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A hermeneutic content analysis of the nexus between the Lesotho Curriculum and Assessment Policy and Lifelong learning competencies

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Abstract

In today's economy, the economic growth, development and progress of a country and civilisation are subject to investment in people, to the increased role of education as well as LLL and improving educational and employment policies. This study sets to explore the nexus between the Lesotho Curriculum and Assessment policy and lifelong competencies. The study was conducted qualitatively through content analysis of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy of Lesotho and Lifelong competencies as defined by the European Union (2019). The findings showed that all the competencies are catered for by the CAP's curriculum aims of secondary education. However, striking to notice is the fact that the competencies are manifested in varying degrees. Aim one caters for six out of eight competencies, followed by aim two with five competencies, aim five with four competencies and aims six and four tying at three competencies. Trailing behind is aim three which appears only in one competence. It is recommended that further research needs to be done to investigate whether the secondary education subjects, drawn from and on CAP in Lesotho, truly align with the curriculum secondary education aims as well as LLL competencies.

Introduction

In the modern economy, investing in people, recognising the importance of education and lifelong learning, and enhancing employment and educational policies are all necessary for a nation's and a civilization's economic growth, development, and advancement. Lifelong learning, also known as education from birth to death, is a comprehensive approach whose main goals include generalising pre-school education in terms of both quantity and quality (Prahaladaiah, 2021), providing a real learning foundation for compulsory education, easing the transition from school to the workplace, promoting lifelong learning in adults, updating the system's resources, and creating consistency among its components (Demirel, 2009). LLL encompasses all stages of education, including formal, non-formal, and informal learning, and spans from preschool to post-retirement. This indicates that learning is a varied process that is tailored to each individual and that takes place everywhere, at any time, to meet community needs in addition to individual ones in order to promote the continual growth and enhancement of the knowledge and skills required for job as well as individual fulfilment (Mokhets'engoane & Pallai, 2023).

Increased work efficiency highlights the significance of LLL for a nation's economic development because participation in LLL helps people better handle fierce competition from the worldwide marketplace and adjust to developments in the job market more readily (Kiely et al., 2021). These benefits are reinforced by the reality that individuals who are well-prepared are consistently an enduring investment for society, serving as pillars for both human and economic progress. Since LLL engenders the principles of quality education, addressing strategic goals at the educational level at the start of the 21st century is one of its most important fields of discussion, serving as an end in itself and as an indicator in future growth (Lekhanya & Raselimo, 2022). One aspect of the new development goals that respects cultural diversity and applies new technological development is the creation of educational standards targeted at improving creativity and innovation. Rasco (2016) states that targeted improvements in educational systems are intended to promote quality, efficiency, mobility, recognition, and competence. As a result, the Ministry of Education and Training [MOET] (2009) outlined six dimensions that determine the quality of education: inclusivity; effectiveness; gender equality; health, safety, and productive school environment; contribution and active participation of all parties involved in the daily operations and operation of the school environment; respecting children's rights; and multiculturalism.

Because modern life is so dynamic, many nations are constantly forced to implement new educational initiatives that enable their people to stay up to date with every aspect of the world in a variety of fields. This is required by a number of issues that are specific or widespread across different nations. Among the most difficult problems facing Lesotho are extreme poverty and a high unemployment rate, high rates of HIV and AIDS incidence and a lack of appropriate skills in both technical and managerial fields (Mutebi, 2019). Therefore, even though the missionaries brought formal education to Lesotho, their education was centred on fostering Christian values in lieu of the cultivation of lifelong skills that would benefit the Basotho society (Raselimo & Mahao, 2015), which made it necessary to review the country's educational system under the post-colonial regime. The demands of the Basotho people were undoubtedly unmet at the time by education.

