

Challenges Facing Implementation of an Integrated Tourism Curriculum: The Experiences of Teachers in Lesotho

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Abstract

This study explored challenges experienced by tourism teachers in Lesotho in an attempt to implement an integrated tourism curriculum. The undertaking was important, because tourism is a new subject, which was introduced in nine Lesotho high schools for piloting in 2011. The aim of introducing tourism was to increase the number of vocational subjects for learners that would enable them to be creative and productive, and become self-employed and self-reliant. The researcher used semi-structured interviews to generate data from three tourism teachers at three of the original nine schools in which tourism had been piloted. Two education officials were also selected for the semi-structured interviews, to provide information at the policy-making level. Data from the interviews was analysed and synthesised to make meaning, and to illuminate the challenges that were being experienced by tourism teachers during and beyond the pilot stage, even though there was support for tourism education from school administrators, and the Ministry of Education and Training. The study found that tourism teachers face a number of serious challenges that need to be addressed, so that integrated tourism curriculum fulfils the expectations of alleviating poverty and unemployment, while promoting self-employment and self-reliance.

Keywords: challenges, integrated tourism curriculum, semi-structured interviews, tourism teaching

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1. INTRODUCTION

The subject of tourism was introduced in Lesotho in 2011 to increase the number of vocational subjects offered by high schools, and for learners to learn hands-on skills, and become self-employed and self-reliant during and after their studies. Tourism was piloted in nine high schools from 2011 to 2016 (Molise 2016: 1-2). In 2017, tourism was rolled out to 13 additional high schools, bringing the total to 22. There has been no formal report informing stakeholders how tourism education performed during the pilot stage. The absence of a formal report provides justification for this paper, which attempts to fill that gap, and explore the challenges experienced by tourism teachers during and beyond the pilot stage. The findings provide useful lessons for tourism teachers, school administrators and the Ministry of Education and Training, so that, when tourism education is rolled out to more schools, feedback on challenges can invoke reflection on and new insights into the way forward.

Prior to 2009, since Lesotho's independence in 1966, the Lesotho education system had been using an examination-oriented curriculum, which had been described as a "pen and paper activity" characterised by small-scale practical work by learners to fulfil examination requirements (MoET 2009: 3). "Pen and paper activity" had been taking place since the arrival of missionaries, who introduced formal education in several African countries, including Lesotho, in the early 1830s. Raselimo and Mahao (2015: 1-2) chronicle numerous attempts by Lesotho to transform colonial education after the country gained independence from Britain. For example, there was curriculum diversification reform in 1974; inclusion of more practical subjects in 1982; core curriculum reform in 1984; and O Level localisation reform in 1995, which removed the control of O Level examinations, away from Britain. All these attempts failed to practicalise education for self-employment and self-reliance.

In 2009 the Lesotho education system adopted an integrated curriculum to promote the "practical application of concepts and skills in most subjects" in order to alleviate poverty, unemployment and disease, and promote self-reliance (MoET 2009: 3, 18). Raselimo and Mahao (2015: 1-2) see the 2009 integrated curriculum as guiding the 1995 localisation process, and making education relevant by responding to Lesotho's current development needs. Introducing tourism in 2011 was in line with this new objective of promoting and equipping learners with creative, productive, and hands-on skills, within the 2009 integrated curriculum, and putting these skills into practice to solve practical life challenges.

The 2009 integrated curriculum was, therefore, meant to be a departure from colonial education, which emphasised cognitive skills, and was geared towards white-collar jobs. Tanzania was one of the first African countries to do away with colonial education by introducing Education for Self-Reliance (Nyerere 1967). Major curriculum restructuring also took place in Botswana and South Africa in 1994, and in Australia about the same time, to make curriculum relevant to these countries' development needs (Raselimo & Mahao, 2015: 2). Thus, the Lesotho's curricular reform of 2009 was not unique, but was consistent with global curricular reforms.

