHODOLOGY**

This section explained and justified the research methodology followed in this study. The research paradigm was first explained, followed by the research design, and the research methods of this study, as well as why they were preferred to investigate the research questions presented in chapter 1.

#### **3.2.1 Research paradigm**

Generally, perceptions are the views of individuals about the world around them. These views are often shaped by the individual experiences of interacting with their social and physical environments. Therefore, these views are subjective because people experience the world differently. Based on this explanation, this study adopted an interpretivist approach which views truth as subjective and knowledge as something which is socially negotiated by the individuals through interaction with their physical and social environments (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). Interpretivists believe that knowledge and reality creation of individuals could be interpreted through their actions (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smith, 2004). The interpretivists view curricular knowledge as socially constructed and shaped by contextual factors. Therefore, this paradigm has been found ideal as a base for investigating teachers' perceptions that the primary school teachers have about their preparedness to implement integrated curriculum in the schools in Lesotho.

### **3.2.2 Research design**

The study used the qualitative research design approach since it sought to explore teachers' perceptions. Qualitative design, according to Macmillan and Schumacher (2010) is concerned with exploring and describing the phenomenon of interest, as well as how people perceive and understand the world. The study is on teachers' interpretation and sense making of the way they were prepared to implement the integrated curriculum, and how such perceptions influence their instructional practices. The choice of this design was also influenced by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) who asserted that this approach allows for the descriptive reports of individuals' perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, views and feelings, as well as interpretations. Another reason for adopting qualitative design approach is that it mainly emphasizes the use of words rather than numbers in order to determine the quality as opposed to quantity of a subject (Leedy & Omrod, 2010). In this study, the quality of teacher preparedness is being examined as to see whether teachers felt prepared to teach the integrated curriculum.

### **3.2.3 Research method**

This descriptive study used the interview method for generating data. An interview was preferred for collecting data for this study since it is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used, verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard. By using interviews, Creswell (2003) shows that the insight into peoples' thoughts and perceptions are gained. Also, Interviews were used to give the participants and the interviewer an opportunity to gain insights into how people interpret certain situations from their own point of view (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Additional to interviews, field notes were taken as Krathwolh (1997) indicates that field notes highlight the emergent themes, help to ask more questions, and to explain the observed emotions and behaviors. In this study, teachers interpreted their preparedness to implement the integrated curriculum, and how their preparedness affects the way they implement it.

### **3.2.4 Population and participants**

The targeted population for this study was primary school teachers in Lesotho for they all met the criteria for inclusion in this study (Creswell, 2003). Integrated curriculum was introduced in the primary schools in 2013. These teachers are expected, or are already implementing this curriculum.



### ***Selection of participants***

Because the study is about teachers' views on how they were prepared for the implementation of the integrated curriculum (IC), six teachers were selected from three schools. Purposive sampling was used to select participants based on their knowledge and experience of the previous and the current curriculum, and those with the experience of IC only, as well as the grades taught by such teachers. Also convenience sampling was preferred due to accessibility of participants in terms of a distance and travelling costs in collecting data (Cohen, Manion & Morriison, 2007).

The specific targeted teachers for this study were those:

- with 0 and 5 years of teaching experience in primary schools in Lesotho;
- with 6 years and above of teaching experience in primary schools in Lesotho;
- having college teaching qualifications (Lesotho College of Education);
- having undergraduate teaching degree (National University of Lesotho);
- teaching in the lower grades (grade one to three);
- teaching in the upper grades (grade four to seven).

The interest on the education training institutions is influenced by the Garvis and Pendergast's (2012) assertion that the research calls for the ongoing monitoring of curriculum change, and the implementation of professional development programs to support teachers. That is, in order to enact curriculum change in the classroom effectively, there should be a strong coordination between the stakeholders and educational institutions. Garvis and Pendergast's (2012) maintain that this coordination which is influenced by the research will guide the education leaders in ensuring that teachers are adequately prepared to implement the new curriculum. Years of teaching experience were considered in selecting some participants because prior knowledge of teachers and teachers' experience contribute to their interpretation of any curriculum reform (Spillane, Reiser & Reiner, 2002). As to validate data, it was gathered from different grades, lower ones (1, 3 and 4) and upper ones (5, 6 and 7) because IC was introduced in different years on these grades, teachers were therefore assumed to have been prepared on different years. Selecting participants from different geographical regions and grades was for data triangulation (Leedy and Ormorod, 2013).

### 3.3 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

There are structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). In structured interviews, questions require the no or yes answers, and the predetermined short responses are determined, and they are ordered prior to the interview. In an unstructured interview, specific questions and their order are not pre-determined, and such questions encourage participants to tell stories, explain processes as well as to describe situations (Chere-Masopha, 2011). The semi-structured interviews are the mix of more and less structured questions. The semi-structured interviews were carried out with six integrated curriculum teachers to collect data. These interviews were considered the most appropriate to generate data because:

- they provided an opportunity to the interviewer to get deeper understanding of perceptions through additional information by the interviewees, and their clarification of responses in cases where such responses were not clear (Nieuwenhuis, 2007);
- they allowed probing, reactions to the respondents' emotions, and the investigation of aspects of responses that cannot be found when using questionnaire (Lankshear & Knobel 2004).

#### 3.3.1 Design of the interview protocol

According to Cresswell (2003), the creation of instruments by the researcher is permitted when there is no existing instrument for the study. Therefore, the semi-structured interview protocol was developed and used to guide the interview of a minimum of 4 questions developed from the review of literature.

##### *The question structure in the interview protocol*

**Background questions:** This section was an introduction to the actual interview, and it focused on the participants' profile such as the educational background of the teacher, and the teacher training institution attended and duration. It included also the number of years of teaching experience, and those of integrated curriculum implementation.

**Integrated curriculum implementation:** This part demanded participants to show how integrated curriculum should be implemented in the classrooms. Participants were asked to include the teaching and assessment methods and strategies.

**Views about preparedness and their influence on teacher change:** In this section, the questions focused on the influence of teachers' preparedness perceptions on how teachers implement integrated curriculum. Teachers were asked to indicate changes on their instructional practices in relation to how they teach and assess learners as a result of their preparation and support.

### 3.3.2 Instrument testing

The interview schedule developed was tested before the actual study was conducted to ensure that it would collect the intended data, to test the questions' clarity, to confirm the interview duration, as well as to check the omissions, redundancy, and relevancy (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). An instrument was used on two teachers who shared similar specified characteristics of the actual participants of the study. Both pilot teachers and schools were not part of the actual study. The same approach, methodology and methods were applied in testing the instrument (Basit, 2010). The functioning and effectiveness of audio recording was confirmed. The participants gave their views concerning the interview protocols, and their comments and suggestions were incorporated in the instrument to ensure validity and reliability.

## 3.4 DATA COLLECTION

The data collection process involved two stages which are the interview preparation stage and the actual data collection stage.

### 3.4.1 The interview preparation stage

The data collection preparation for this study began at the National University of Lesotho which gave the researcher the permission to carry on the study. In each school, the required teachers were approached by the principal, and were asked about their willingness to participate in the study. This happened after the participants were given information regarding their expected contribution in the interviews, the procedures to be followed, as well as terms and conditions. The terms and conditions included the freedom to withdraw from the study any time they wanted to, and the freedom to be recorded or not, as well as to use the language that they were

comfortable with. In order to facilitate the conversation, the participants were to use either English or Sesotho since these languages are both the official languages in the country. The participants were given the researcher's phone numbers for further discussion and arrangements for further interviews including their suggested time and places. The phone numbers even helped in cases where the participants had to inform the researcher that they were no longer willing to participate in the study.

### **3.4.2 Data collection stage**

The face-to-face semi-structured interviews were carried out for about 45 minutes at the participants' places of employment. The purpose of the research, the activities to be carried out and their duration were discussed, and the recording of the interview, as well as the language to be used to collect data were negotiated. The participants' willingness to participate in this study was confirmed and participants were reminded of their rights to withdraw from the study, and to show their concerns or any objections during the interview process.

The participants were then asked questions with the researcher asking clarifications on some issues, and making summaries. The participants gave their views and clarified some issues that were emerging. With the consent of the participants, interviews were audio-taped. An audio recorder helps with referencing during data transcription, as well as in checking the wording of statements of interest that might be quoted during data analysis as evidence (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Wolcott (1994) was also of the view that audio recording helps a researcher to keep a close eye contact with the respondents, and to pay attention to everything that is said. As a result, the fluency of a conversation was improved, and the process was speed up since non-verbal actions of the interviewees were noted, and the questions were probed. Field notes were taken during interviews as they highlight the emergent themes, help to ask more questions, and to explain the observed emotions and behaviors (Kratwohl, 1997). At the end of the interview, the participants were notified, the recording of the interview was played back to the participants, depending on the time available, and their comments on the topic itself, as well as on the processes were encouraged. In cases where there was no time to play back the recordings, additional time was requested by the researcher. Alternatively, other appointments were made as to listen to the record together with the participants. To avoid any confusion, all the tapes were labeled and kept in a safe place before serving their purpose.

### **3.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

The analyzed data for this study were on the perceptions of six teachers on their preparedness to teach the integrated curriculum. The thematic analysis was used, and it was guided by the research questions. The process involved organizing and presenting data in patterns and themes that makes the unknown real and understandable (Krathwohl, 1997). As it is the case with the qualitative study, data analysis involved data preparation, data coding, and data interpretation of the subject of investigation (Wolcott, 1994). These procedures followed in data analysis are explained below.

#### **3.5.1 Data preparation**

When preparing data, the interviews were first transcribed separately. Then just like the field notes, the interviews were coded and categorized as to identify the themes that emerged as well as to compare and contrast the responses (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The audio-tapes were listened to in order to capture and transcribe responses from the participants into text including those that were thought to be irrelevant to the study. To facilitate the conversation, both official languages (English and Sesotho) were used because some participants preferred to communicate in their first language. Others switched from one language to the other. Therefore, in cases where the responses were in Sesotho, they were literally translated into English as data was being transcribed, and minor editing of English grammar in the quotes was done to make the study readable. However, the original meaning of words, phrases and statements were not changed, and in cases where Sesotho words and expressions could not be translated into English, they were kept in their original form. Even the interpretation of pauses, emphases, and other non-verbal responses were done.

#### **3.5.2 Data coding and analysis**

The thematic analysis was used in this study. The analysis included organizing the data, coding and identifying themes, representing the data, and interpreting findings (Cresswell, 2003). To organize data, the researcher relied on transcriptions, interviews and fieldnotes, and aligned data collected to the research questions. The descriptive phrases were used, and data was coded to identify the patterns within each question depending on the outcomes hoped to be achieved. That was achieved by investigating and coding participant' data separately, then comparing data for

all participants, and by looking at the repetitions and relationships of the participants' responses transcribed (Chere-Masopha, 2011). The connections between individual and common themes were made, and conclusions were drawn about the overlapping themes and patterns. The common themes allowed for description of produced perceptions as told by the teachers. The unrelated themes were also analyzed in relation to their relevance in the study. Categories were constructed by putting data into themes and patterns as well as analyzing content (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The themes related to the research questions. These themes included; teachers' personal interpretation of integrated curriculum, teachers' classroom practices in implementing integrated curriculum, teachers' views on their preparedness to implement integrated curriculum, and the influence of teachers' views on their preparedness on their classroom practices.

### **3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness is the truth value of a piece of a research. In a qualitative study, it involves the following elements: credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability.

#### ***Credibility***

The credible data is the one which is reported as it is, or whose results reflect the perceptions of the people under study, having the faithful descriptions that readers with similar experience can relate to (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The conclusions made from the data were discussed with colleagues in master's programme and a supervisor to check whether the interpretations and such conclusions were appropriate based on the collected data. The conclusions made were also taken back to the participants in order for them to confirm their accuracy or whether such conclusions made sense, based on what participants said (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

#### ***Dependability***

According to Polit and Hungler (1993), a dependable study is accurate and consistent. It reflects stable data over time and conditions. As suggested by Leedy and Omrod (2010), to make this study dependable, the data collection instrument was scrutinized by the supervisor to confirm whether it was valid. The instrument was tested on different schools apart from the ones that are in the study. The interviews were audio-taped to validate data. The researcher reviewed the

literature to see the views of other investigators on the same phenomenon, and conducted data from different schools and from different grade levels (Basit, 2010).

### ***Conformability***

Conformability refers to the research findings which are the results of the research, not the researcher's assumptions and preconceptions (Polit & Hungler, 1993). In order to confirm the results, inquiry audit can be used to trace data to their sources so as to follow the researcher's path of arriving at constructs, themes and interpretation (Polit & Hungler, 1993). In this study, the researcher audited the research process, and the citations from different participants were included in the study without any comments.