As a result, in order to address these issues, Lesotho passed CAP 2009, which served as guidelines for the development and execution of a new curriculum that would be the nation's means of addressing its problems. Several failed reforms were implemented in the early 1970s in an effort to make education pertinent in meeting the needs of the country (Raselimo & Mahao, 2015). Among these changes was the 1974 curriculum diversification reform, which brought in practical subjects like

home economics, technical subjects, and agriculture in an effort to encourage youth autonomy (Raselimo & Mahao, 2015). In order to improve educational efficiency, a different reform known as the "core curriculum reform" was implemented. This reform aimed to organise the school curriculum into subjects with a heavy emphasis on science, maths, and English as fundamental subjects (Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture, 1982). This overhaul gave each of the core subjects a greater amount of time than other subjects on the curriculum's schedule, elevating them above the practical subjects (Raselimo & Mahao, 2015). Ansell (2002), however, issued a warning, pointing out that the 1978 National Pitso review disclosed that an excessive focus on examination hindered this curriculum from properly addressing national needs. He contended that many issues with the curriculum and teaching methods are caused by the excessive emphasis placed on preparing for end-of-course examinations, which jeopardises the achievement of some educational goals that are essential for the economic growth of the nation. These consist of "the development of a moral, socially conscious character, problem solving, implementation of concepts and skills, a culture of cooperation and collaboration, as well as inventiveness and imagination" (Ansell, 2002, p.93-94).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The vast amount of expertise that needs to be acquired these days in contrast to people's limited cognitive capacity can be used to illustrate the current educational problem. Bulle (2013) claims that the answer to these problems rests in the still-somewhat-mysterious notion of the "well-made head," which refers to training-capable individuals, guides, or "masters" who have a solidly constructed rather than a well-filled head, along with the cognitive economy's teaching methods and even the cognitive ability of the things they permit. Given this, Lesotho has made great strides towards achieving Education for All (EFA) with the implementation of Free Primary Education in 2000, which was further strengthened by the enactment of CAP in 2009 to become Free and Compulsory Primary Education by law in 2010. (MOET, 2016). But the policy's silence on how it can help students become lifelong learners is too loud. As was previously said, education must guarantee sustainability throughout a person's lifetime while also assisting students in solving societal issues. If education systems are not matched with lifetime learning competencies, social worry reduction efforts may come to naught. Therefore, the CAP document's silence regarding LLL's function and place in Lesotho's educational system may make sustainability impossible to achieve and result in a failed endeavour. In light of this, the purpose of this study is to investigate how secondary education aims might be in line with lifelong learning competencies in order to guarantee outstanding education and facilitate the accomplishment of internationally recognised educational targets.

Literature review

Definitions of curriculum

Phenix (1962), referenced in Bulle (2013), has one of the more restrictive conceptions of the curriculum that is based on widely divergent opinions and viewpoints. Curriculum is defined by Phenix as the subject matter or content taught in the classroom. Even though it is quite specific, the definition is still accurate because curriculum is the source of the school syllabus, so calling it "content offered in schools" is legitimate. Mizikaci (2017) provides a definition that goes in the same way, characterising the curriculum as what is taught. Ornstein and Hunkins (2016) approach the curriculum as prospects and describe it as a framework that includes all of the educational possibilities that the school offers. In a similar vein, curriculum is defined by Rasco (2016) as everything that the school plans, including the discipline, subject matter, and materials that students learn. It also includes the experiences that students have while attending class. Scholars in the literature define curriculum as

a real-life experience; a means to help learners ready for life, a system, a plan for a particular subject area, a content, an activity or opportunity, a tool to assist teachers in making decisions about teaching, and a belief system (Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). These divergent meanings are surely caused by the fact that curricula and education both have flexible structures that can be adjusted to meet the demands of the times. All things considered, a curriculum is a planned series of experiences that are founded on standards and allow students to practise and become proficient in both material and applied learning abilities. In order to ensure that each learner has an opportunity for challenging academic experiences, the curriculum serves as the primary source of guidance on critical teaching and learning practices for all teachers.

Curriculum is what makes education what it is. It is recognised as the information, abilities, attitudes, and values imparted to students with the goal of modifying their behaviour so they can contribute to society as useful members (Offorma, 2016). The curriculum can also be seen as the tool used by educational institutions to attempt to materialise the expectations and needs of society as a whole in which they operate. It follows a predetermined order. Curriculum is how society expresses and defines itself. The curriculum consistently presents a fairly accurate view of society's past, present, and desired future state (Barbareev, 2014). Questions like "why," "what," and "how to do it" cannot be ignored by a multitude of interested parties and individuals. The fundamental goals of determinants (why), content (what), and procedures (how) are to identify what human capacity can be developed and to create a form of educational blueprint of a society's future. It is mostly dependent on a curriculum that has been designed well.