2. LITERATURE ON INTEGRATED CURRICULUM

2.1. Conceptualisation

Integrated curriculum refers to teaching and learning in which themes from different disciplines are interrelated (Malik & Malik 2011: 99). It is an approach that uses cross-curricular means to produce knowledge, or enhance the understanding of concepts (Brauer & Ferguson 2015: 314-315). Theories of learning support integrated approaches to teaching and learning, in which knowledge can be socially constructed from multiple perspectives (Brauer & Ferguson 2015: 314-315), by means of discussions, brainstorming and sharing ideas, which favour learner-centred pedagogy, and “it is currently the dominant paradigm in curriculum reform” (Raselimo & Mahao 2015: 2). An integrated curriculum opens doors and opportunities for teachers to connect and assist one another on common themes (Brauer & Ferguson 2015: 314-315; Malik & Malik 2011: 100), and bridges the gap between theory and practice (MoET 2009: vii). This new, holistic approach to teaching has become dominant and popular all over the world (Brauer & Ferguson 2015: 313; Park 2008: 308).

Harden’s (2000) 11-step model of curriculum integration, shown in Figure 1, assists us to understand curriculum integration as a process, not an event. The model indicates the level of curriculum integration, and the action that is taken at each level.

Step number	Level	Action
Step 1	Isolation	Isolated subject-teaching takes place
Step 2	Awareness	Teachers are aware that what they teach is found in other disciplines too
Step 3	Harmonisation	Communication and bringing together similar content
Step 4	Nesting	Infusion takes place between courses
Step 5	Temporal coordination	Similar content covered in parallel across courses
Step 6	Sharing	Joint teaching on similar topics occurs occasionally
Step 7	Correlation	Integrated teaching introduced
Step 8	Complementarity	Several disciplines contribute to a theme
Step 9	Multidisciplinarity	Themes identified for co-planning and co-teaching, and effected
Step 10	Interdisciplinarity	Further development of commonalities between disciplines takes place
Step 11	Transdisciplinarity	Curriculum focuses on process of learners constructing meaning from different disciplines

Figure 1: Harden’s (2000) 11-step model of curriculum integration

According to Harden’s (2000) model, confining the definition of integrated curriculum to being cross-curricular, with multi-disciplinary intentions, could be simplistic, because that definition focuses on the level of curriculum integration in Step 9. Without a model to help explain the entire process of curriculum integration, the definitions of integrated curriculum risk being incomplete and inadequate. From Step 2 to Step 11 in Harden’s (2000) model, all the terms aim “to integrate disciplines for a more holistic style of learning” (Daly, Brown & McGowan 2012: 5), in which themes and topics from different disciplines are interrelated to promote connections between subjects (Malik & Malik 2011: 99), to enhance understanding and the construction of knowledge. In addition to Harden’s (2000) model, other integrated curriculum models have been proposed, for example, by Fogarty (1991), Loepp (1999), Daly *et al.* (2012) and Brauer and Ferguson (2015).

2.2. Benefits of an integrated curriculum

An integrated curriculum progressively engages learners in learning and assessment, as opposed to the examination-oriented curriculum, which is judgemental, undemocratic, teacher-centred and “authority driven” (Petersen 2015: 75). Globally, an integrated curriculum approach to teaching and learning has been described as democratic, learner-centred, encouraging life-long learning, and promoting work-related competencies (Raselimo & Mahao 2015: 2), which lead to the ability to solve practical problems and a striving for self-reliance (MoET 2009: vii, 18). Engaging in problem-solving activities was found to enhance understanding of concepts in the classroom (Msuya, Ahmad, Kalunguizi, Busidi, Rwambali, Machinda *et al.* 2014: 108). Thus, an integrated curriculum provides an enabling environment for a more fruitful teaching and learning process to take place. Well balanced and successful assessment of theory and practice in integrated tourism teaching takes place in countries such as Britain (Cambridge IGCSE 2014: 1-32), and South Africa (DBE 2013: 1-11, DBE 2014: 1-13). These countries cover all 11 of Harden’s (2000) levels of curriculum integration. Lesotho does not yet benefit from an integrated curriculum, because theory still dominates practice, particularly with regard to tourism teaching.

2.3. Challenges identified by literature as facing the implementation of an integrated curriculum

One of the challenges experienced by the United States of America, United Kingdom and Canada, is the

understanding of an integrated curriculum and its terminology by teachers: multidisciplinary, interdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity (Daly *et al.* 2012: 2-3). These terms explain integrated curriculum at different levels of its process. For example, multidisciplinary approaches are meant to enhance understanding of a topic or theme while maintaining disciplinary boundaries (Choi & Pak 2006: 360). Interdisciplinarity refers to common themes being identified, analysed and synthesised, to produce unified knowledge, in a manner that blurs subject boundaries (Daly *et al.* 2012: 2). Transdisciplinarity, in turn, is evaluative in the sense that it seeks to find out if learners can argue their positions from multiple perspectives (Daly *et al.* 2012: 2). In other words, transdisciplinarity determines if learners can produce and apply knowledge gained from multiple disciplines to solve practical problems.