### ***Transferability***

The results are transferable only if they can be applicable in another context based on the adequate explanation of the methods (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, for this study to be transferable, the methods used were thoroughly explained so as to enable the researcher to make judgments, and use the findings in other studies. The three schools were used as to compare teachers' perceptions in different contexts. This encouraged transferability in this study since the researcher did not generalize the findings (Cresswell, 2003).

## **3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

According to Bryman (2012) ethics involve treatment of people in the research, and involve the consideration of the activities that should or should not be carried out with the participants. Basically, the study that either harms the participants physically or mentally is unacceptable (Cresswell, 2003). Bryman (2012) emphasizes that research ethics are important, and must not be ignored because they relate to the integrity of a study. Therefore, the ethics were maintained in this study as described below.

Before data collection, the purpose of the study was communicated to the principals and the participants. Terms and conditions including the participants' rights to voluntarily participate or withdraw at any stage of the study were discussed with the participants (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010). The participants were given the contacts and email of all the responsible people for Postgraduates Research Programs such as the supervisor and the Dean of Faculty of Education so

as to lodge their complaints or concerns regarding the study. Participants were also informed about their rights to access data, and to decide what to include and exclude in the study.

During data collection, the informed consent and self-determination were still observed (Cohen & Manion, 1994). The participants were granted an opportunity to ask questions and not to answer any question they felt uncomfortable with during the interviews, and the participants' rights, beliefs, perceptions, and lifestyles were considered (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

In analyzing data, the anonymity of participants and confidentiality were equally observed. For instance, there was no link between the participants and their responses since schools were named with the alphabets from A to C, while teachers were numbered from Teacher 1 to Teacher 6 (Bryman, 2012). Any information that might reveal the participants and schools was eliminated in the study.

The findings were reported with complete honesty without misinterpreting them to support any conclusion made by the researcher, or to avoid misleading others, they were equally monitored by the supervisor (Cresswell, 2003). Also, any material that belonged to other people such as their thoughts, ideas or words was fully acknowledged.

### **3.8 SUMMARY**

This chapter explained the research paradigm and methods that were used in conducting this study, as well as the reasons for their selection. The chapter further discussed the participants, the research instrument as well as the whole procedure of data collection, including the ethical considerations. The data analysis procedure was also demonstrated in this chapter, and the limitations of the study. The next chapter is about the presentation and discussion of the data obtained through the data collection methods used in this study.



## CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aimed at exploring teachers' perceptions on their preparedness to implement the integrated curriculum (IC) in primary schools in Lesotho. The data were collected from six teachers who voluntarily participated in the semi-structured interviews. This chapter therefore presents the findings that emerged for the data collected. The four broad questions that were asked during data collection are: (1) how teachers interpreted the integrated curriculum; (2) how teachers implemented integrated curriculum; (3) teachers' views on how they were prepared for the implementation of the integrated curriculum, and (4) how teachers' views about how they were prepared for integrated curriculum influenced their classroom practices. Therefore, information in this chapter is presented as follows: this section, 4.0 introduces the study, Section 4.1 summarizes participants' professional profile, and Section 4.2 presents the findings.

### 4.2 PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants in this study were selected from six schools (two from each) as described in Chapter 3. Because of confidentiality, the real names of schools and the participants were not provided. The schools were named with the alphabets from A to C, while teachers were numbered from Teacher 1 to Teacher 6. Table 4.1 presents the summary of the participants' profile. The detailed profile of the participants is on Appendix 1.

*Table 0:2: Summary of participants' professional profile*

Names of the Schools	School A		School B		School C	
	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4	Teacher 5	Teacher 6
Profile						
Age	30	40	58	35	45	46
Gender	F	M	F	M	F	M
<b>Teaching experience</b>						
Number of teaching years	4	14	30	10	20	19
Grades taught	2-3	4-7	1-7	4-7	4-7	1-5
Current grade	4	6	3	5	1	7
Number of	4	2	6	4	6	4

years teaching IC						
<b>Professional Training and development</b>						
Institution/s	LCE	LCE and NUL	LCE	LCE and NUL	LCE and NUL	LCE and NUL
Qualifications	DEP	BEd(Primary)	PTC	BEd (Primary)	BEd (Primary)	BEd(Pri mary)
Subject Specialization	All subjects	English, Sesotho and Mathematics	All subjects	Science, Social Studies and Religion.	English, Sesotho & mathematics	Sesotho English & Social Studies
<b>2.In-service workshop/course attended in past five years</b>	_____	_____	1	1	1	_____
Year			2013	2015	2015	
Title			Integrated Curriculum	Integrated Curriculum	Integrated Curriculum	
Duration			1 Week	1 Week	1 Week	
Hosting Organization/s			Education Officers and District Resource Teachers	District Resource Teachers	District Resource Teachers	

The participants in this study were both males and females. In each school, there was one male and one female teacher. The study also engaged participants of different ages ranging from 30-58 years. Two participants ages ranged between 30-35, three ranged between 40- 46 years, and one teacher was 58 years old. The participants' teaching experiences ranged from 4-30 years. Only one teacher had less than five years of teaching experience, others had 10 years and above years. The three lower grades teachers and three upper grades teachers participated in the study. Also, the study included different years in which teachers engaged with this curriculum, the

assumption being that their preparedness perceptions would differ depending on the years in which they were trained to implement the integrated curriculum. The participants' years of experience teaching the integrated curriculum ranged from 2-6 years. Only two teachers engaged in teaching integrated curriculum when it was first introduced in 2013 as they were on the grades 1-3 in which it started. Three teachers engaged with integrated curriculum two years after it was introduced. There was only one teacher who had just two years teaching integrated curriculum as a teacher has been in grades 6 and 7 ever since the curriculum was introduced. Moreover, the study covered the participants with different qualifications. Most (4) were bachelor's degree (Primary) holders who started at the Lesotho College of Education (LCE) and went further to the National University of Lesotho (NUL). Two participants had College (LCE) qualifications only, one had Diploma in Education Primary (DEP) and the last one had Primary Teaching Certificate (PTC). Out of the six participants, only three attended the integrated curriculum training workshops.

#### **4.3 PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS**

One of the leading concerns among the teachers included a lack of opportunities for collaboration and sharing among peers in support of the change. The identification of this specific concern highlights a value that teachers often place on collaboration (Lambert, McCarthy, Fitchett, Lineback, & Reiser, 2015). This section presents the results of data collected through interviewing six teachers. The data that was collected through these teachers included: (1) how teachers interpreted integrated curriculum; (2) teachers' classroom practices in implementing integrated curriculum, (3) teachers' views on how they have been prepared to teach the integrated curriculum, and (4) how teachers' preparedness perceptions influenced their instructional practices. Information in this section is presented accordingly under the following sections: Section 4.2.1 presents teachers' interpretation of the integrated curriculum; Section 4.2.2 teachers' classroom practices in implementing integrated curriculum, as well as Section 4.2.3 teachers' views on how they have been prepared to implement the integrated curriculum, and Section 4.2.4 how such perceptions influenced teachers' instructional practices. In this section, the extracts from the interviews are used as an evidence to show that the knowledge is created by the participants. The voices of the participants are denoted through the use of *italics*.

### **4.3.1 Teachers' personal interpretation of the integrated curriculum**

The participants were asked about their interpretations of integrated curriculum. The sub-questions that were used to collect data for this question included: (1) How teachers defined integrated curriculum; (2) How integrated curriculum should be taught and assessed, as well as (3) teachers' views on the difference between the new curriculum (integrated curriculum) and the old curriculum (subject oriented curriculum) in terms of how it should be taught and assessed.

#### ***(1) Teachers' definition of integrated curriculum***

In their attempts to define integrated curriculum, teachers responded differently. Generally, all the participants indicated that integrated curriculum is an approach that is made up of learning areas other than individual subjects in order to make connections of concepts across all such learning areas. They also indicated that it is life-oriented, learner-centered, and it makes use of continuous assessment. This is how Teacher 1, from School A defined integrated curriculum:

*I understand the concept of integrated curriculum as the curriculum that is derived from five Learning Areas being Creativity and Entrepreneurship area, Personal, Spiritual and Social area, Linguistic and Literary area, Numerical and Mathematical area, as well as Scientific and Technological area. With this approach, traditional subjects are still taught, but they have been grouped together, with a focus on the connections between them, other than on the independent subjects*

Teacher 3 concurred with Teacher 1, and added that the integration is achieved through projects, themes, or topics that reflect children's interests and suggestions. She further explained that this integration builds on the relationships which exist among all things in life. Teacher 3 claimed that it allows children to take learning in a holistic way, without the restrictions brought by the subject boundaries, as well as promoting learners' understanding of concepts since learners learn concepts across the subject areas.

Teacher 2's definition emphasized that integrated curriculum helps learners to engage in relevant and meaningful activities that can be connected to real life. Teacher 2 had this to say:

*When highlighting me about this curriculum (IC), one of my colleagues indicated that it integrates real life issues with the school content; so I found it to be a good curriculum because it develops the child's ability to transfer their learning to other settings. Learners are being taught to apply what they are learning at schools in real*

*life situations so as to show their understanding. In short, with this curriculum, community life or everything that learners are experiencing in the outside world is connected to the school life.*

Teachers did not differ much when defining integrated curriculum even though they put more emphasis on different aspects. Teacher 5 mentioned that integrated curriculum is learner-centered. In her response, Teacher 5 demonstrated that integrated curriculum is learner-centered because children are to be the decision-makers and planners throughout the process, and they are to be allowed to be more responsible and involved in their own learning by doing more activities than a teacher, rather than depending on teachers for information. In further illustrating this point, Teacher 5 highlighted that with IC, a teacher only supports learners, not interfering with their work, and does not overwhelm learners with suggestions and ideas. She concluded that with integrated curriculum, a teacher is a learner with the child, rather than an expert.

Another teacher from School C, Teacher 6 defined integrated curriculum based on its assessment for he stated that it is an approach that uses continuous assessment. This is how Teacher 6 responded:

*Integrated curriculum is the approach that advocates for the use of continuous assessment. With this system, assessment for learning is practiced other than assessment of learning. Assessment for learning is whereby teachers make an ongoing diagnosis of learners' difficulties in order to identify areas requiring remediation or extra attention. IC encourages the monitoring and assessment of learner's progress at school level through daily classroom teaching.*

## **(2) How integrated curriculum should be taught and assessed**

The participants indicated that integrated curriculum should be taught in a way that helps learners to relate everything that they learn with what happens in schools. They added that it should be taught in a manner that encourages more learners' involvement in their own learning, while a teacher should just be a facilitator. The participants further mentioned that IC should be taught in a manner that allows for the integration of concepts within and across all the learning areas. Based on assessment, the participants showed that IC should be assessed continuously. This is how Teacher 1 explained:

*My colleagues informed me that with integrated curriculum, teaching should not only be done in a manner that help learners to connect and create more real world connections, but learners should be also actively involved in their learning, they*

*should do most of the teaching activities, and my work as a teacher should be to facilitate their learning. Teacher 1 continued by showing the advantage of the teaching approach that she has just mentioned. ... With this curriculum, I have observed that my learners show higher signs of retention at an increased rate because they are able to make connections of the school content with the real world, and they do activities by themselves because I am now their facilitator.*

The participants further illustrated that since integrated curriculum is the interdisciplinary approach, they should no longer teach independent subjects, but they must link or merge the concepts within and across the learning areas so as to improve integration. Teacher 3 made it clear that during their training, they were orientated that this curriculum (IC) should be integrated through the use of themes, projects, individual and small group studies.

When Teacher 3 provided an example to elaborate on this link or integration, she indicated that when teaching a composition in Linguistic and Literary (English), a Linguistic and Literary (Sesotho) teacher must also teach *mogogo* (Sesotho composition) at the same time. It is important to note that in this example, there is no link of concepts, learners would be learning by translating not integration.

Teacher 2 also expressed his views about the integration and linking of concepts within and across the learning areas. This is how this participant expressed his view:

*In this curriculum, there are no clearer subject boundaries, I sometimes get confused in trying to link and integrate the concepts myself. I normally see learners having the same confusion; they would provide the irrelevant answers of things they have learnt in Scientific and Technological in the Creativity and Entrepreneurial lesson.*

His argument illustrated how far he understood the concept of integration.