Types of Curricula

There isn't one curriculum that is followed everywhere. Rather, disparate curricula are combined into one. The majority of people frequently believe that curriculum refers to a clear-cut lesson plan or course design, but in actuality, it is far more intricate and dynamic. To have an impact on lives of learners, a teacher must be able to navigate these difficulties. This reveals that there are several curriculum types. The many kinds of curriculum described by Marzooghi (2016) are listed below.

Written Curriculum

What is formally recorded in writing and documented for instruction is called a written curriculum. These resources may consist of instructional texts, videos, books, and other items that teachers require. These resources are either from the school directly or from the wider school district. They frequently hire or contract with a curriculum specialist to create a plan that satisfies particular requirements.

Taught Curriculum

This kind of curriculum reflects the real teaching methods used by teachers. This kind of curriculum is less standardised and reproducible since teachers' delivery methods might differ greatly. It may also vary according on the kinds of resources available to an a teacher. Experiments, shows, and other forms of participation through group projects and practical exercises can fall under this category. For learners in specialised schools or those who need another type of specialised support, the curriculum that is taught is crucial.

Supported Curriculum

A supported curriculum makes use of extra materials, tools, and educational opportunities that can be obtained both within and outside of a classroom. These include inventive new methods of engaging learners as well as textbooks, technology, software, and field excursions. The supporting curriculum also includes teachers and other participants in the educational experience.

Assessed Curriculum

A tested curriculum is another name for an assessed curriculum. It alludes to examinations, quizzes, and other techniques used to gauge the advancement of learners. This can include a variety of evaluation methods such as the national and state standardised tests, presentations, portfolios, and demonstrations.

Recommended Curriculum

This kind of curriculum is based on recommendations made by education specialists. A range of sources, such as nationally renowned researchers, government officials and policy officials, and others, might recommend curricula. It concentrates on the subjects, abilities, and resources that teachers ought to give top priority in the educational setting.

Hidden Curriculum

Though unplanned, a concealed curriculum has a big influence on what learners learn. This kind of curriculum incorporates unstated expectations, implicit regulations, and cultural norms and values. It is not usually explicitly stated or documented. Learners from diverse origins or cultures may find it difficult to adapt to a hidden curriculum or may even feel unfairly assessed. Across a school or school district, the distribution of funds, time, and resources can also have an impact on a concealed curriculum. For instance, if English is taught to learners rather than Sesotho for homework, they might conclude that learning English is more beneficial.

Excluded Curriculum

The null curriculum is another name for the excluded curriculum. It speaks of the material that is not covered in a course. Teachers and curriculum specialists frequently hold the opinion that a particular skill or the subject is not as significant as others or does not require teaching. Deliberate or inadvertent, what is omitted can occasionally influence learners just as significantly as whatever is offered. For instance, it is possible that learners will not gain knowledge about a current controversy involving subject-matter specialists or will not be prompted to analyse texts critically.

Learned Curriculum

What learners learn from a course is referred to as a learned curriculum. This covers the material and skills they acquired in a class, but it might also involve extra adjustments to their mind-set and emotional stability. The difference between what teachers believe their learners should learn and what they really do need to close.

Curriculum and society

The aims of a curriculum are achieved through the medium of education. The fundamental goal of education is to help people apply the knowledge, facts, abilities, values, and attitudes they have

acquired in one setting to the solution of problems in another. Curriculum that is culturally sensitive enables this to happen.

A curriculum needs to address societal issues if it is to be considered relevant. As a result, changes in community must be taken into account for a curriculum to be successful and appropriate for teaching in schools; community should be allowed the chance to express its goals in the curriculum (Kombe, 2015). It becomes crucial that the curriculum is designed with the presence of social elements in mind, taking into account how these aspects evolve over time. Examples of these factors include a country's philosophy, resources available, and culture. Lesotho's curriculum is currently shaped and directed by the 2009 curriculum and assessment policy, which is covered in more detail below.

Curriculum and assessment policy Lesotho

Lesotho has a very lengthy background in education. Prior to the missionaries' introduction of Western education to Africa, especially Lesotho, traditional education was predominantly the norm (Kurata, Mokhets'engoane & Selialia, 2022). Additional attempts were made to come up with ways to make education relevant, such as forming the "Task Force" to assist the government in formulating national policy (Khalanyane, 1995). In 2009, Lesotho's Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) released the Curriculum and Assessment Policy for the first time since the nation's independence. The HIV/AIDS pandemic, rising rates of poverty, environmental degradation, and other demands resulting from globalisation all had an impact on the project. In order to make education at these levels accessible, relevant, efficient, and of the highest quality, MOET started reviewing the whole primary and secondary education curricula from 2010 to 2016 at the primary level and from 2017 to the present at the secondary level (Phosisi, 2019).