Other challenges faced by teachers in integrated curriculum implementation include lack of staff training; lack of resources and facilities (Park 2008: 308-309, 313, 316); lack of will to understand and accept the process of change in curricular matters (Malik & Malik 2011: 99); a possible mismatch between the curriculum taught and assessed (Shankar 2014: 75), perhaps as a result of lack of cooperation between teachers and departments (Raselimo & Mahao 2015: 8-9). Literature reports that successful implementation depends on a thorough understanding of an integrated curriculum (Park 2008: 314; Tankiso-Mphunyane 2014: xvii). Without adequate understanding, teachers think an integrated curriculum is some kind of a teaching method, and so, continue to teach in out-dated, traditional ways, rather than using integrated curriculum as a new way of producing knowledge. These implementation challenges are prevalent in Lesotho, and impinge negatively on integrated tourism teaching, hence, the significance of this study.

3. LITERATURE ON TOURISM EDUCATION

3.1. Conceptualisation of and reasons for introducing tourism

Tourism refers to the provision of services to people who are visiting a place or country for sightseeing, leisure, pleasure, adventure and other reasons, for between 24 hours and a year (Debeshe, Pitso, Makhonofane & Tsatsane 2005: 66; Halling 2011: 15; Neumeier & Pollermann 2014: 272). Przeclawski (1993, in Halling 2011: 16) adds that tourism is an instrument of social integration and globalisation. There are different kinds of tourism, which may overlap with the types mentioned above, for example, educational tourism, business tourism, event tourism, sports tourism, community-based tourism, cultural and heritage tourism, eco-tourism, health tourism, inbound tourism (domestic), and outbound tourism (international) (LGCSE 2017: 8-9, 17). Leiper (1995, in Mayaka 1999: 9) suggests that each kind of tourism can be divided into at least seven sectors: marketing sector, carrier sector, accommodation sector, attractions sector, tour-operator sector, coordinating sector, and miscellaneous sector.

There are two main reasons why countries introduce tourism education in their curricula. The first is that tourism contributes a great deal to the economic growth of countries. In Croatia, tourism contributes 30 percent of GDP (gross domestic product) (Lovrentjev 2015: 555). Tourism also contributes substantially to the economy of Australia (City of Whitehorse 2014: 10), Ghana (Sarkodie & Adom 2015: 114), and South Africa (Dube 2014: 154; Petersen 2015: 11). In Lesotho, the Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC 2017: 34) reports a contribution of 11.8 percent by tourism to the GDP in 2015. Secondly, tourism contributes to national development by providing tangible jobs; the implication is that percentage contributions to economic growth and GDP, in themselves, do not necessarily mean people's lives have improved. The 11.8 percent contribution to the GDP in Lesotho translated into 79 500 real jobs (LTDC 2017: 34) in the tourism industry. It makes sense, therefore, for governments across the world to introduce tourism education to boost their economies and development, and for learners to learn and contribute to development during and after their studies.

Countries, such as Britain (IGCSE 2014) and South Africa (DBE 2013; DBE 2014) report success in integrated tourism teaching in which theory and practice are well balanced in teaching and assessment, that is, in which both theory and practical skill part comprise 50 percent. Examples of content for theory include the travel and tourism industry, features of world-wide destinations, customer care and working procedures, marketing and promotion. Examples of the practical skill part include choosing an investigation, collecting evidence, preparing a report (IGCSE 2014: 1).