In relation to how the integrated curriculum should be assessed, teachers noted that they were told to use formative assessment in this approach. They indicated that with this assessment, learners are not supposed to be assessed through tests. The participants emphasized that teachers should assess every time they are teaching or at the end of the week to allow learners to reflect on what they had done during the week. Teacher 6 explained as thus:

*My colleagues informed me that with integrated curriculum, we should practice continuous assessment. For example, each new concept should be followed by an exercise so as to assess whether learners are following or not, or simply to assess learners who needs further assistance. I was told that should a teacher discover that*

*a learner did not understand any concept; a teacher should do a remedial work where such a teacher will provide more examples of the concepts which learners are not competent with.*

**(3) Teachers' views on the difference between the new curriculum (Integrated Curriculum) and the old curriculum (Subject Oriented Curriculum) in terms of how it should be taught and assessed**

In responding to this question, the participants indicated that the integrated curriculum is generally good, and it effectively addresses a number of challenges facing Lesotho if it can be implemented effectively. The participants first compared the two curricula in terms of the teaching methods. The participants noted that with the subject oriented curriculum, subjects were taught in isolation, while in IC subjects are not separated, but merged to form broad learning areas so that concepts also are taught together. For example, this is how Teacher 1 stated:

*I support integrated curriculum for improving learners' understanding of concepts because it grouped individual subjects into broad learning areas to allow for integration of concepts, it has replaced the old one which isolated the subjects, and gave certain subjects such as English, Mathematics and Science priority over others.*

Teacher 4's response was the same about integrated curriculum, but he added that with subject oriented curriculum, school concepts were not connected to the outside world experiences. He noted that the integration of the life experiences with the curriculum helps learners to view the world or life holistically.

Three of the participants lamented that even though the IC might be assumed to be a bit easier to teach as real life-experiences are integrated with school content, this curriculum is beyond the cognitive level of learners compared to the subject oriented curriculum, and that learners seem to be struggling in the learning of concepts unlike in the previous curriculum. For instance, Teacher 2 complained:

*Honestly, with this curriculum (IC), we feel as though we are failing to do our work, we feel very incompetent when looking at our learners' performance, but having looked at the content in this new curriculum, I concluded that it is normal that learners' performance is so horrible; the curriculum is just too complicated for learners.*

These participants explained that in teaching the subject oriented curriculum, they focused on disciplinary knowledge and cognitive skills only. They expanded that all other desirable

competences and skills, including some which are now taken care of in Creativity and Entrepreneurship (CE) learning area were ignored in the old curriculum. On the other hand, Teacher 5 felt that this new curriculum (IC) will improve the standard of education in Lesotho because it will help learners to explore new ways of thinking and imagining when being taught about real life issues. This is how she put it:

*Compared to the subject-based curriculum, integrated curriculum might improve the economy of the country. We have high unemployment rate, therefore, CE provides learners with the information, skills, and knowledge to overcome a number of these issues which are the threats to Lesotho's citizens such as youth unemployment, climate change, and food insecurity. It is equally likely to address a number of challenges such as HIV and AIDS pandemic, which result in a growing number of households headed by children.*

In emphasizing the possibility of improving the economy of the country through CE, Teacher 5 reported that CE will promote learners' self-reliance and creativity at the early stage. She noted that learners will see the importance of designing and producing beautiful products, even by recycling, not necessarily by buying the materials and learners will sell the items as to earn money, other than all being willing to be employed.

All the participants were equally aware that the old curriculum used the teacher-centered methods of teaching, while the new curriculum (IC) adopted the learner-centered methods in teaching as learners are to be more involved in their learning.

The participants also expressed their views on how the IC differs from the subject-oriented curriculum in terms of the assessment. They maintained that the old curriculum used the summative assessment while the new curriculum employed the formative assessment. Teacher 3 responded as follows:

*In subject oriented curriculum, all learners sat for the common public examinations, as a summative assessment in all the levels throughout the year. Now IC removes the pressure from teachers to teach for the exam, allowing teachers to teach and assess the whole curriculum. It mainly uses the formative assessment since the assessment is integrated with teaching and learning, allowing for monitoring of educational progress.*



Teacher 3 further elaborated that the only time that integrated curriculum uses the summative assessment is when learners sit for public examination at the end of Grades 10 and 12 for certification and selection of learners for higher education.

The assessment issue was also clarified by Teacher 6 who explained:

*My colleagues told me that with integrated curriculum, we no longer provide learners with marks such as 18/20 or 80% like it was done in the subject oriented curriculum. Instead of marks or grades, the new methods of assessment generate statements about each learner's progress and ability. The statements help learners, teachers, as well as parents to know exactly what a learner has learnt, or is capable of doing, indicating also areas where remedial work is needed.*

Teacher 6 emphasized that with IC, learners with different abilities are catered for, and a learner is not compared with others. His view was that integrated curriculum is far much better than the subject oriented curriculum one since the entrance in higher education is no longer determined by students' performance in group examinations, but it is determined by performance in subjects where learners have best abilities. He illustrated that with this curriculum, unlike the previous one where there were failures; learners do not fail or repeat the grade as each learner's weaknesses are to be observed and be dealt with.

### **Summary**

Teachers were asked to define the integrated curriculum, to explain how it should be taught and assessed, as well as to describe the difference between the integrated curriculum and the subject-oriented in terms of how it should be taught and assessed. Teachers' different interpretations of integrated curriculum included:

- IC is life-oriented and learner-centered, it links or merges the concepts within and across the learning areas, and it makes use of continuous assessment.
- In the integrated curriculum, subjects are not taught in isolation, there is an integration of subjects as well as concepts while the subject-oriented curriculum focused on each individual subjects.
- In teaching the integrated curriculum, the skills and attitudes necessary for achieving rapid social and economic change are developed while the old curriculum focused on the cognitive skills only. Subject-based curriculum was teacher-centered while integrated curriculum is learner centered. The subject-based curriculum used the summative

assessment while the integrated curriculum uses the formative assessment.

Having looked at how participants define integrated curriculum, how it should be taught and assessed, as well as the difference between the integrated curriculum and the previous one in terms of how it should be taught and assessed, the study found it important to look at how the participants are actually implementing this curriculum.

#### **4.3.2 Teachers' classroom practices in implementing integrated curriculum**

In this section, the participants were asked about the teaching methods and assessment strategies they use in implementing the integrated curriculum, as well as the challenges they encounter in implementing this curriculum. Therefore, the sub-questions that were used in collecting data for this section were: (1) what teaching methods and assessment strategies do teachers employ in teaching the integrated curriculum? (2) What challenges do teachers encounter in implementing the integrated curriculum?

##### ***(1) Teaching and assessment strategies teachers employ in their current teaching practices***

All the teachers indicated that they had never reflected on their own instructional or teaching practices. They seemed a bit confused and reluctant to describe how they taught. This was first observed in Teacher 1's response, who with laughter said:

*Well. Okay...I don't know if this answer will be appropriate since I'm not sure whether I can specify the methods and strategies I use every day. When introducing a new topic, I first ask learners the probing questions that focus on their needs, interests, questions, prior knowledge, and daily experiences. I do this to help learners to be able to relate things that happen in their everyday life with whatever they are to learn, as well as to find out whether they have the previous knowledge on what I'm about to teach. In short, I lead them to make connections between prior and new knowledge.*

Another teacher from the same school as Teacher 1, Teacher 2, was also uncertain to describe his teaching methods. This is how he responded:

*Mmm.... well...the current reform is a good strategy honestly, it encourages the use of learner-centered pedagogy, so to allow more learners' involvement in their own learning, I no longer teach, I allow learners to participate more by creating the challenging, fun and meaningful tasks for learners such as singing, writing, reading and role playing. I normally hold class discussions, I also use the ability group discussions as to give learners a chance to talk and share ideas, I engage outdoor*

*learning activities, and I sometimes let learners get the information from the internet at home as to find information on their own.*

Teacher 1 and Teacher 2's lack of confidence in responding to some questions are the clear indications of how little confidence they have in teaching the IC. In showing how he implemented the integrated curriculum, a teacher from School C, Teacher 4, was very passionate, and he broadly justified his choice for group work.

*In implementing the integrated curriculum, I consider the children's strengths and interests, as well as the resources available. I normally offer resources and teach the skills and strategies needed individually or through class instruction. After that, I then resort to the use of the small group study whereby I let learners become independent, and to take some responsibility for their own learning by sharing and transferring information. I found group work to be very helpful since learners have opportunities to ask questions, solve problems, and think independently. Learners similarly learn to take turns in speaking, and to listen when others tell their ideas. Teacher 4 continued:*

*Actually, I have discovered that learners benefit from working with other children for they learn from the collaboration of others as they inspire each other in a group. With group work, I also want to build a classroom community of people working together and respecting the needs of all members. Moreover, I want to make learners aware that in life, people rely on each other to perform certain tasks.*

Generally, four teachers who participated in this study claimed to use teaching methods in which they act as facilitators not the knowledge transmitters. These teachers also indicated that however, group work strategy is not always effective, that sometimes only one or two groups out of eight groups would understand a skill being taught. As a result, they often arranged remedial lessons or activities for those who appeared to be struggling. They, however, indicated that because of their teaching loads and class sizes (105 learners), sometimes they are not able to provide remedial teaching.

The findings on the teaching strategies indicate that teachers have an understanding that IC is child-centered not teacher-centered. This was more significant in Teacher 5's response:

*In this curriculum, I completely facilitate teaching by letting learners to contribute and find information. I let children find facts by themselves, I do not spoon-feed them. Learners give their own understanding of concepts and after that, we discuss everything and come up with a common understanding. I don't like giving learners notes because they even take a lot of time copying such notes. In fact, learners have to explore and derive their own meanings all the time, I just have to listen.*

There were two teachers who indicated that some of the teaching strategies demanded in the IC are impossible to achieve. They made an example of a group work teaching strategy. For example, Teacher 6 put it this way:

*I cannot use some of the teaching approaches that are suggested by the IC such as the learner-centered approach. Honestly, in a small classroom that I have, it is highly impossible to use this strategy in a group of 105 learners. There is no enough space for them to sit in groups. So the only option I have is to use the teacher-centered approach whereby I stand in front of the class, and let learners to listen and look at me while teaching.*

Teacher 6 further complained that:

*.... Although group work as a teaching strategy, is encouraged in the integrated curriculum, the reason being that learners in small groups begin to learn how to accept and respect each other, work in a teamwork, as well as becoming stronger individuals, I do not use this teaching strategy most of the time. I have also discovered that this strategy is also time consuming. It requires me to use a lot of energy in controlling learners' noise, and managing their behavior and directing how they should carry out a task and how to work with others. At some stage, you will find them fighting in a group. So I usually resort to activities that are both teacher-initiated and directed together with those that are child-initiated and directed.*

One of the participants indicated that she is still using teaching strategies that they have been using in the old curriculum and those that they are comfortable with. This was reflected in a 58-year-old teacher, with the teaching experience of 30 years, Teacher 3 who said:

*I'm holding on what I know already, after all, I was trained in a manner that I transfer my knowledge to learners a number of years ago.... in fact, I'm doing what has been working for me for 30 years that I have been teaching, the question and answer method of teaching works for me for you will always find my learners quiet and listening attentively, because as a teacher I decide who should speak and when ... honestly, I'm feeling comfortable in using the old teaching approaches. It is best to use what works for you. I always teach by telling my learners facts, encouraging learners to go and observe such facts on their own.*

How this teacher responded was different from how other teachers responded. The four teachers were willing to show that their teaching approaches align with the requirements of the integrated curriculum. In her response, Teacher 3 indicated that she was not abiding by the new curriculum policy, and that in her teaching, she acted as the transmitter of knowledge rather than the facilitator. This was further signified when she said:

*.... It is true that with integrated curriculum, learners are not to be given notes, but I sometimes do so because learners are very lazy. So I give them notes to help them to understand more of what they learnt in the classroom.*

Teacher 3s' behaviour aligns with Grauer's (1999) assertion that even if all teachers can be trained to implement the new curriculum, it does not necessarily mean that they will all implement it. This is also supported by Davis (2008) whose findings also indicated that even if trained, some teachers do not successfully acquire knowledge, skills and understandings which are necessary to implement a curriculum reform while others do not intentionally implement the curriculum.