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy, as Selepe (2016) illustrates, divided the curriculum for primary school into learning domains, with formal subjects being covered in the final three years of basic education. Eleven academic subjects have been integrated into the five learning areas at the primary stage as a result of the learning areas. According to Selepe (2016), the learning domains so point to a corpus of knowledge required to give learners the skills they need to deal with life's obstacles. The five learning categories listed in the policy are: scientific and technological; personal; spiritual and social; linguistic and literacy; numerical and mathematical; and, finally, creative and entrepreneurial (MOET, 2009). According to this paradigm, integrated curriculum can be a useful tool for addressing previous concerns. Since the goals of the learning areas are to provide learners with the essential skills for utilising their knowledge and abilities, an integrated curriculum should emphasise the following areas: problem-solving, scientific, technological, and creative skills; effective and functional communication; collaboration and cooperation; and, finally, functional numeracy and learning to learn (MOET, 2009). In order make the curriculum more feasible, the policy stipulates that school life ought to be integrated with civic engagement and learners' everyday encounters. The curriculum's aim to address and overcome the aforementioned obstacles is seen in its integration of real-world difficulties with academic instruction (MOET, 2009). Aspects of the curriculum emphasise the difficulties encountered in real life and the environments in what learners are projected to thrive both as individuals and as members of society (Phosisi, 2019). The information that is required to give students the skills they need to handle these obstacles in life is indicated by the learning areas.

Lifelong learning competencies

Knowledge, skills, and attitudes are combined to form the core competencies. Skills are the capacity to carry out procedures and apply previously acquired knowledge to attain goals and objectives;

knowledge is made up of the concepts, facts, and figures, ideas, and theories that assist the comprehension of a particular area or subject. The way one acts or reacts to concepts, people, or circumstances is characterised by their attitudes (European Union, 2019).

The primary competencies are acquired over the course of a person's life through formal, informal, and non-formal learning in a variety of settings, such as: the home, workplace, school, neighbourhood, and other cultures (Ng, 2023). Every essential competency is deemed equally significant, and elements necessary for one area will facilitate the development of competencies in another. For instance, the core competencies incorporate 21st century abilities like critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, communication, creativity, negotiation, and intercultural skills (Moea, 2023)

There are the eight key competences, being Literacy competence, Multilingual competence, Mathematicalcompetence and competence in science, technology and engineering, Digital competence, Personal, social and learning to learn competence, Citizenship competence, Entrepreneurship competence and Cultural awareness and expression competence (European Union, 2019). These are the ones which will be used for analysis and will be detailed under the analysis section below.

Methodology

Qualitative research was very important in educational research because it addresses the "how" and "why" research questions and enables deeper understanding of experiences, phenomena, and context. Qualitative research allows you to ask questions that cannot be easily put into numbers to understand human experience. In this study, the researcher was interested in finding how the 2009 Curriculum and Assessment Policy in Lesotho align with the LLL competencies. A document analysis was conducted because Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (). The researcher conducted content analysis of the CAP with much focus on secondary education curriculum aims in alignment with the LLL competencies.

Results and discussion

Below is an analysis of the alignment between the six curriculum aims of secondary education and LLL competencies.

Literacy competence

According to the European Union (2019), literacy is the capacity to recognise, comprehend, articulate, produce, and evaluate ideas, emotions, information, and viewpoints both orally and in writing, utilising visual, aural, and digital materials in a variety of academic fields and settings. It suggests having the capacity to interact and engage with people in a suitable and original way. Literacy development is the cornerstone of additional education and language exchange. Literacy proficiency can be gained in the native tongue, the official language of a nation or region, or the language of instruction, depending on the situation. Proficiency in reading, writing, and comprehension of written material are prerequisites for this competency, which calls for an awareness of vocabulary, grammar, and language functions. It entails being aware of the primary forms of communication, a variety of literary and non-literary texts, and the key components of various language registers and styles. This

competence is embedded within curriculum aim one, 'at the end of secondary education, students should have acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes that enhance permanent and functional literacy and numeracy for continuous effective learning and for application in various situations' (MOET, 2009, 13).