3.2. Challenges in tourism education identified by literature

Literature suggests that tourism is a young subject, having only been introduced in Australia in 1987-1990 (Marland & Store 1991: 19); in South Africa in 1994-1996 (Dube 2014: 153-154; Petersen 2015: 80), and in Lesotho in 2011 (Molise 2016: 1-2). Authors agree that, at its introduction, tourism was taught by teachers of social sciences, such as geography, development studies, history, and economics, who had no qualifications in tourism education, and, therefore, taught the subject as if it was purely academic (Armstrong 2003: 2; Sean 2010: 39). Tertiary institutions in South Africa that offer tourism education are lagging behind on methods and approaches of teaching the subject (Armstrong 2003: 2; Sean 2010: 39). In Lesotho, the Lesotho College of Education, which trains and produces teachers, does not, as yet, offer tourism in its curriculum, even though

tourism was introduced in high schools in 2011. Teachers' content knowledge is inadequate and, therefore, they cannot teach tourism with confidence and provide examples and illustrations to explain concepts (Kleickmann, Richter, Kunter, Elsner, Besser, Klauss *et al.* 2013: 91; Ward, Kim, Ko & Li 2015: 130). There is also a lack of resources, such as libraries and textbooks for tourism education (Abomeh 2012: 14), and challenges relating to taking learners on educational excursions (Mayell & Davies 2014: 14).

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by Rogers's (1983) diffusion of innovation as a theoretical framework, because it is relevant and appropriate. Rogers (1983: 6) defines diffusion as "the process by which an innovation is communicated" and spreads among members of "a social system", such as teachers at a school. Innovation is an idea or practice that is perceived to be new (Rogers 1983: 11), and aimed at bringing improvement in the lives of people. Based on these definitions, the introduction of Lesotho's 2009 integrated curriculum, and tourism in 2011, can be perceived as innovations, aimed at improving what education offers (curriculum), and the learners who benefit from the offering.

Rogers (1983: 15) suggests five characteristics of innovations that determine how innovations diffuse and spread among members. The first characteristic is relative advantage. If an innovation has a relative advantage over existing programmes, in terms of economics, social prestige, convenience, and satisfaction, that innovation is likely to diffuse and spread easily and quickly among members. Both the 2009 integrated curriculum and the subject of tourism are commended for their potential to contribute to the economy and national development in general, as the curriculum and the subject emphasise the acquisition of practical and productive skills for employment and self-employment. Neither offers social prestige, but tourism seems to offer more satisfaction to the teachers, while the 2009 integrated curriculum seems to be struggling, because of its demands on the teachers to understand theoretical underpinnings and implementation strategies.

The second characteristic of innovations is compatibility, which is the extent to which an innovation is perceived as consistent with existing values, past experiences and needs of a "social system" (Rogers 1983: 15). It can be argued that the introduction of both the 2009 integrated curriculum and tourism satisfies the attribute of compatibility. For example, the 2009 integrated curriculum encourages collaborative approaches to teaching and learning, which are consistent with the culture of the Basotho, of working in *matsema* (groups or cooperatives) during hard work in the fields, or to plant trees to prevent soil erosion (MoET 2009: 4-6). Thus, both the 2009 integrated curriculum and tourism respond to current national needs by aiming to produce learners with practical and productive skills, to alleviate poverty, unemployment and disease, and achieve self-reliance (MoET 2009: 18). Dube (2014: 156) describes compatibility as contextual suitability.

Harden's (2000) 11-step model of curriculum integration resonates with compatibility, culture and existing values of a social system. In Harden's (2000) steps, there is awareness of similarities in what teachers teach; harmonisation of similar content; nesting, in which infusion takes place between disciplines; sharing, in which joint teaching on similar topics occurs; correlation, in which integrated teaching is introduced; and multidisciplinary, in which themes are identified for co-planning and co-teaching. These levels of curriculum integration proposed by Harden take place when there is compatibility with culture, and values of harmony and sharing in a social system, as suggested by Rogers (1983: 15). Teachers are more effective when they come together as professionals, and when they coordinate their work and share workloads and techniques of teaching.

The third characteristic of innovations is complexity, which is the degree of difficulty of understanding and using an innovation (Rogers 1983: 15). Some innovations are easy to understand and, therefore, diffuse and spread quickly; others are difficult to understand and, therefore, diffuse and spread slowly. Comparatively, the 2009 integrated curriculum seems to be difficult to understand, while tourism seems to be easy and, therefore, tourism quickly spreads to more schools. An additional reason why tourism spreads easily and quickly could be that it is taught by teachers whose majors are academic (Sean 2010: 39), and who teach tourism as such, not as practical and vocational.