In relation to how they assess learners, the participants indicated that since the Curriculum and Assessment policy, 2009 suggests that there should be a shift from assessment of learning to assessment for learning, they use formative assessment in which learning and assessment are integrated. The participants further indicated that they achieve this through daily diagnosis of learners' performance in which remediation or extra work is needed. They further noted that the assessment also focuses on individual's abilities. This is how Teacher 2 reported:

*Since assessment should be part of the daily routine with this approach, we try as much as we can to do daily assessment with my colleagues. For example, I ask learners many questions during teaching as to help them to reflect upon and articulate what they have learned. I also use weekly assessments that I add to the learners' portfolios in order to show all the learners' abilities. What I'm trying to show you is this, with this curriculum, assessment is continuous, and it is not done in isolation.... learning is linked with the assessment.*

On the other hand, Teacher 3 demonstrated her concern in relation to the assessment criteria by saying:

*What I don't like is that the assessment is not in our hands, it is limiting since we are not able to assess aspects of what we are teaching. I don't know if it is true, but my colleague who was involved in the preparation of the assessment packages told me that when assessing learners, we are restricted to use the assessment packages that are prepared by Examination Council of Lesotho (ECOL), she even informed us that the packages were said to be helpful for they have marking rubrics so we must stick to them.*

Similarly, three of the participants mentioned that the number of learners in their classrooms does not allow them to implement the formative assessment which is suggested by the new curriculum policy. For example, this is how Teacher 4 put it,

*In my congested classroom, how can I focus on each learner's abilities and weaknesses? How can I do the remedial work? I mean, honestly, how can I assess each learner's weaknesses in specific areas, give each learner feedback, and provide each learner with examples till the learner understand? After all, we have a lot of content to cover so all I do is to teach, assess learners and tell them to seek for help, and to look for the correct responses from those who understood the taught concepts. Therefore, I have a feeling that I'm still using the summative assessment which is completely discouraged in the IC.*

Generally, results indicate that the other teachers used teaching strategies that are recommended for integrated curriculum, while others stuck to the methods which they felt make their teaching easy. Detailed discussions on this issue are to be found in the next chapter.

## **(2) Teachers' challenges in implementing the integrated curriculum**

Teachers were asked to indicate the challenges that they encountered when implementing the integrated curriculum in relation to the skills they need for the successful use of teaching and assessment methods, the resources needed, and for the effective classroom management, as well as effective learner support for successful teaching of integrated curriculum.

Generally, the findings revealed that there are a number of challenges that teachers encounter when implementing the integrated curriculum. Such challenges include: (a) increased teachers' workload (b) lack of common understanding and commitment among teachers; (c) limited teaching and learning materials; (d) learners' unwillingness to participate; (e) complicated and overloaded curriculum; and (f) expectations placed upon beginning teachers. These challenges are presented here after.

### **a) Increased workload on teachers**

In responding to the challenges teachers encounter, all participants complained that integrated curriculum brings along a number of changes with it, the biggest challenge being the extra work load that is embedded within the implementation of this curriculum. Therefore, participants

demonstrated that IC is time consuming, and it is not easily implemented because of crowded classrooms, and the increased workload on teachers.

Illustratively, Teacher 1 indicated that in using IC, learners have to be active, and to do a number of activities, while a teacher is responsible for knowing each learner's strengths and weaknesses. She therefore lamented that she takes time thinking of the activities that can engage learners and those that can enhance integrated teaching approach as well. Teacher 1 therefore emphasized that she does not have time to engage meaningfully with the entire curriculum changes due to lack of time.

Teacher 2 similarly complained of being overloaded with other school activities, and as thus, this limits his time to engage with the demands of the curriculum. He explained that he has limited time to fully engage with learners due to the number of activities that he is running at school. Teacher 2 expressed his view:

*The implementation of integrated curriculum is really not that much challenging because learners link whatever happens at home with everything that they are being taught at school...therefore, learners are able to understand the concepts easily because they use the environment and experiences as their learning resources. However, I have too much work at the present time... I am often involved in many extra-curricular activities such as sports before and after school.*

Teacher 4 also noted the same challenge, and added that due to overcrowded classrooms, he does not fully and effectively enact the integrated curriculum. He made an example that he is not even able to do remedial work, which is part of continuous assessment whereby each learner is notified and helped in all the weaknesses. Teacher 4 revealed that with his fully packed classroom, he teaches, marks and passes to the next concept as to cover the curriculum.

Teacher 6 expressed similar sentiments when he said:

*This learner-centered curriculum is challenging to implement, imagine having to pay attention to an individual learner in these crowded classrooms on daily basis. Honestly, it is really impossible to identify each learner's strengths and weaknesses when dealing with 105 learners in this one small classroom, focusing on each is just too much. Even when we have identified that a learner needs additional assistance, we do not get a chance to help such a learner as they are just too many. Some of the requirements of IC are not that practical*

Teacher 5 equally indicated that integrated curriculum requires high energy levels as it increases both teachers' and students' work. Teacher 5 explained:

*This curriculum is very child-centered, even though learners do a lot of activities; I'm overloaded because such work is checked by me at the end. Besides, the curriculum demands us to do a lot of paper work, limiting our time to focus on individual learner.*

#### **b) Lack of common understanding and commitment among teachers**

The participants also blamed lack of common understanding, collaboration and commitment among teachers as one of the challenges they encounter. For example, one teacher from School C who is Teacher 6 indicated that teachers stay in their different classrooms and teach their individual subjects. He noted that this promotes individualism among teachers which results in these teachers not wanting to be observed or to observe others. According to Teacher 6, this practice hinders the participatory learning approaches. Teacher 6's view was observed by Ansell (2002) that there is always lack of collaboration and clashes over curriculum changes among teachers. Teacher 3's response also supports Teacher 6's view and this was the response:

*We are normally frustrated on how to implement the integrated curriculum since we have different perceptions of how it should be taught. Even when trying to plan together, we do not agree on a number of issues because we do not have the common understanding of what the integrated curriculum is basically about. ...you can imagine our confusion, us who are not trained on how to implement this curriculum! Everything is just complicated; we do not even know how to describe this curriculum to parents and learners yet there are some of the things that we ought to describe such as the use of triangles while marking.*

#### **c) Limited teaching and learning materials**

Shortage of teaching and learning materials such as the scheme books and teachers' guides, as well as other resources to support learning was also considered the biggest challenge by teachers. Participants explained that the IC requires teachers to use resources such as computers. They indicated that there are limited new teaching materials that can be used in the classrooms such as textbooks. As a result, they mentioned that they have to work hard to achieve the set objectives. Teacher 1 reflected on her own classroom teaching and learning materials.

*This curriculum is very good as it teaches learners to be independent, as well as to use the environment as a resource for their learning. The Grade 3s have books; however, my teaching only depends heavily on the textbooks which are even shared by learners as they are not enough. Apart from textbooks, we are referred to the teachers' guides in all the topics in the syllabus. Unfortunately, there is very little information in the guide, and some of the concepts are not included at all.*



This was also supported by Teacher 5, a Grade 7 teacher in School C who complained that teachers do not have the resources to use including simple teaching aids like textbooks and litmus papers, as well as computers and laboratories. For example, Teacher 5 pointed out that some concepts such as the teaching of acids need to be illustrated because learners have to see litmus papers turning blue and red. Teacher 5 indicated that due to this lack of resources, learners miss out on a number of concepts that are supposed to be taught at the certain level. As a result, when learners get to a particular grade, they lack the basics that lay foundation for that grade. This is how she explained:

*The worst part of it is that learners do not even have books at schools and at home. How then can they do their assignments when there are no guiding textbooks books?*

According to Teacher 5, the nature of this curriculum does not allow teachers to re-teach or to address learners' weaknesses through remedial teaching of the concepts that learners missed out in the previous grades.

Teacher 3 echoed the same sentiments in relation to the teaching and learning materials, she said:

*The biggest challenge we have is the materials we don't have and which we cannot even improvise. For instance, we have to use computers in order to offer hand-on activities. However, we do not have electricity as well as computers .... Indeed, this is really challenging because personally, I do not even have computer literacy skills. In this school, all the topics which demand the use of computers are never taught.*

One participant, Teacher 4, confirmed that he normally gives learners homework on topics which require the use of internet. He indicated that since there are no computers, and no electricity at school, learners are only able to use internet when they are at home, because they use their parents' phones and computers. However, he was also quick to point out that that only a few of learners have access to such phones and computers because some are not allowed by their parents to use their devices, while the parents of some learners do not have such devices.

#### **d) Learners' unwillingness to participate**

Despite the fact that the integrated curriculum emphasizes that learning should be child-centered, teachers complained that learners do not participate in their own learning for a number of reasons. For example, for reasons such as being used to relying on their teachers, cultural habits, and their conception of what they view as automatic promotion. For example, many

believe that even if they put very little effort or not effort at all, the system still promotes learners to the next grade. This is how one of the participants said (Teacher 1):

*Believe me Mme Mabea, the only thing that makes learners and parents love this curriculum is that they are aware that it encourages automatic promotion.... with this curriculum, learners are not to repeat any class as assessment is based on their different abilities, and the exam marks are no longer considered, so learners are just relaxed... they know that with this reform, they are automatically promoted to the next grade, and are to be admitted in the nearby High schools.*

The participants clarified that with automatic-promotion, it was believed that since teachers will identify the weaknesses of each learner, and help such a learner, learners will not fail or repeat the class. In her response, Teacher 3 went on to clarify that even when they urge the parents of the learners who have not yet reached the expected level of knowledge to allow their children to repeat a grade, parents usually disagree. Therefore, and accordingly, as indicated by Teacher 3:

*The automatic promotion results in incompetent learners who drop-out of schools just after being admitted at high schools, with insufficient knowledge and skill required by this level of education.*

Contrarily to Teacher 3's view with regard to automatic-promotion, Teacher 4 revealed that there are some schools which ignore this policy. He explained that, coming from one workshop, his principal told them that one of the District Resource Teachers (DRTs) questioned the issue of automatic-promotion, indicating that whoever said learners should not repeat a class made a mistake, and that even if this was from the government itself, it was wrong because this is not stated in the curriculum and assessment policy. Having heard this from their principal, Teacher 4 indicated that it was agreed by all teachers that automatic-promotion should not be practiced in their school. This is how he explained: Teacher 4

*We are not even scared that we no longer implement the automatic promotion because we know that the Ministry of Education and Training does not care about what is happening now in schools, so since we are the ones suffering as a result of this automatic promotion, we are doing what is best for us and for our learners. If you need more clarification on our conclusion Mrs Mabea, let me tell you that the government suggested the use of double shifting in schools some years back, since double shifting did not work for both us and learners, we stopped practicing it within one month of its implementation. We did not get any questions from the MOET till today. The ministry does not care about the education of this country at all.*

Teacher 4's contribution on the issue of automatic-promotion makes it clear that there is a confusion between the training and monitoring bodies such as National Curriculum Development Centre, Education Officers and the District Resource Teachers concerning what should happen, or what should not happen in implementing the integrated curriculum. Hence, this confusion appears to be passed on to teachers during in-service training.

There were some teachers, Teacher 1 and Teacher 5, who had a contrasting view on the willingness of the learners to engage in the learning activities. They explained that in this curriculum, some learners happily engage in learning by making projects in Art and Entrepreneurial area. They indicated that in supporting their learners to embrace the integrated curriculum, they help them to understand the significance of their role in this approach. According to these teachers, they usually tell their learners to explore and carry out the learning activities, and that they should value their assistance by teachers. They mentioned that they enforce learners' participation and provide the activities that promote it.

#### **e) Complicated and overloaded curriculum**

One of the challenges indicated by the participants is the complexity of the integrated curriculum whose content is way above the learners' level. This was particularly pointed out by Teacher 1, a teacher with 4 years of teaching experience, who said:

*I have close to five years of teaching experience, but with this curriculum, it is like everything is new, I feel like going back to school. This curriculum is so complicated that I feel like I know nothing concerning teaching. It is generally very broad, and it is far beyond the cognitive level of learners. It has complicated content for each grade and it has to be covered in a prescribed time which is usually very short.*

Teacher 1 was supported by Teacher 3 whose view was that:

*The curriculum has a number of new concepts that we are not familiar with as teachers. It calls for a lot of reading to improve on the content knowledge to be taught. .... To be honest with you Mrs Mabea, I personally don't like reading as a teacher. It is the same with learners. Now you can imagine what the parents go through when helping learners with assignments.... In fact, learners seem to be worse because they do not care about anything these days.*

Concerning the complexity of the IC, Teacher 5 further clarified that even though learners are expected to explore their environments and carry out learning activities by themselves, including

choosing what to learn, the complicated curriculum hinders their participation, influencing teachers to be knowledge transmitters who are also eager to finish the syllabus. This is what she said:

*Even when you want to allow learners to completely do things on their own, you find that it consumes a lot of your time, leaving some concepts unattended as it takes them time to understand the concepts and the instructions of the learning tasks. Therefore, we still have authority on the learners, as well as on what they should learn.*

#### **f) Expectations placed upon beginning teachers**

When expressing their views on the challenges, there was one participant who revealed that the beginning teachers experience challenges such as high expectations that are placed on them by teachers who have been in the field for some time. The view of these teachers is that the beginning teachers are recent graduates and they should have a good knowledge and understanding of the integrated curriculum. Teacher 1 shared her challenge:

*I work under pressure, I have a lot of stress because my experienced colleagues think I understand the integrated curriculum better, they believe that I know everything concerning the curriculum, they don't understand that as a new teacher, I only have limited knowledge and essential skills to teach in general, more especially this complicated curriculum.*

Teacher 1's assertion was confirmed by Teacher 2, who has been in the field for some time. He pointed out that:

*Graduates have an important role to play in bringing most understanding about curriculum and practice into schools, but they decide not to share their knowledge with us.*

#### **Summary**

This section presented the findings on the teaching methods and assessment strategies used by teachers in the implementation of the integrated curriculum, as well as the challenges teachers encounter in implementing this curriculum.