People are enabled to monitor and modify their own communication to fit the needs of the circumstance, as well as communicate both orally and in writing in a number of contexts. This competency also includes the capacity to recognise and apply various sources, to find, gather, and analyse information, to make use of tools, and to develop and present arguments both orally and in writing in a way that is persuasive and appropriate for the situation. It includes the capacity for critical thought as well as the evaluation and manipulation of data (European Union, 2019). An awareness of artistic aspects, an inclination for critical and constructive discourse, and an interest in social contact are therefore all components of a positive attitude towards literacy. This suggests that one must be conscious of how language affects other people and that one must learn and use language in a way that is constructive and socially responsible.

Multilingual Competence

This competence defines the ability to use different languages appropriately and effectively for communication. It broadly shares the main skill dimensions of literacy: it is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in an appropriate range of societal and cultural contexts according to one's wants or needs (European Union, 2019). Languages competences integrate a historical dimension and intercultural competences. It relies on the ability to mediate between different languages and media, as outlined in the Common European Framework of Reference. As appropriate, it can include maintaining and further developing mother tongue competences, as well as the acquisition of a country's official language(s).

This competence requires knowledge of vocabulary and functional grammar of different languages and an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction and registers of languages. Knowledge of societal conventions, and the cultural aspect and variability of languages is important. Essential skills for this competence consist of the ability to understand spoken messages, to initiate, sustain and conclude conversations and to read, understand and draft texts, with different levels of proficiency in different languages, according to the individual's needs. Similarly, this competence is still located in secondary aim one as stated in literacy competence above. Individuals should be able to use tools appropriately and learn languages formally, non-formally and informally throughout life. A positive attitude involves the appreciation of cultural diversity, an interest and curiosity aboutdifferent languages and intercultural communication. It also involves respect for each person's individual linguistic profile, including both respect for the mother tongue of persons belonging to minorities and/or with a migrant background and appreciation for a country's official language(s) as a common framework for interaction.

Mathematical Competence andcompetence in science, technology and engineering

Mathematical competence is the ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking and insight in order to solve a range of problems in everyday situations. Building on a sound mastery of numeracy, the emphasis is on process and activity, as well as knowledge. Mathematical competence involves, to different degrees, the ability and willingness to use mathematical modes of thought and presentation (formulas, models, constructs, graphs, charts) (European Union, 2019). Competence in science refers

to the ability and willingness to explain the natural world by making use of the body of knowledge and methodology employed, including observation and experimentation, in order to identify questions and to draw evidence-based conclusions. Competences in technology and engineering are applications of that knowledge and methodology in response to perceived human wants or needs. Competence in science, technology and engineering involves an understanding of the changes caused by human activity and responsibility as an individual citizen. Necessary knowledge in mathematics includes a sound knowledge of numbers, measures and structures, basic operations and basic mathematical presentations, an understanding of mathematical terms and concepts, and an awareness of the questions to which mathematics can offer answers. For science, technology and engineering, essential knowledge comprises the basic principles of the natural world, fundamental scientific concepts, theories, principles and methods, technology and technological products and processes, as well as an understanding of the impact of science, technology, engineering and human activity in general on the natural world. These competences should enable individuals to better understand the advances, limitations and risks of scientific theories, applications and technology in societies at large (in relation to decision-making, values, moral questions, culture, etc.).

This competence is found in aim one due to the presence of the enhancement of 'permanent and functional … numeracy for continuous effective learning…' as well as its application in numerous milieus. Further, this competence is found in aim two, 'at the end of secondary education, students should have developed … technological… skills… for the world of work and further studies. Aim five also entails this competence, '… be able to apply scientific and technological knowledge and skills in developing new ideas to respond socio-economic challenges' (MOET, 2009,13).An individual should have the skills to apply basic mathematical principles and processes in everyday contexts at home and work (e.g., financial skills) which includes entrepreneurial skills as manifested by aim two, and to follow and assess chains of arguments. An individual should be able to reason mathematically, understand mathematical proof and communicate in mathematical language, use appropriate aids including statistical data and graphs, and understand the mathematical aspects of digitalisation. Skills include the understanding of science as a process for the investigation through specific methodologies, including observations and controlled experiments, the ability to use logical and rational thought to verify a hypothesis and the readiness to discard one's own convictions when they contradict new experimental findings. It includes the ability to use and handle technological tools and machines as well as scientific data to achieve a goal or to reach an evidence-based decision or conclusion. Individuals should also be able to recognise the essential features of scientific inquiry and have the ability to communicate the conclusions and reasoning that led to them.A positive attitude in mathematics is based on the respect for truth and a willingness to look for reasons and to assess their validity. Competence includes an attitude of critical appreciation and curiosity, a concern for ethical issues and support for both safety and environmental sustainability, in particular as regards scientific and technological progress in relation to oneself, family, community, and global issues.