It is interesting to observe that, as one moves from Step 1 (isolation) to Step 11 (transdisciplinarity) in Harden's (2000) model of curriculum integration, the more complex the levels become. Surely, teaching an isolated subject, such as tourism, without worrying about bringing similar themes from other disciplines, is less complex than expecting learners to solve a problem from multiple perspectives, as is the case with transdisciplinarity. Harden's (2000) model explains clearly why the diffusion of an integrated curriculum (an approach involving multiple disciplines), as an innovation, is slower than the diffusion of tourism (a single discipline). Thus, Rogers's (1983: 15) third characteristic of innovations, complexity, is well articulated in Harden's (2000) model.

The fourth characteristic of innovations is trialability, which is the extent to which an innovation can be experimented upon (Rogers 1983: 15). In this regard, both the 2009 integrated curriculum and tourism were piloted; tourism in 2011-2016, and the integrated curriculum from 2017 at the secondary level. As with tourism at the end of its pilot, by the end of 2017 there has been no formal report on the pilot performance of the 2009

integrated curriculum. It remains to be seen if the second year of piloting, 2018, will see a formal report being produced. Evidence on the ground clearly indicates that teachers are having more difficulty implementing the integrated curriculum than they did with tourism.

The final characteristic of innovations is observability, which is the extent to which “the results of an innovation are visible to others” (Rogers 1983: 16). Individuals adopt an innovation when they can discern and foresee its outcome. With regard to the 2009 integrated curriculum, Brauer and Ferguson (2015: 318) state bluntly that long-term results of an integrated curriculum are not known, because there is no long-term research on it. Research available on the integrated curriculum was done over the short term. In other words, no one can foresee what will be the results of the 2009 integrated curriculum 50 years from now and, therefore, individual schools and teachers are not likely to adopt it easily and quickly. However, with regard to tourism, it is not difficult to understand and see that the subject prepares learners to get jobs in the tourism industry, and that it promotes self-employment.

5. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1. Selection of participants and sampling

This research was designed around three high schools in which tourism had been piloted between 2011 and 2016. The schools were chosen on the understanding that they would have rich information after having been in the thick of things, as it were, while also being part of the transition, during which tourism was rolled out to more schools. Included in the sample were two education officials, who were also selected for the semi-structured interviews. One official was responsible for assessment and examination of tourism education at schools. This official was important, because she presented workshops for tourism teachers countrywide to share information on assessment and examination successes and failures, and explained how failures were addressed by some schools. The second official worked for the National Curriculum Development Centre; he could shed light on the development of the tourism curriculum, and on the 2009 integrated curriculum.

Purposive sampling was used, because this technique focuses on participants who can provide rich information and knowledge about the subject under study (Hao & Lin 2016: 158). Purposive sampling also considers convenience in terms of geographical proximity and availability of time and resources, so that the researcher can reach all the schools and participants s/he had planned to reach (Hao & Lin 2016: 158).

5.2. Instrumentation and ethical considerations

The instrument used to gather data was semi-structured interviews. Permission to conduct the semi-structured interviews was sought telephonically and in advance from the interviewees, tourism teachers at the three high schools, identified as Schools A, B and C, and to the two education officials. The aim of the research was explained to them – which was to identify the challenges tourism teachers experienced during and beyond the pilot stage. Interviews were conducted one-on-one with the tourism teachers and the education officials, at a place and time convenient to them. The researcher took notes of the teachers’ and education officials’ responses to his questions, and analysed the responses later.

5.3. Qualitative research method and justification

The qualitative research method was appropriate for this study, because it enabled teachers to narrate their stories, which could not be measured or quantified with numbers, as quantitative research would require (Dakwa 2015: 209). The qualitative method allows the actual voices of participants to be heard, which represent real-life situations that expose perceptions and attitudes in a social context (Check & Schutt 2012: 188). The qualitative method captures the participants’ lived experiences in complex, multiple realities (Check & Schutt 2012: 189; Hao & Lin 2016: 157).

Qualitative research is compatible with semi-structured interviews as a research technique, because, through intensive and in-depth interviewing, tourism teachers were able to explain their perceptions and attitudes and the challenges they faced during and beyond the pilot stage. Rogers’s (1983) diffusion of innovations theory fits in well with the qualitative research method, because, for the innovations to diffuse and spread, much depends on the attitudes and perceptions of the target community, and not on objective explanations of an innovation (Rogers 1983: 15).