Teaching methods and assessment strategies used by teachers in implementing the integrated curriculum: Even though learner-centered methods are used in teaching IC, mainly through small study groups, there are some teachers who still apply teacher-centered approaches. The formative

assessment is also used in assessing learners, however, other teachers are still holding on to the summative assessment.

The challenges encountered in implementing this curriculum: the challenges teachers encounter when implementing IC include: Increased workload on teachers, lack of common understanding of IC and commitment among teachers, shortage of teaching and learning materials, learners' unwillingness to participate, as well as complicated and overloaded curriculum, and high expectations placed upon the beginning teachers.

The following section presents the findings on the teachers' views on how they were prepared to implement the integrated curriculum.

#### **4. 3.3 Teachers' views on how they were prepared to implement the integrated curriculum**

The participants were asked about their views on their preparation to teach the integrated curriculum. The questions that collected data for this information included: (1) how teachers were prepared and trained to teach the integrated curriculum; (2) teachers views on how they were trained; (3) teachers' views on the professional support they receive from their schools and other interested bodies in the implementation of the IC; (4) the influence of teachers' preparation and support on instructional practices; as well as (5) teachers' views on how they should be prepared and supported in order to successfully implement the integrated curriculum.

##### ***(1) Teachers' perceptions on how teachers were prepared and trained to teach the integrated curriculum***

Teachers explained how they were trained on the teaching and assessment methods, use and production of resources, classroom management, and learner support for the implementation of the integrated curriculum. As it appeared from the results, teachers were prepared by different people at different places for the implementation of the integrated curriculum. For instance, three teachers indicated that they were formally trained for the implementation of the integrated curriculum through the in-service workshops. Teacher 3, who has been teaching integrated curriculum since 2013, stated that she attended a training workshop organized by the Education Officers and the District Resource Teachers in 2013. Teacher 4 and Teacher 5 declared that in 2015, two years after the introduction of IC, they attended a one-week training workshops that was organized by the District Resource Teachers only.

The other three participants, (Teacher 1, Teacher 2 and Teacher 6) indicated that they learned about integrated curriculum during pre-service training (at Lesotho College of Education and or the National University of Lesotho). They also pointed out that they have not attended any in-service training workshop on integrated curriculum. According to the results, there are also training activities that were organized at school level by the principals or other senior staff members. There were also other teachers, like Teacher 3 for example, who claimed not to have received any type of training, as in-service or pre-service. There were some teachers, who even though they have received pre-service training, were expecting further in-service training that would hone their skills. For example, Teacher 2 who had learnt about integrated curriculum during pre-service training said:

*I was aware that when the curriculum was introduced on the foundation phase (Grade 1-3), all teachers for these Grades were trained. I could not wait to be trained too, but I am sorry to mention that I did not receive any curriculum training. We were two teachers in the same grade last year so the principal selected only one teacher per grade to attend the workshop as they were instructed by the Education Officers to do so due to budgetary constraints. From Grade 4 to Grade 5, one teacher was selected in each grade. Unfortunately, only teachers from the curriculum areas that were considered important were selected for training, and they did not even transfer whatever knowledge they gained from the workshops until today. .... I even asked my principal to allow me to go. I was not interested in the money that the trainees were promised per day to cater for their food and transport. I was tired of different interpretations of IC, as well as how it should be implemented from my colleagues who seemed to be not sure of what they were saying. However, the number of teachers per school was confirmed and the rest of us were dismissed.*

Teachers stated that they did not remember being trained about the use and production of resources, classroom management, and learner support. For example, Teacher 3 commended:

*Even though I don't remember well what was exactly said about the teaching methods, we were told that in this approach (IC), we have to integrate the concepts within and across the learning areas, as well as to integrate such concepts with the real-life experiences so as to promote learners' understanding of everything that they are being taught at school.*

In support of Teacher 3's claim, Teacher 4 said,

*We were requested to use all the methods that engage learners more in their learning process, and we should just be there to facilitate learning, not to transfer knowledge. We were not equipped with the skills in all the other aspects that you*

*have mentioned including use and production of resources, classroom management, and learner support that you mentioned.*

Another contribution about the training was from Teacher 6 who reported that:

*Ever since I heard of integrated curriculum at NUL, I have heard nothing other than the formative assessment that we are to fully employ. Even my colleagues who attended the external workshops mentioned that with this curriculum, we should assess learners daily and during the teaching process so as to see their weaknesses and strengths.*

## **(2) Teachers' views on the adequacy of the preparation they received for the implementation of integrated curriculum**

In giving views on how they were adequately trained in preparation for the implementation of integrated curriculum, teachers generally pointed out the limited time allocated for training, limited resources used for demonstration during training, lack of teachers' voice in the workshops, as well as unrealistic expectations of the workshops in relation to the classrooms realities.

### **(a) Limited time allocated for training**

Teachers mentioned that the duration of their training time was very short. Those that were trained by the tertiary institutions mentioned that due to the limited time they had before their teaching practice, they were mainly oriented on how to scheme and how to do lesson plans, very little which specifically addressed integrated curriculum was touched. Those that were trained by the DRTs revealed that the duration of a week they were trained was not enough to equip them with the knowledge and skills that could enable them to effectively implement the integrated curriculum. This was explicitly explained by Teacher 4,

*There was a limited pre-determined time of completing the workshop, we were taught about the whole curriculum change and implementation in only one week, and we were expected to go and to effectively implement the curriculum. Actually, the training took less than a week. It took about 3 days because nothing was done on the first day as the trainers were not prepared to disseminate, they appeared to be too disorganized. Similarly, on the last day, they were not in the working mood; they were too much in a hurry to close the workshop... when I was at the training session on integrated curriculum, I thought to myself "maybe we will be provided with more training".*

This was also supported by one participant, Teacher 3, who demonstrated how short their training duration was and the effectiveness of such training.

*The training was too short to for us to understand everything about the IC. For instance, a number of the aspects like the ones we mentioned earlier were left out. Also, even though I indicated that we were trained of the teaching and assessment methods to employ in this curriculum, our trainers did not go into detail on how to integrate, how to use the learner-centered pedagogy, and how to use continuous assessment in the classrooms.*

Generally, all the participants pointed out that the workshops which were held for their preparation for the implementation of IC were not only short, but were also delayed. Thus, this has left teachers mentioned inadequately prepared to teach the integrated curriculum.

#### **(b) Limited resources used for demonstration during training**

The participants indicated that the training that they received was too theoretical because their trainers did not even have resources for demonstration. As a result, nothing that was taught was concrete. This was particularly highlighted by Teacher 3 who said:

*During our training, the EOs, DRTs NCDC did not even have the resources to make demonstrations of their presentations; they only mentioned such resources as the syllabus, scheme books and computers. We were wondering whether they did make an effort to check the practicality of some of the suggested practical topics in the syllabus before training us.*

#### **(c) Lack of teachers' voice in the workshops**

It appeared from teachers' responses that there was no sign of teachers' voice in how they could be trained in relation to the implementation of IC. For example, when asked whether they were given any opportunity to give their views in the development of the curriculum and on the workshops, the participants mentioned that they were excluded in the development of IC, their trainers had an authority over them, and these authorities did not even ask for their contribution. One participant (of Teacher 3) expressed the view that their input was minimal. This is illustrated in the extract below:

*...Noooo, Not at all. We were not formally informed about the IC from the beginning when it was developed, we only heard about it when it was already practiced in few selected schools. Then we were invited for the IC training when it was already being implemented in the schools where it was piloted. Also, at the workshops, we only had*



*to follow the pre-determined program of the DRTs. We did not feel as part of the workshops at all. Even when we tried to show our trainers that we were not following on a number of items, they just ignored us... They did not want to come to our level so we ended up just being passive listeners, without making any input.*

According to Teacher 5, a number of teachers do not put effort in implementing the integrated curriculum. She stated,

*Not only me, but a number of teachers do not put an effort in implementing the IC, we question why we should bother making time to implement it since we believe it is the issue of those who introduced it.*

Nevertheless, on the same issue of teachers' voice in the workshops, one respondent felt that they had some input. That is, Teacher 4 demonstrated that things changed gradually as teachers gained strength to show their views and suggestions, and the DRT members considered their contributions. Even though Teacher 4 felt that they contributed in the workshops, I realized that their input was still limited because they only provided examples as to confirm or check whether they were following on what they were expected to do. This was evident in his response:

*We made some contributions in the workshop because we were providing the examples on what we were taught since we (teachers) were familiar with what actually happens in the classrooms, the Education Officers (EOs) and the DRTs did not entertain any questions from us... we realized that they were offended and were avoiding the questions we asked, we then decided to keep quiet and just listen to their confusing presentation.*

Generally, the results indicated that teachers were excluded in the IC development yet they are the ones who really know what happens in the classrooms. Teachers were denied opportunities to make contributions or suggestions during the integrated curriculum workshops.

#### **d) Unrealistic expectations of the workshops in relation to the classrooms realities**

In giving their views on the integrated curriculum preparation, teachers' observation was that they were trained by people who did not only limit on the information on the IC, but also teachers who were divorced from Lesotho classroom environment. For example, Teacher 3's comment on one of the training workshops he attended was that:

*The DRTs were reading directly from the documents they were holding to show that they were not knowledgeable on IC. Unfortunately, such documents were too general, they did not address all the important and relevant issues that you have*

*mentioned such as how to produce and use resources, as well as how to manage the classrooms. Even the learner-centered approach and the continuous assessment system were not thoroughly explained.*

Teacher 3 further indicated lack of knowledge by the DRTs. He said:

*At some stage, the DRTs seemed much confused, the information that they were presenting was conflicting, and they were not ashamed to make arguments on some issues by themselves.*

This was also supported by Teacher 4; whose view was that the trainers' limited information was the reason that they did not entertain questions from teachers.

On the same issue of limited knowledge demonstrated by the trainers, Teacher 4's assumption was that the trainers had no knowledge of the Creativity and Entrepreneurship learning area (CE) since this area was not explained. She viewed this as too bad because from her point of view, Music, Art and ICT are essential in improving learners' skills that are capable of enhancing self-reliance in learners as a result.

The participants in this study also indicated that what they were taught while in training was completely different from what really takes place in the classrooms. This was particularly pointed by Teacher 5 who indicated that their trainers were not knowledgeable about classroom situations. She claimed that the DRTs seemed to have forgotten what really happens in the classrooms hence they did not even orientate them on how to deal with learners of different learning abilities, disabilities and their needs such as HIV/AIDS related issues, food and clothes.

### **3) Professional support from schools and interested bodies**

This section required teachers to indicate the professional support they receive from their schools and interested bodies, as well as giving their views on this support.

In response to the question that required about the kind of support they were receiving from their schools in implementing the IC, teachers had different views. Some maintained that they were receiving support from their schools through the workshops. For example, they indicated that the school management usually organized workshops that aimed at equipping them with the skills which are relevant for the teaching of integrated curriculum. For example, a teacher from school A (Teacher 1) responded as follows:

*..... We hold quarterly internal workshops at our school where we work together to help each other as colleagues by making sense of new ideas brought by this curriculum, as well as to encourage each other in implementing the IC. I usually get a lot of support from my principal and my peers.*

Teacher 5 concurred with Teacher 1. She added that their principal had an understanding that the IC was still new so he was always willing to check their work and help them where there was a need. However, Teacher 5 also pointed out that even though their principal was always helpful, and open to the new ideas, he had his own different views and interpretations of IC which confused them more as teachers. This is how Teacher 5 explained:

*.... In one of his workshops, our principal was trying to address the issue of marking using ticks, triangles and lines where appropriate. His view was this type of marking was mostly to be used at the lower grades. To my surprise, that information caused a long argument as teachers had different perceptions from hers on where or how to use these mentioned signs when marking.*

Yet, according to Teacher 5, some teachers' view point was that a triangle was used when showing the general performance of a learner, but there was also another group which argued that a triangle was used when marking every day's work of a learner. Teacher 5's view was that this reflected poorly on the principal and that it was another indication that the principals were also not prepared through training, and provision of teaching and learning resources such the manuals that would guide them to monitor and supervise teachers' performance in the implementation of IC. Teacher 5 went further to explain that their principal was called for the training year after the new curriculum was introduced in schools. Therefore, this meant that they were being guided and supervised by a person who had very little knowledge of how IC should be implemented. This is what she said:

*My principal depends too much on the information given by his friends on integrated curriculum. The problem is that even when they give him the wrong information, he wants us to do as they say. Hence there is a lack of cooperation and commitment among teachers. It is true that some teachers do not bother to work together with other teachers since they lack confidence, and feel they have nothing to share. Some do not bother to work together with those teachers whom the principal considers the best in IC just because they are her friends.*

Not all participants believed that they were receiving support from their schools. There were others who indicated in their responses that the school administration and management team was

not supportive enough of their efforts to implement the IC. For example, this is how Teacher 3 expressed her views:

*The management underrates the importance of the internal workshops; our school does not allocate time for teachers to work on planning and developing teaching and learning resources for the new curriculum. We only depend on the external workshops that are rarely provided by the Ministry of Education and Training. To illustrate, over the past seven years, the management has never hosted any internal workshop.*

Teacher 2 felt the same way about not receiving any support from their schools. He maintained that even though the principals are supposed to be the first to monitor and to evaluate how teachers implement the IC in the schools, as well as to help these teachers where necessary, they fail to do that. This is how Teacher 2 put it:

*I have never attended any integrated curriculum workshop, either school-based or external. Even teachers who were selected to attend the external workshops in the grade that I was teaching did not share with us the knowledge they got, they simply said they still do not understand. I got information about this curriculum by myself as I am currently a curriculum scholar at UOFS.*

Teacher 2's assertion was surprising because he was in School A as Teacher 1, who claimed that they normally hold internal workshops concerning the IC. Teacher 2 seemed to have the negative attitude regarding anything that has to do with teachers' training to implement the integrated curriculum.