Digital competence

Digital competence involves the confident, critical and responsible use of, and engagement with, digital technologies for learning, at work, and for participation in society (European Union, 2019). It includes information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, media literacy, digital content creation (including programming), safety (including digital well-being and competences related to cybersecurity), intellectual property related questions, problem solving and critical thinking. Knowledge includes Individuals should understand how digital technologies can support communication, creativity and innovation, and be aware of their opportunities, limitations, effects and risks. They should understand the general principles, mechanisms and logic underlying evolving

digital technologies and know the basic function and use of different devices, software, and networks. Individuals should take a critical approach to the validity, reliability and impact of information and data made available by digital means and be aware of the legal and ethical principles involved in engaging with digital technologies. Digital competence appears in aim two, '… have developed advanced technological … skills…' as well as in aim five, '… be able to apply scientific and technological knowledge and skills in developing new ideas…' as a response to socio-economic straits.

Individuals should be able to use digital technologies to support their active citizenship and social inclusion, collaboration with others, and creativity towards personal, social or commercial goals. Skills include the ability to use, access, filter, evaluate, create, program and share digital content. Individuals should be able to manage and protect information, content, data, and digital identities, as well as recognise and effectively engage with software, devices, artificial intelligence or robots. Engagement with digital technologies and content requires a reflective and critical, yet curious, open-minded and forward-looking attitude to their evolution. It also requires an ethical, safe and responsible approach to the use of these tools.

Personal, social and learning to learn competence

Personal, social and learning to learn competence is the ability to reflect upon oneself, effectively manage time and information, work with others in a constructive way, remain resilient and manage one's own learning and career (European Union, 2019). It includes the ability to cope with uncertainty and complexity, learn to learn, support one's physical and emotional well-being, to maintain physical and mental health, and to be able to lead a health-conscious, future oriented life, empathize and manage conflict in an inclusive and supportive context.The competence is based on a positive attitude toward one's personal, social and physical wellbeing and learning throughout one's life. It is based on an attitude of collaboration, assertiveness and integrity. This includes respecting diversity of others and their needs and being prepared both to overcome prejudices and to compromise. Individuals should be able to identify and set goals, motivate themselves, and develop resilience and confidence to pursue and succeed at learning throughout their lives. A problem-solving attitude supports both the learning process and the individual's ability to handle obstacles and change. It includes the desire to apply prior learning and life experiences and the curiosity to look for opportunities to learn and develop in a variety of life contexts.

This competence is manifested in aim one, '… acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes that enhance permanent and functional literacy and numeracy for continuous effective learning and for application in various situations,' aim two, '…developed entrepreneurial, technological and vocational skills for world of work and further studies;' aim three, '…have acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes to interact appropriately with the environment and promote socio-economic development;' aim four, '…have acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes to promote socially and morally acceptable behaviour;' aim five, '…to apply scientific and technological knowledge and skills in developing new ideas to respond to socio-economic challenges;' and in aim six, '…apply acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for effective participation in democratic processes and social activities' (MOET, 2009, 13).

For successful interpersonal relations and social participation, it is essential to understand the codes of conduct and rules of communication generally accepted in different societies and environments. Personal, social and learning to learn competence requires also knowledge of the components of a healthy mind, body and lifestyle. It involves knowing one's preferred learning strategies, knowing

one's competence development needs and various ways to develop competences and search for the education, training and career opportunities and guidance or support available.Skills include the ability to identify one's capacities, focus, deal with complexity, critically reflect and make decisions. This includes the ability to learn and work both collaboratively and autonomously and to organise and persevere with one's learning, evaluate and share it, seek support when appropriate and effectively manage one's career and social interactions. Individuals should be resilient and able to cope with uncertainty and stress. They should be able to communicate constructively in different environments, collaborate in teams and negotiate. This includes showing tolerance, expressing and understanding different viewpoints, as well as the ability to create confidence and feel empathy.