The semi-structured interviews centred round these main questions: What challenges face teachers in implementing integrated tourism curriculum? Do teachers understand the 2009 integrated curriculum well enough to implement it successfully? Responses to these questions were thematically analysed, as outlined in the results and implications, but, as much as possible, voices of the teachers were allowed to come out to express their lived experiences.

6. RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS

Suter (2012: 347) posits that qualitative research uncovers themes, concepts, patterns, designs, insights and

understanding from the data generated by interviews. Premised on this position, thematic analysis of the data gathered during the semi-structured interviews indicated the following integrated tourism teaching challenges: challenges relating to reception and status of tourism, challenges relating to tourism content knowledge, challenges relating to availability of resources and facilities, challenges relating to carrying out tourism practical work, and challenges relating to implementing the 2009 integrated curriculum.

6.1. Challenges relating to reception and status of tourism

In all the high schools where tourism had been introduced, it had been well received. The attitudes of teachers and learners were positive; the main reason was tourism's contribution to economic growth and national development through the creation of job opportunities. Participants believed tourism would offer employment in the tourism industry, and would promote self-employment and self-reliance. Thus, the rationale for introducing tourism had been well articulated at schools (Molise 2016: 1-2). From 2011, when tourism was introduced in Lesotho, learners did not hesitate to select tourism from other practical and vocational electives offered by their high schools. As an innovation, tourism easily passed Rogers's (1983: 15) test of relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability. All the teachers who were interviewed attested that, *Hase thuto e thata* [It is not a difficult subject]. Indeed Sean (2010: 39) asserts that, "there is an assumption that travel and tourism is a generic discipline in which everyday knowledge [from geography, history, economics] can suffice." This assertion corroborates the belief that tourism is not a difficult subject.

Unfortunately, being classified as an easy subject seemed to work against tourism. Two of the three teachers interviewed complained that, "*Ke moo ho dumpeloang bana teng*" [Tourism has become a dumping ground for the slow learners]. When learners experience problems in other subjects, such as mathematics or physics, they are advised to switch to tourism. This attitude, held by some teachers and school administrators, tarnishes the image and status of tourism, even though the rationale for its introduction remains sound and worthy. Dube (2014: 159) refers to this phenomenon as a paradox, where tourism is important for its contribution to the economy and national development, despite being perceived as a soft discipline.

6.2. Challenges relating to tourism content knowledge

All the teachers at Schools A, B and C were uncomfortable with the part of tourism that involved calculations. Unit 2 of the LGSCE Travel and Tourism Syllabus (2017: 12) requires that learners be taught "the relationship between the lines of longitudes and time zones in relation to GMT and Lesotho," and to "calculate time differences for different land masses using the lines of longitude." The concept of foreign exchange, which also requires calculations, has to be taught too, and learners must be shown exactly how Lesotho benefits from foreign exchange rates when tourists arrive and have to change, for instance, dollars or pounds into the local currency.

A female teacher of School B revealed that she had a phobia of mathematics, and said that was why she had not enrolled for a BSc (Bachelor of Science) at university. Asked how she had coped with mathematics as a learner at high school, she said:

Esita le high school ke ne ke sa pasa maths hantle. Joale ha ke tsebe hore na ha o boetse o hlaha ka har'a unit two ke tla etsa joang [Even at high school I had not passed mathematics well. I don't know what to do in Unit two, since mathematics appears again].

School C, a rural school, had the additional problem of not having a reliable electricity supply and internet connection, which are necessary in Unit 3 for learners to practise technological applications – computerised reservation systems and other information technologies (LGSCE 2017: 14-15).

Personal details of the teachers who were interviewed reveal that they did not have qualifications in tourism education, thus, corroborating the literature that tourism teachers had majored in geography, development studies, history, and economics. With a low tourism-knowledge base, teachers cannot explain tourism concepts confidently and provide examples (Kleickmann *et al.* 2013: 91; Ward *et al.* 2015: 130). In addition, without adequate knowledge, teachers cannot integrate tourism theory with practice (Altun 2013: 366). Thus, even though tourism, as an innovation, is not perceived as complex (Rogers 1983: 15), there are parts of it that demand in-depth knowledge and understanding. Teachers do not seem to apply Harden's (2000) 11-step model of curriculum integration, which would constantly remind them of harmonisation, coordination, correlation and networking to share knowledge in the integrated tourism curriculum, and to apply appropriate methods of teaching to make their work easier.