Regarding the support that teachers' get from the interested bodies, all the participants who were trained by NCDC showed a concern that besides the facts that they were trained for a short time; they were never visited by the NCDC members since the earliest stage of IC implementation. Moreover, they complained that even after these years of IC, they have never been visited by NCDC, Education Officers as well as the District Resource Teachers, or any education inspectorate as to monitor the implementation process of IC or to do any school inspection. This is how Teacher 3 put it:

*This is the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the implementation of IC. However, our school never got any visit from NCDC, Education Officers as well as the District Resource Teachers as to check how the implementation process is going on, and the ministry does not even*

*supply the necessary resources for the implementation of the IC. We are not provided with any guidelines on how to teach this curriculum.*

Teacher 3 indicated that her assumption was that that maybe the stakeholders had already seen that this curriculum has no value at all, and would not respond to the needs of Basotho, and perhaps that was why the just mentioned stakeholders were not even interested in its (the IC) success.

The participants similarly indicated that they did not get any support from the educational institutions. Teacher 1, Teacher 4 and Teacher 5 argued that the current teacher education programs conducted at tertiary institutions are inadequate in enabling teachers to implement the integrated curriculum in the classrooms. They lamented that the educational institutions were also not making any follow up on whether they were sufficiently preparing teachers to implement the IC.

Teacher 1, a beginning teacher from LCE also pointed out that although she believed that a number of teachers were indeed interested in learning more about the integrated curriculum and its value in their daily teaching, the tertiary institutions were not providing in-service training and professional development program for the teacher educators.

#### ***4) How teachers' views about their preparedness and support influence their classroom practices***

Teachers reported that since their schools and other stakeholders are not providing them with the necessary professional development and time to engage with the new curriculum, it is difficult for them to implement new changes. For example, Teacher 3 explained:

*Since I don't receive any support from both my school and from interested bodies, I am still teaching in the way that works well with my learners, I will not follow this curriculum change which is not even monitored. In fact, I cannot stress myself with this curriculum which is just thrown unto us as if it is not to be implemented by human beings on other human beings. It even irritates me because as I have mentioned earlier, it conflicts with the manner in which I have been teaching for years. As long as my learners are still performing well, I am not going to change anything.*

Teacher 5 held the same view as Teacher 3, and this was reflected in this response:

*Since we had too much to be taught within five days of our training, I did not understand this curriculum. Sad to say Mrs. Mabea, I felt helpless and more discouraged the day my principal and teachers were arguing about the marking system to be employed in this curriculum, since I thought I would be enlightened by our internal workshops ...therefore I decided to stick to what I know.... (laughing) I saw my younger colleagues going on with the suggested marking system, but it only lasted for a month or two because they were also confused.*

Teacher 4's concern was specifically in relation to Creativity and Entrepreneurship learning area (CE). Teacher 4 pointed out that they were not teaching most concepts in this area as they were not receiving any support on how to implement it.

*....Like I mentioned earlier, since our training was short and done by the DRTs who seemed to lack knowledge on integrated curriculum, I don't even know where to start when teaching other learning areas such as CE... our school is not in a position to help us to teach this learning area, no one in my school is prepared to teach CE, even my friends from other schools, who were involved in the development of assessment packages that we are currently using cannot help because they were similarly not trained on this area. It was just introduced as a new area.*

In the same manner, Teacher 2 revealed that most of the time, he copies what other teachers have planned already because he did not receive any training on integrated curriculum implementation. He highlighted that he was still learning about this curriculum because he was a curriculum scholar. This is what he said:

*.... Since I did not receive any training, and I am not supported, it is very difficult for me to implement this curriculum...to begin with, I don't understand this issue of learning areas, I don't even know how to integrate the content from other subjects...my colleagues tried explaining these issues to me, but I got more confused because they had different interpretations. To implement this curriculum, I therefore ask teachers who were trained, and are teaching the same subjects as mine on the same grade to scheme and make lesson plans so that I just copy what they have done and I simply teach.*

Generally, all the participants confirmed that they lack confidence in teaching. However, it was also observed from the findings that those who received training on the integrated curriculum only when in pre-service programme by different tertiary institutions, like Teacher 1, appeared to be more threatened or frustrated by the integrated curriculum compared to those that were trained by the NCDC, ECol and the District Resource Teachers. These teachers who were not trained on integrated curriculum felt they can do better if they can be trained by NCDC too.

### **5) Teachers' suggestions on the support they should get to successfully implement the integrated curriculum**

The participants were asked to suggest the ways in which they can be supported to successfully implement the integrated curriculum. With a hope and willingness to do the best in implementing this curriculum, teachers echoed that it is important for all stakeholders to support teachers in embracing and implementing the curriculum change. They made a number of suggestions.

All the participants suggested that the curriculum must be reviewed, particularly the content which is too much complicated for teachers, learners and parents. Teacher 3 stated,

*Government must reduce and simplify the content so that it corresponds with the cognitive level of learners ...learners will then be motivated as they will understand whatever they are being taught easily.*

Teacher 3 went on to show that the government must similarly take into consideration the nature of our learners, as well as the situation of our country or the context in which the curriculum is implemented.

Teacher 5 agreed with Teacher 4 and emphasized that first of all, curriculum experts who are responsible for training teachers should equally be provided with the intensive training on IC approaches. For example, there were some teachers who claimed that they were making this proposal because they had seen the DRT members reading the information on IC word by word while facilitating the workshops.

The participants strongly emphasized that their knowledge and skills on integrated curriculum as teachers should be increased through intensive training also. The need for more workshops was not only associated with the increase in skills and knowledge, but was equally assumed to be a good measure that will change teachers' perceptions and beliefs on IC. This is how it was explained by Teacher 2:

*.... I believe training is a very powerful tool to prepare me to teach IC appropriately as well as to own this curriculum. Honestly, I can teach the integrated curriculum if I am properly taught how to implement it. I want to be able to do the best I can, but I sometimes feel as if I have never been trained on IC implementation.*

Even though most participants agreed on the need for high quality training workshops for EOs, DRTs and teachers, some emphasized that the curriculum experts, being the curriculum developers should be the only people responsible for training teachers as they have adequate knowledge of integrated curriculum. For example, Teacher 6 explained:

*To avoid the distortion of information, people who receive the first hand training on the reforms should be the only one to train teachers as a number of concepts seem to be interpreted differently by different trainers such as the DRTs who were trained by the Education Officers to train teachers.*

Similarly, Teacher 1 being fresh from LCE warned that the preparation of pre-service teachers to interpret and apply the integrated curriculum is a challenge among the tertiary participants. Her view was that both the pre-service and in-service teacher trainers should be able to provide teachers with skills that will help them understand and implement the integrated curriculum. She indicated that it will make the curriculum easier to manage. According to Teacher 1, *“The in-service training programs should address problems encountered in the implementation of the new curriculum”*. In addition, Teacher 6 pointed out that there was also a need that program evaluative studies on IC that would inform the stakeholders should be carried out and their results made available. In specific, he pointed out that NUL, LCE and NCDC should investigate the effectiveness of the strategies they engage in in-service and pre-service training teachers for new curriculum innovations with specific focus on the teaching of the integrated curriculum.

In view of her experience with her principal who lacked the knowledge of IC, Teacher 5 was the only one who recommended that the principals should be intensively trained on the integrated curriculum. His view was that:

*.... The principals are responsible for monitoring the implementation of integrated curriculum as they are supposed to check how teachers plan for daily lessons, what content teachers cover, as well as how these teachers transmit knowledge to learners ... Therefore, the principals must be trained on how to implement all the changes brought by this curriculum, including the pedagogy to be used so that they will be able to monitor and help teachers in implementing the IC.*

In addition to training, all the participants’ showed a need for the provision of teaching and learning resources. They maintained that the schools and government should support teachers to



introduce new ideas in teaching by providing them with adequate funds so that there are enough resources to be used in training teachers and in implementing this curriculum.

The participants also recommended that teachers should be involved at the earliest stage of curriculum development since they are the main implementers of the curriculum, and they are the ones who know what really takes place in classrooms. The participants pointed out that it is important that teachers are allocated enough time for teachers to scheme and plan together at different centers so that they can share experiences and challenges on the IC. They further emphasized that the education administrators should visit schools with the intention of helping teachers to implement the IC, not to threaten them. Furthermore, the participants urged that the government should solve the problem of overcrowded classrooms by appointing more teachers. Teacher 2 suggested:

*The government should take care of student-teachers ratio by hiring more teachers and building more classrooms so that the number of learners will allow us to implement all the changes brought by IC, this ratio must also be reconsidered since now we are to focus on each learner unlike in the subject oriented when the ratio was still appropriate.*

Some of the participants noted a need for the government to denounce automatic-promotion. This is what Teacher 2 said:

*Really, I wish the government should once listen to our suggestions because we are the ones who are suffering in implementing this curriculum, and learners are soon to come to school once in a quarter due to this issue of automatic promotion. The government must declare officially in media and everywhere that we, as teachers are to be responsible for promoting learners. It should abolish the use of automatic promotion completely, and this must happen as soon as possible as to encourage learners to be responsible for their own education, as well as to motivate parents to be seriously involved in the education of their children.*

Related to learners' motivation also, all the participants declared that even though with the IC, all learners' abilities are to be considered, the non-cognitive skills are still not given value for they are not yet assessed. Therefore, there was a suggestion from teachers that all the extra-curricular activities should be assessed so that the curriculum includes all learners.

## **Summary**

This section discussed: how teachers were prepared to implement the integrated curriculum; their views on how they were prepared; the influence of these teachers' views on how they were prepared on their instructional practices; their views on the support received from the schools and other interested bodies to implement the IC; how the teachers' views on how they have been prepared, and how they are supported influence their instructional practices, as well as participants' views on how teachers should be prepared and supported for the implementation of the integrated curriculum.

The findings in this section indicate that teachers were prepared through training that was offered by both the teacher training agencies such as ECoL and NCDC. Other teachers were prepared while in pre-service programs offered by (Lesotho College of Education and National University of Lesotho) educational institutions, others by National Curriculum Development Centre, Examination Council of Lesotho, and the District Resource Teachers, while others were trained by their colleagues. There are some teachers who did not receive any training on IC at all. Teachers who received training indicated that their training was short, there were no resources and teachers' voice during training, and workshops were irrelevant and were offered by people who did not have knowledge of IC and of classroom realities. They also mentioned that there is a lack of support from both schools and interested bodies. As a result, some teachers were confused and reluctant to implement the integrated curriculum, while some were not implementing the IC at all. As demonstrated in the conceptual framework and literature review, preparedness is very important and should always be considered since gaps in learning often cause students to fall behind and struggle academically (Wiles & Bondi, 2014). Teachers therefore recommended that they should be provided with the intensive training on IC, as well as teaching and learning resources. They equally showed a need for review of the curriculum and the student-teacher ratio.

## **4.4 SUMMARY**

This chapter presented the results on teachers' interpretations of integrated curriculum, teachers' classroom practices in implementing integrated curriculum, teachers' views on how they have been prepared to implement the integrated curriculum, and how such perceptions influence

teachers' instructional practices. It also presented teachers' views on their support from schools and interested bodies, as well as their views on how they can be supported to effectively implement the integrated curriculum.