Citizenship competence

Citizenship competence is the ability to act as responsible citizens and to fully participate in civic and social life, based on understanding of social, economic, legal and political concepts and structures, as well as global developments and sustainability (European Union, 2019). Citizenship competence is based on knowledge of basic concepts and phenomena relating to individuals, groups, work organisations, society, economy and culture. It includes knowledge of contemporary events, as well as a critical understanding of the main developments in local, national and global history. In addition, it includes an awareness of the aims, values and policies of social and political movements, as well as of sustainable systems, in particular climate and demographic change at the global level and their underlying causes. This competence appears in the communicative aim, being aim one that emphasises contextual communication '… permanent functional literacy… for application in various situations' and in aim two '… developed advanced … skills for world of work and further studies' which touches on the economic side of this competence. It is also represented in aim three by '…acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes to interact appropriately with the environment and promote socio- economic development'. Aim four manifests citizenship competence, '…have acquired religious knowledge, skills and attitudes to promote socially and morally acceptable behaviour' and aim five displays this competence in emphasising the application of scientific and technological knowledge, skills and attitudes in developing novel ideas responding to socio-economic challenges. Lastly, aim six vehemently emphasises citizenship competence for it emphasises application of acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant for effective participation in democratic processes and social activities.

Knowledge of African integration as well as an awareness of diversity and cultural identities in Lesotho, Africa and the world is essential in this competence. This includes an understanding of the multi-cultural and socioeconomic dimensions of African societies, and how national cultural identity contributes to the African identity.Skills for citizenship competence relate to the ability to engage effectively with others in common or public interest, including the sustainable development of society. This involves critical thinking and integratedproblem-solving skills, as well as skills to develop arguments and constructive participation in community activities, as well as in decision-making at all levels, from local and national to the European and international level. This also involves the ability to access, have a critical understanding of, and interact with both traditional and new forms of media and understand the role and functions of media in democratic societies.

Respect for human rights as a basis for democracy lays the foundations for a responsible and constructive attitude as it appears in aim six. Constructive participation involves willingness to participate in democratic decision-making at all levels and civic activities. It includes support for social and cultural diversity, gender equality and social cohesion, sustainable lifestyles, promotion of culture of peace and non-violence, a readiness to respect the privacy of others, and to take

responsibility for the environment. Interest in political and socioeconomic developments, humanities and intercultural communication is needed to be prepared both to overcome prejudices and to compromise where necessary and to ensure social justice and fairness.

Entrepreneurship competence

Entrepreneurship competence refers to the capacity to act upon opportunities and ideas, and to transform them into values for others (European Union, 2019). It is founded upon creativity, critical thinking and problem solving, taking initiative and perseverance and the ability to work collaboratively in order to plan and manage projects that are of cultural, social or financial value. Entrepreneurship competence requires knowing that there are different contexts and opportunities for turning ideas into action in personal, social and professional activities, and an understanding of how these arise. Individuals should know and understand approaches to planning and management of projects, which include both processes and resources. They should have an understanding of economics and the social and economic opportunities and challenges facing an employer, organisation or society. They should also be aware of ethical principles and challenges of sustainable development and have self-awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses. This competence appears in aim two, which emphasises development of advanced entrepreneurial, technological as well as vocational skills for world of work and further studies.

Entrepreneurial skills are founded on creativity which includes imagination, strategic thinking and problem-solving, and critical and constructive reflection within evolving creative processes and innovation which embeds this competence in aim five, where the development of both scientific and technological knowledge, skills and attitudes has to develop novel ideas to respond to socio-economic challenges which engages both critical and problem-solving skills as necessitated by this competence. They include the ability to work both as an individual and collaboratively in teams, to mobilize resources (people and things) and to sustain activity. This includes the ability to make financial decisions relating to cost and value. The ability to effectively communicate and negotiate with others, and to cope with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk as part of making informed decisions is essential. An entrepreneurial attitude is characterised by a sense of initiative and agency, pro-activity, being forward-looking, courage and perseverance in achieving objectives. It includes a desire to motivate others and value their ideas, empathy and taking care of people and the world, and accepting responsibility taking ethical approaches throughout the process.