6.3. Challenges relating to availability of resources and facilities

School A had a reliable electricity supply. There was also a classroom with 40 computers, where all the school's learners learned basic computer skills; however, there was no internet connectivity or WiFi. School B had electricity supply through a small generator that provided lights at night, and for limited photocopying functions, but there were no computers for the learners to use. School C had an unreliable electricity supply from a rural

hydro-power station, whose electricity was rationed; that is, electricity was only available at certain times. The station was old, having been built in the 1970s; so, even when electricity was supposed to be available, incessant repairs at the station interrupted supply. It was problematic to teach learners technological applications at all the schools.

What was significant to observe was that, tourism teachers at the three schools in the study shared limited resources and facilities with the subject of geography – maps, globes, compasses, textbooks, classrooms – hence, the perception that tourism was more academic than practical and vocational. Even though school administrations seemed to provide support for tourism education, teachers could not say with certainty how much schools budgeted for the integrated tourism curriculum in the school funds, and how tourism's budget compared to that of other practical subjects. Their responses suggested that the budget for tourism came from the social science department, not from the practical and vocational department, further buttressing the belief that tourism is academic. By and large, resources and facilities have not been significantly increased in Lesotho schools to cater for the implementation of the 2009 integrated curriculum and introduction of tourism in 2011. Much has been written about the importance and usefulness of resources and facilities at schools (Atieno, 2014: 1; Lyimo, Too and Kipng'etich 2017: 104), and how they improve the quality of teaching and learning. Perhaps Rogers (1983) could have included availability of resources as a requirement for the diffusion of innovations.

6.4. Challenges relating to carrying out tourism practical work

It is important to start by differentiating tourism practical work from work-integrated learning (WIL) in the context of this study. Tourism practical work involves a one-day educational excursion to observe how things are done at a workplace (hotels, lodges), and, where possible, to learn by doing a few work-related tasks. Practical work serves as demonstrations of what takes place in the workplace; it is not serious work-experience acquisition, like that accomplished by WIL, in which learners are placed at a workplace over a period of six months or a year to acquire work experience, and which is supervised by the hotel and the school (Nkumane, 2008: 115).

All three schools in the study carried out their practical work in motels, inns and hotels. Schools made appointments with the management of these facilities and asked if 30 Grade 12 learners could visit for practical sessions on a certain date. Schools B and C, 10 km and 42 km away from town respectively, experienced transport problems, because learners had to cover the cost of transport themselves. Practical work took the form of making guests' beds, cleaning rooms, washing dishes, ironing guests' clothes, helping with cooking, and serving meals at lunch. Practical work had to be done at a time when the motels, inns and hotels had many guests, and this, in itself, posed a problem, because peak tourism seasons in Lesotho are in winter, when there is snow on the mountains, and in December, at Christmas and New Year (LTDC, 2015: 13). During these peak times, schools are closed. The teacher of School A, in town, where there were no transport problems, said he solved the problem by requesting the hotel to accept 10 learners per day on three different days, instead of waiting for winter or Christmas and sending 30 learners at once. The three schools carried out practical work twice a year, mostly in March/April (autumn) and September/October (spring).

Teachers at the three schools did not engage learners in other forms of practical work to bridge the gap between theory and practice, other than the visits to hotels, inns and motels. For example, learners could learn to make handicrafts with grass, wood, clay, wool and mohair, which could be sold to generate income, with the help of skilled and talented community members, where possible (Nhlapo, 2018).

6.5. Challenges relating to implementing the 2009 integrated curriculum

The 2009 integrated curriculum is in its second year of piloting, having started in 2017 in Grade 8 at the secondary school level. However, the 2009 integrated curriculum lacks step-by-step guidelines to help schools implement it (Tankiso-Mphunyane 2014: 73). The 2009 integrated curriculum is a huge programme that should have been trimmed and unpacked for easier implementation. Worse still, there has been no formal report indicating how the pilot stage performed in 2017, although research points to a lack of understanding of the integrated curriculum (Tankiso-Mphunyane 2014: viii).