The findings showed that although teachers have different definitions of integrated curriculum, they are not able to implement this curriculum due to different challenges. The interview results equally indicated that all teachers are not feeling adequately prepared to implement the integrated curriculum. From the results also, it seemed teachers are not supported by schools and interested bodies. Therefore, teachers need more training, resources and support in order to implement the IC successfully. In the next chapter, the discussions, conclusions and recommendations for further studies are found.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The study explored teachers' perceptions on their preparedness to implement the integrated curriculum in Lesotho primary schools. Chapter four presented data from the interviews of six participant teachers in three schools. This chapter presents the discussions, conclusions and recommendations made in this study. The information in this chapter is therefore presented as follows: section 5.1 (this section), and discussions in section 5.2. Then there is section 5.3 which is the conclusion of the study. The recommendations for further studies, in response to what emerged from the investigation are stated in section 5.4. The chapter finally highlights the limitations of the study in section 5.5.

### **5.2 DISCUSSIONS**

This section is guided by the following research questions: 1) what are teachers' interpretations of integrated curriculum? 2) what are teachers' classroom practices in implementing the integrated curriculum? 3) What are teachers' perceptions on how they were prepared for the implementation of the integrated curriculum? And (4) how do teachers' perceptions on their preparedness influence their instructional practices?

#### **5.2.1 Teachers' personal definitions of integrated curriculum**

Teachers displayed different understanding of integrated curriculum in relation to how it should be taught and assessed. For instance, some teachers described integrated curriculum as an approach that grouped the individual subjects into learning areas. Others defined it as an approach that links these concepts within and across the learning areas, and there are those who indicated their understanding of integrated curriculum as an approach that is life-oriented and learner-centered.

Even though teachers appeared to have different understandings of integrated curriculum, it could be argued that the difference was mainly on their emphasis in their responses. For example, while other teachers emphasized grouping of individual subjects into learning areas, others mainly focused on integration of concepts within and across learning areas. It could be

argued that generally, though teachers' understanding of integrated curriculum differ, they expressed that integrated curriculum is an approach that grouped the individual subjects together, and that links the concepts within and across the learning areas. Other participants indicated that integrated curriculum is life-oriented and learner-centered, requiring teachers to act as facilitators. Their general view is that integrated curriculum uses learning areas not individual subjects, and demands teachers to be facilitators while learners should actively participate in their learning. The participants are also of the view that integrated curriculum is child centered and life-oriented, and uses continuous assessment as learners are to be assessed every time they are taught, during and after teaching.

This finding slightly differs from Selepe's in 2016. Selepe's finding was that the individual's understanding of integrated curriculum still differs within and across schools, regardless of when and where different teachers were trained. In the same study, Selepe (2016) also included that teachers' understanding of IC was limited to the grouping of individual subjects into learning areas while Tankiso-Mpunyane (2014) concluded that teachers had little knowledge of integrated curriculum. These results show that teachers' understanding of integrated curriculum has improved because in this study, teachers' definition is no longer limited to learning areas. Participants are aware of IC components and requirements. For example, their understanding of IC teaching is that it should link concepts within and across the learning areas, that IC integrates knowledge gained at school with real life situations, and that it is learner-centered, encouraging learners to participate in their learning, with teachers only being facilitators. This understanding demonstrated by teachers appear to be in line with Sintoorongse (2005) whose view is that integrated curriculum brings together different disciplines in teaching and learning, and helps learners to apply the knowledge gained at school to solve the real life problems.

It should be noted however, that there were few teachers who still demonstrated limited understanding of integrated curriculum. An example is Teacher 3 who took an integration to mean teaching exactly the same topic in different areas rather than using skills and knowledge gained from certain learning areas in teaching other areas. Teacher 2 also complained about the integration of concept, indicating that it confuses both teachers and learners. This finding is also in line with the Shao's (2005) which indicated that most teachers need systematic education in pedagogical knowledge and instructional methodology.

### **5.2.2 Teachers' comparison of integrated and subject-based curricula**

The results from teachers' comparison of IC and subject-based curriculum show that teachers' views were that IC appear to be focusing on the following:

- the skills and attitudes development necessary for achieving rapid social and economic change while the old curriculum focused on the cognitive skills only;
- the subject-based curriculum was teacher-centered while integrated curriculum is learner-centered;
- subject-based curriculum used the summative assessment while the integrated curriculum uses the formative assessment.

### **5.2.3 Teachers' classrooms practices in implementing the integrated curriculum**

The study found that some participants attempted to align their classroom practices with the relevant teaching methods and strategies suggested for teaching integrated curriculum, while others used their old teaching methods and strategies.

The results showed that even though some participants tried to implement integrated curriculum, their teaching methods and strategies differed. For instance, some participants used brainstorming, with questions that were based on learners' daily experiences. Others used learner-centered methods such as group discussions. An example is Teachers 4 who explained that he facilitated learning, and he involved learners more in their learning through group discussions. The participants' use of different methods and strategies could be linked with the intentions of each participant. For instance, while some participants focused on the integration of the school content with the real world experiences, others aimed at enhancing learners' participation.

However, it should be noted that some participants indicated that they preferred using the traditional teacher-centered methods such as classroom teacher-led discussions. They indicated that they were comfortable with the old teaching approaches because such approaches were still working for them. An example is Teacher 3 who clearly indicated that teaching and giving learners notes saved both his time and learners' time. According to Labbo (2005), teachers prefer working in their comfort zones, and they can simply deny and ignore what they are actually supposed to do.

Some participants were of the view that some of the teaching strategies suggested by integrated curriculum, such as the learner-centered approach, were challenging, and were not applicable in their schools. For instance, Teacher 6 pointed out that he had many learners in one small classroom, and therefore he could not use group work. In view of these results, it is evident then that some of the participants' classrooms were still characterized by passive learners who only listened so that they could answer questions in class, their learning not for self-reliance.

The study also found that summative assessment was more used by participants than formative assessment. The participants were of the view that formative assessment, particularly that assess for remedial teaching, was time consuming and impossible to employ in the congested classrooms. Generally, and as it appears, very few participants were attempting to implement integrated curriculum as suggested by the Lesotho Curriculum and Assessment Policy 2009. Most participants are still using the methods and strategies that are teacher-centered, feeling comfortable with such methods.

#### **5.2.4 Challenges that teachers encounter in implementing the integrated curriculum**

Some of the challenges that appeared to be encountered by teachers in implementing integrated curriculum included: teachers' lack of skills and knowledge to implement IC, lack of common understanding, collaboration and commitment among teachers, increased workload on teachers, expectations placed upon the beginning teachers, limited teaching and learning resources and facilities, overloaded and complicated curriculum, and learners' unwillingness to participate.

Teachers' lack of knowledge and skills appeared to be a major challenge for teachers in implementing integrated curriculum in this study. Participants did not know how to teach a number of concepts in integrated curriculum due to their limited knowledge and skills. For instance, in his explanation, Teacher 4 made reference to the *Creativity and Entrepreneurship learning area*, saying that he did not even know where to start in teaching this area due to his lack of knowledge.

As viewed by the participants of this study, lack of knowledge and skills resulted in yet another challenge being the lack of common understanding, commitment, and collaboration among teachers. The results indicated that due to participants' lack of knowledge and skills on IC, there were arguments among teachers and as a result, they did not plan together, observe each other, or

share ideas on this curriculum. For example, the view of Teacher 2 was that they did not work together because the beginning teachers, who were perceived to have a better understanding of IC, could not share their knowledge with other teachers. Yet, according to Teacher 1, the perception that they have knowledge and skill to teach integrated curriculum was making them uncomfortable because they also lacked knowledge and skills on IC. These views about the impact of teachers' lack of skills and knowledge were similar to those found in the study of Henchey (1999) which indicated that when teachers lack knowledge and skills on the introduced curriculum, they are reluctant to collaborate or cooperate.

The results also revealed that the implementation of IC was equally affected by limited teaching and learning resources such as the syllabi, teachers' guides, scheme books, textbooks, electricity supply, computers and internet connection. With this lack of teaching and learning resources and facilities, teachers mainly depended on few textbooks and teachers' guides which had very limited information on few topics also, not all the concepts.

Increased teachers' work by integrated curriculum appeared to be another challenge affecting how IC is implemented. The study has established that teachers perceived that their workload increased by the integrated curriculum because learners have a lot to learn, teachers have to use learner-centered methods and formative assessment which demand teachers to focus on each learner, and yet, teachers have limited time to interpret and plan for this complicated curriculum. This finding is in line with the Amupala's, (2014) which indicated that integrated curriculum is associated with increased workload.

Teachers' also complained about the content in the curriculum, that it is complicated and beyond the cognitive level of learners in primary education. As a result, some teachers did not teach the concepts which they perceived to be complicated to them and learners. From their explanations, the complication of integrated curriculum could be associated with teachers' lack of reading culture. Illustratively, Teacher 3 said: *"... It (integrated curriculum) calls for a lot of reading to improve on the content knowledge to be taught. To be honest with you Mrs Mabea, I personally don't like reading as a teacher"*.

Another challenge mentioned by teachers who participated in this study was learners' unwillingness to participate in their learning. Teachers also complained about learners who lack



knowledge and skills, and unwilling to participate in a meaningful way during learning. However, in view of these results, teachers are really challenged in implementing integrated curriculum, with teachers' lack of knowledge and skills being the biggest challenge, leading to many other challenges such as lack of collaboration by teachers.

### **5.2.5 Teachers' views on how they were prepared for the implementation of integrated curriculum**

The results relating to teachers' views on how they were prepared to implement integrated curriculum include the type of training and the support they received. These are discussed below.

#### ***Training***

The results indicated that teachers perceived the in-service training they received to be insufficient and inadequate because it was very short. Therefore, they concluded that the training did not provide teachers with knowledge and skills on this curriculum, and did not consider some classroom realities as well as some important factors such as the cognitive level of the learners for each grade.

The study also found that teachers perceived that the training they received was overwhelming, not consistent, and was offered by people who did not even have a common understanding of IC, as well as resources to demonstrate during training. In addition to this, teachers revealed that the training bodies for curriculum change such as NCDC did not provide in-service professional development programs on integrated curriculum, or in other areas related to their profession

The participants who claimed to have received training on integrated curriculum when they were doing in-service training at LCE and or NUL perceived that their knowledge on IC was very limited. They similarly pointed out that the knowledge they gained during teacher training was provided by trainers who also lacked knowledge of integrated curriculum. To illustrate, Teacher 3 said, "*.... The DRTs were reading directly from the documents they were holding to show that they were not knowledgeable on IC*".

Teachers equally complained that they were denied an opportunity to make contributions in the workshops. As a result, teachers explained that the workshops had unrealistic expectations in relation to the classrooms realities.

### **Professional Support**

In regard to the professional support from schools, many indicated that they were not provided with any support or where it was offered, it was done in a limited way. One of the factors that may be associated with lack of support for teachers in their schools could be the principals' lack of knowledge and skill for integrated curriculum.

Therefore, and as it appears, it would be difficult for these principals to monitor and support their teachers' work.

#### **5.2.6 Teachers' views on how their preparedness and professional support influenced their classroom practices**

The discussions in the preceding section indicated that many teachers have not changed how they teach to align with the requirements of the integrated curriculum. For example, this study has established that there are some teachers who are trying to change how they teach, but they are limited by the factors which they mentioned as: limited knowledge and skills by teachers and those who are supposed to be training or supporting them; learners who are not willing to participate in a meaningful way in the classrooms, large and overcrowded classrooms; and a curriculum which is complicated and not easy to teach, to mention a few.

Some teachers appeared not to be taking an effort to change because they view integrated curriculum to be conflicting with the manner in which they have been teaching for years. As a result, teachers mentioned that they have not changed anything, they have decided to stick to what they know, arguing that their learners are still performing well.

#### **5.2.7 Teachers' suggestions on how they can be supported to successfully implement the integrated curriculum**

Generally, teachers believe that they could successfully implement integrated curriculum if:

- they are provided with intensive and continuous training on integrated curriculum so that they gain skills and knowledge of teaching IC, as well as to clear out some of the arguments that arose as a result of the distortion of information. The duration of such workshops should be extended.
- the National Curriculum Development Centre provide an ongoing training for trainers such as Education Officer from ECoL and the District Resource Teachers.
- there is regular schools' inspection by the curriculum Developers, EOs and DRTs so as to

- oversee how teachers are implementing integrated curriculum.
- schools are provided with the necessary resources to implement IC.
  - schools, and the teacher educational institutions as well as other stakeholders collaborate to devise new strategies that can help teachers to adapt to curriculum innovations, and to improve the application of the reforms.
  - the content level of integrated curriculum is lowered as currently it is too high for the cognitive development of learners.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

The implementation of integrated curriculum is still faced with a number of challenges in Lesotho schools. Teachers have been prepared in a very limited way in relation to knowledge and skill, and change of attitude towards teaching. However, teachers seem to understand what the integrated curriculum means, as well as its demands. Teachers compromise the implementation of the learner-centered approach and formative assessment, not only because of lack of skills and knowledge of IC, but also due to lack of resources, overcrowded classrooms, as well as complicated curriculum. Therefore, teachers suggested that for the successful implementation of integrated curriculum, they should be provided with more workshops so that they are intensively trained on integrated curriculum, adding that the schools, as well as other interested bodies should provide them with the necessary support including the provision of materials and the schools' inspection. In conclusion, teachers need intensive training before engaging in any curriculum changes, as well as the support during the implementation process.