Cultural awareness and expression competence

Competence in cultural awareness and expression involves having an understanding of and respect for how ideas and meaning are creatively expressed and communicated in different cultures and through a range of arts and other cultural forms (European Union, 2019). It involves being engaged in understanding, developing and expressing one's own ideas and sense of place or role in society in a variety of ways and contexts. This competence requires knowledge of local, national, regional, African and global cultures and expressions, including their languages, heritage and traditions, and cultural products, and an understanding of how these expressions can influence each other as well as the ideas of the individual. It includes understanding the different ways of communicating ideas between creator, participant and audience within written, printed and digital texts, theatre, film, dance, games, art and design, music, rituals, and architecture, as well as hybrid forms. It requires an understanding of one's own developing identity and cultural heritage within a world of cultural diversity and how arts and other cultural forms can be a way to both view and shape the world. Skills include the ability to express and interpret figurative and abstract ideas, experiences and emotions

with empathy, and the ability to do so in a range of arts and other cultural forms. Skills also include the ability to identify and realise opportunities for personal, social or commercial value through the arts and other cultural forms and the ability to engage in creative processes, both as an individual and collectively. It is important to have an open attitude towards, and respect for, diversity of cultural expression together with an ethical and responsible approach to intellectual and cultural ownership. A positive attitude also includes a curiosity about the world, an openness to imagine new possibilities, and a willingness to participate in cultural experiences. Based on the explanation of this competence, aim one '…permanent functional literacy…' which is communicative, manifests this competence. Also, aim four which is about religious knowledge, skills and attitudes intended to promote social and moral behaviour displays this competence. Lastly, aim six also manifests this competence because it deals with the application of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for effective participation in democratic and social activities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study was set to explore the nexus between the Lesotho CAP's curriculum aims of secondary education's alignment with the tenets of the LLL competencies. Based on the results, it appears that all the competencies are catered for by the CAP's curriculum aims of secondary education. However, striking to notice is the fact that the competencies are manifested in varying degrees. Aim one caters for six out of eight competencies, followed by aim two with five competencies, aim five with four competencies and aims six and four tying at three competencies. Trailing behind is aim three which appears only in one competence. The findings therefore reveal that there is an alignment between the secondary education aims and the LLL competencies.

The conclusion drawn, based on the results, is that the CAP ensures that the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the learners throughout their lives, focusing on requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes applicable in various contexts. It additionally proves to promote flexibility and adaptability which can enable learners' acquisition of novel skills and knowledge as societal and professional needs arise. A curriculum that aligns with lifelong learning competencies offers several benefits. It ensures that the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of learners throughout their lives, focusing on skills and knowledge that are applicable in various contexts. As thus, the Lesotho CAP promises to be relevant in this regard. Also, such a curriculum promotes flexibility and adaptability, enabling learners to acquire new skills and knowledge as societal and professional demands evolve. This is evident in aim six of the CAP. It further fosters a mindset of continuous learning, encouraging individuals to engage in self-directed learning and personal development beyond formal education.

The curriculum that aligns with the LLL competencies emphasizes the development of transferable skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and collaboration, which are valuable across different domains and professions (Moea, 2023). These appeared in the analysis of the CAP document as depicted by the different aims. As well, by aligning with lifelong learning competencies, the curriculum equips learners with the skills and knowledge necessary for career success and adaptability in a rapidly changing job market. This was manifested in the analysis of the CAP. In addition, an LLL competent curriculum supports personal growth, enabling individuals to pursue their passions, interests, and goals, leading to a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction. This was evidenced by the analysis. A curriculum aligned with lifelong learning competencies and thus, further promotes social engagement and active citizenship, encouraging learners to contribute to their communities and address societal challenges. Overall, such a curriculum empowers individuals to become lifelong learners, enabling them to thrive in an ever-changing world and pursue personal and professional growth throughout their lives. It is unquestionable that the CAP aligns with the LLL

competencies which are beneficial in the world today. Therefore, further research needs to be done to investigate whether the secondary education subjects, drawn from and on CAP in Lesotho, truly align with the curriculum secondary education aims as well as LLL competencies.

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