When asked whether the 2009 integrated curriculum was helping them realise the dream of integrated tourism teaching, a teacher at School A said:

Ho fihlela honajoale, ha re kopanye integrated curriculum le tourism. Ho hong le ho hong ho rutoa kamoo ho leng ka teng. Mohlomong nako e tla fihla ea hore re li kopanye [Until now, we don't mix integrated curriculum with tourism. Each is practised on its own. Maybe time will come in the future to mix them].

The teacher from School B said:

Bothata ke hore ho koetlisitsoe litichere tse fokolang sekolong ka seng ho utloisisa integrated curriculum. Kutloisiso ea rona ea fokola, ebile ha e t'soane. Ke likhang feela hore na re sebetsa joang. [The problem is that only a few teachers in a school were trained on integrated curriculum. We have a low understanding of the curriculum, and we are not on the same footing. We are always arguing about

what should take place].

From the two responses above, it is clear that the integrated curriculum is not perceived as operationalising the integration of theory with practice in the subjects offered at schools. Tourism and the integrated curriculum do not reinforce each other, but are treated as separate entities. Even if the integration of theory with practice occurred, it is clear that teachers would not credit a contribution by the integrated curriculum. Much still needs to be done in Lesotho secondary and high schools to instil the understanding that the goal of the 2009 integrated curriculum, as an innovation, is to integrate theory with practice in all subjects.

According to the examiner of social sciences of the Examination Council of Lesotho, teachers experience difficulty asking questions that demand application of concepts. She revealed that most tourism teachers ask learners low-order questions based on knowledge and recall. In most cases, projects or practical work do not form part of assessment, despite the LGCSE Travel and Tourism Syllabus (2017: 26) emphasising that learners should be exposed to practical application of concepts, and, where possible, should participate in individual and group projects. There is a mismatch between what teachers assess and what the syllabus demands.

Finally, the official working at the National Curriculum Development Centre had complained about piloting in 100 schools in 2017, citing lack of capacity and resources for monitoring and follow-up purposes. In 2018 piloting is still being carried out in Grade 8, in the same 100 schools; it has not been extended to Grade 9, due to the same reasons of lack of capacity and follow-up resources. On 2 May 2018 teachers marched to the prime minister's office demanding, among other things, that schools receive resources for the proper implementation of the 2009 integrated curriculum, and that teachers be adequately trained for it. As the tension between MoET and the teachers increased, Sebusi (2018: 9) wrote, "New curriculum stirs confusion". Indeed, challenges faced by tourism teachers in implementing the integrated tourism curriculum are a reality, and need to be addressed.

7. AREA FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In the future, it could be useful to focus on the challenges/experiences of Lesotho secondary and high school teachers during and beyond the piloting of the 2009 integrated curriculum. This knowledge would be important, since the integrated curriculum should operationalise the integration of theory of all subjects into practice.

8. CONCLUSION

This study explored challenges experienced by tourism teachers in Lesotho in their attempts to implement the integrated tourism curriculum. This topic is important, because tourism is a new subject, having been introduced in 2011 (Molise 2016: 1-2). The rationale for introducing tourism was to increase the number of vocational subjects for learners that require learners to be creative and productive, and to become self-employed and self-reliant during and after their studies. As the subject is rolled out to more schools after the pilot stage (2011 – 2016), pitfalls should be avoided by teachers, school administrations and the Ministry of Education and Training. The quality of integrated tourism teaching could improve. However, the fact that, to date, there are no qualified tourism teachers in Lesotho, and teachers who have a thorough understanding of the 2009 integrated curriculum, and how it has to be implemented, means that integrated tourism teaching is not optimal. Therefore, solving the ills of poverty, unemployment and disease through integrating tourism theory with practice, will not be possible for some time.

Using Rogers's (1983) diffusion of innovations theory to guide the study, it is apparent that, even though the 2009 integrated curriculum and the subject of tourism have relative advantages over other programmes, both have different levels of complexity, which is elaborately highlighted by Harden's (2000) 11-step model of curriculum integration. The subject of tourism, as an innovation, easily passes Rogers's (1983) test. Implementing the 2009 integrated curriculum is quite demanding, because it is a far more complex innovation than the subject of tourism. The theoretical underpinnings and practical and vocational strategies of the integrated tourism curriculum should be well understood by teachers, school administrators and education officials, at the implementation level, if creativity, productivity, entrepreneurship, self-employment, and self-reliance, are to be realised.

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