### **5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study has limitations on the sample used to represent the schools and the participants in Lesotho. The sample was selected from one distinct district, and it is small compared to the number of teachers across the nation which is implementing the integrated curriculum. Further studies can use larger sample of participants from schools in different geographical regions of Lesotho such as the highlands, the foothills and lowlands. Teachers' perceptions on these regions might differ as teachers' perceptions of a change in a classroom are influenced by a number of factors including working conditions found on a school, socio-economic and cultural conditions in the external environment of schools (Chere-Masopha, 2011).

The study also is qualitative and it used interviews only for data generation and analysis. Therefore, the study was completely depended on what teachers said, not on the observations on whether whatever teachers were saying was what they were able to do.

Therefore, there is a possibility of using different methods, especially the methods that are quantitative and that:

- allow for the measurement of teachers’ perceptions
- allow for observation of integrated curriculum implementation in the classrooms
- can investigate the perceptions of the National Curriculum Development Center personnel on how they prepared teachers, and on how teachers are implementing integrated curriculum in schools can investigate the perceptions of school leaders on how teachers implement integrated curriculum
- can investigate learners perceptions on how they understand integrated curriculum and how this curriculum is taught, as well as to confirm the assertions that are made about them with regard to integrated curriculum.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

There are some issues about integrated curriculum that emerged in this study. These issues which need further actions in the area of research and training in Lesotho include:

- the investigation of the policy on automatic promotion of learners to the next levels, which is not well addressed in the implementation of integrated curriculum, therefore causing confusion amongst teachers.
- the investigation on the extent to which the higher educational institutions and NCDC train teachers for the implementation of the integrated curriculum, with emphasis on integration of concepts within and across the subject-areas

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO  
P.O. ROMA, 180  
LESOTHO

#### Semi-structured Interview Protocol

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

**To the participant:**

*It is important for you that you read the following information before you agreeing to participate in this interview*

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The purpose of this interview is to collect your perceptions on your preparedness to implement the integrated curriculum. This information is going to be used for the study that investigates teachers' perceptions on their preparedness to implement Integrated Curriculum (IC) in Lesotho schools. The findings of this study will be useful to all stakeholders of education in Lesotho, particularly those who are interested in the successful implementation of the IC that has been recently introduced in Lesotho schools. These stakeholders include but not limited to the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), and the institutions that provide teacher education and training in Lesotho, as well as Lesotho school inspectors, clinical supervisors, and administrators. The study will provide these bodies with information relating to the skills, knowledge and attitudes teachers have and or require, and how these influences how they implement IC. It is hoped that these bodies will use this information to inform the development of training programs for pre-service and in-service teachers for successful implementation of IC and other school related reforms.

*Please note that:*

1. Your participation in this study is voluntary and all the information that you will provide will be treated as confidential and therefore:
  - In your response to the questions feel as free as possible;
  - You can choose not to answer questions that you feel uncomfortable with, or that you feel they violate your personal space and rights;
  - You are also free to withdraw from this interview at anytime you feel like doing so;
2. If you are not happy and you feel uncomfortable with the way this interview is conducted, you can withdraw and can forward your complaint to one of the following people at one of these university Telephone numbers: +266 2234 0601, +266 5221 3000:
  - Dr. Chere-Masopha (My Supervisor: [juliachere@gmail.com](mailto:juliachere@gmail.com))
  - EDF of Department of Educational Foundations: [mosia296@gmail.com](mailto:mosia296@gmail.com)
  - Faculty Postgraduate Research Programs: [mg.raselimo@gmail.com](mailto:mg.raselimo@gmail.com)
  - Dean of Faculty of Education: [tmmokuku@yahoo.com](mailto:tmmokuku@yahoo.com)
3. It is assumed that this interview will take about 30- 45 minutes.
4. Our conversation will be recorded solely to help assist gather information while I can concentrate on our conversation. However, if you feel uncomfortable to be recorded please tell me, I will be happy to rely on the notes that I will take as we talk.

## 1. PARTICIPANT PROFILE

Please allow me to fill in your school and personal detail before we start our conversation

### a. Personal Profile

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

### a. Teaching Experience

i. Number of Years: \_\_\_\_\_

ii. Grades taught (list all the grades that you have taught):

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iii. List the current grades you are currently teaching:

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–

iv. Number of years teaching integrated Curriculum: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Professional Training and Development

– Formal Training

From (year)	To (year)	Institution	Qualification	Subject Specialization

– In-service Workshops or Short Courses attended in the last five years:

– Teaching related workshops attended:

Date:	Workshop Title	Duration of the Workshop	Hosting Organization

– Teaching related Short courses attended:

Date:	Course Title	Duration of the Workshop	Hosting Organization

### 3. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

#### **3.1. What is your personal Interpretation of integrated curriculum?**

- 3.1 tell me how you understand the integrated curriculum which has been recently introduced in Lesotho School in relation to how it should be taught and assessed?
- 3.2 In your view how does this curriculum differ from the previous curriculum in relation to how it should be taught and assessed?

#### **4. How do you implement the newly introduced integrated curriculum?**

4.1 In this new curriculum how do you teach?

- a) Which classroom teaching methods and strategies do you use?
- b) Which assessment strategies do you use to assess a learner?

4.2 What challenges do encounter when implementing the new curriculum relation to:

4.2.1 Knowledge and skills you need for:

- a) successful use of teaching and assessment methods recommended for the implementation of integrated curriculum
- b) successful use of resources recommended for successful teaching of integrated curriculum
- c) effective classroom management for integrated curriculum
- d) effective learner support in Integrated curriculum

4.2.1 Learners' attitudes towards learning

#### **5. Your views on how you were prepared to teach the integrated curriculum**

5.1 How were you prepared for the implementation of the integrated curriculum?

5.1.1 How were you trained on the following aspects as a preparation for the implementation of integrated curriculum?

- i. teaching and assessment methods recommended for successful teaching of integrated curriculum;
- ii. Use and production of resources recommended for successful teaching of integrated curriculum;
- iii. Classroom management for integrated curriculum;

- iv. Learner support in Integrated curriculum
- 5.1.2 What are your views on how were prepared on the following aspects for the implementation of integrated curriculum?
- i. teaching and assessment methods recommended for successful teaching of integrated curriculum
  - ii. Use and production of resources recommended for successful teaching of integrated curriculum
  - iii. Classroom management for integrated curriculum
  - iv. Learner support in integrated curriculum
- 5.1.3 In your view how does your preparation to implement integrated curriculum influence how you currently teach and assess students?
- 5.1.4 What kind of professional support do you receive from your school or other interested bodies to implement the new curriculum?
- 5.1.5 What are your views on the support you are provided?
- 5.1.6 How does how you were prepared and how you are currently supported influence the way you teach in the classrooms?
- 5.1.7 How would you recommend teachers to be prepared and supported so that they can successfully implement integrated curriculum?

## **7. Closing questions**

1. Is there anything we have not talked about that you would like to share with me?
2. Do you have any questions for me?

**Thank you for answering my questions.**



## **APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANTS' PROFESSIONAL PROFILE**

The participants in this study were selected from six schools (two from each) as described in Chapter 3. Because of confidentiality, the schools and the participants are given pseudonyms.

### **Participants from School A**

Mosa and Eric were recruited from School A. School A is church-owned and offers primary education (from Grade 1 to Grade 7). The school has 1 400 learners and 30 teachers. In this school the integrated curriculum (IC), which replaced subject based curriculum, had just been introduced.

#### ***Mosa***

Mosa is a 30-year-old female who trained as a teacher from the Lesotho college of Education (LCE) between 2011 -2013, after which she obtained a Diploma in Education Primary (DEP). When she was interviewed she was in the 4th year of teaching experience, and on her fourth year experience of integrated curriculum. She has taught Grade 2 and Grade 3. During data collection for this study, she was teaching g Grade 4. In relation to the in-service training, Mosa pointed out that in her four years of teaching experience; she has never attended any external workshop. In relation to the integrated curriculum, she further clarified that she never attended any external workshop, being offered by Education Officers (EO), District Resource Teachers (DRTs), or Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECoL). However, she noted that she only attended the internal workshops that were organized by the management of her school for teachers to share their knowledge and experiences on the IC. This is where she was more enlightened about IC as she was first oriented about it at LCE.

#### **Eric**

Eric is a 40-year-old male teacher who started his college teacher education in 2001 at the LCE. Having done all the offered subjects for primary teachers, he completed in 2003 with the DEP qualification. In 2005, Eric enrolled with the National University of Lesotho where he specialized with English, Sesotho and Mathematics. He completed in 2009 having Bachelor of Education (Primary) or BEd (Primary) qualifications. At the time of the study, he showed that he had 14 years of teaching experience. He has taught Grade 4 up to Grade 7, and he was currently teaching Grade 6. He indicated that he has taught integrated curriculum for two years. In relation to the question asked on any in-service workshops or any teaching related short courses attended

in the past five years, Eric declared not to have attended any workshop, and not to have received external or internal training on integrated curriculum.

### **School B**

Rare and Lebo were recruited from School B. School B is a government school, and it offers primary education (from Grade 1 to Grade 7). The school has 1 100 learners and 28 teachers. This school similarly follows the integrated curriculum policy which was developed in 2009.

### **Rare**

Rare is a 58-year-old female teacher. She did her teacher training at LCE in 1981, doing all the subjects that were provided by the college for this course. Rare completed in 1983 with the Primary Teaching Certificate (PTC) qualifications. She started her teaching career 30 years back, long before the introduction of integrated curriculum. She was a Grade 3 teacher, having taught at all various levels of primary education. She has taught integrated curriculum for 6 years. Relating to the in-service workshops or any teaching related short- courses attended in the past five years, Rare mentioned that she only attended the integrated curriculum workshop which was held by the Education Officers and District Resource Teachers in 2013. She mentioned that the workshop lasted for a week.

### **Lebo**

Lebo is a 35-year-old male teacher. Regarding his professional training and development, Lebo mentioned in an interview that in 2005, he enrolled with LCE where he obtained DEP qualification in 2008. With this program, there was no subject specialization; individuals had to take all subjects. From 2011 to 2015, Lebo enrolled with the National University of Lesotho and got Bachelor of Education (Primary) qualifications. He specialized with Science, Social Studies and Religion. He declared that he had 10 years of teaching experience, and has taught Grade 4 up to Grade 7. He was currently teaching Grade 5. Lebo had 4 years teaching integrated curriculum. He reported to have had the integrated curriculum training workshop in 2015 which was held by the District Resource Teachers.

**School C**

Kenny and Hloni were recruited from School C. School C is a community school consisting of 600 learners and 10 teachers from Grade 1 to Grade 7. School C is similarly functioning under the 2009 integrated curriculum policy.

**Kenny**

Kenny is a 45-year-old female who engaged with the Lesotho College of Education in 2006, and obtained DEP in 2009. At this college, she did all the subjects offered for her program. From 2012 to 2016, Kenny did her first degree at NUL, and she obtained Bachelor of Education qualification, having specialized with English, Sesotho and Mathematics. With 20 years of teaching experience, she taught Grade 4 up to Grade 7. She was practicing in Grade 1 at the time of the study, and has taught integrated curriculum for 6 years. She confirmed to have had a workshop in 2015 on integrated curriculum which was provided by District Resource Teachers. She added that the workshop took a week only. She equally demonstrated that she normally attends the internal workshops on integrated curriculum.

**Hloni**

Hloni is a 46-year-old male teacher. He had started her professional training and development at the LCE in 1998. Doing all the subjects for this program, he obtained the Primary Teaching Certificate in 2001. From 2008 to 2012, Hloni did his first degree at NUL and obtained BEd (Primary). He had specialized with Sesotho, Social Studies and English. With 19 years of teaching experience, he had taught Grade 1 up to Grade 5, and he was practicing in Grade 7. Hloni had taught integrated curriculum for 4 years. He put that he had never attended any external or internal in-service workshop related to IC in the last five years.