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One of the main challenges faced by teachers teaching social studies in Lesotho primary schools is the unavailability of teaching aids and resources, such as photobanks for historical and cultural places. This scarcity significantly hampers the educational process, as visual aids are crucial for enhancing students' understanding and engagement with the social studies material. Without access to images and other resources that depict important historical and cultural landmarks, primary school teachers struggle to provide a vivid and comprehensive learning experience. This limitation does not only affects the depth of students' knowledge but also their ability to connect with and appreciate their heritage, making the teaching of social studies a particularly demanding task in this context.

For instance, there is no local photobank storing photos of the widely recognised places of interest such as Thaba Bosiu and Kome Caves. Thaba Bosiu, known as the mountain stronghold of King Moshoeshoe I and a symbol of Basotho resistance, and the Kome Caves, famous for their unique structure and appearance, are key cultural and historical sites in Lesotho. Without a centralised repository of images depicting these places, teachers are unable to visually convey their significance and historical context to primary school students. These students learn best by seeing, and this therefore limit their understanding and appreciation of their rich history and cultural heritage.

To mitigate the lack of teaching resources, the government of Lesotho should employ the use of technology and provide other essential resources to help teachers relay content to students more efficiently. By integrating technology into the classroom, teachers can access a broader list of digital tools, including virtual tours apps, online repositories, which can significantly enhance the learning experience. This approach aligns with the connectivism learning theory, which emphasises the importance of networks and connections in the learning process. Connectivism advocates for utilising diverse digital tools and resources to facilitate knowledge acquisition and sharing.

Another significant challenge faced by teachers in Lesotho primary schools is the lack of continuous training on the latest tools and methodologies relevant to social studies education. Continuous professional development is crucial for teachers to stay updated with new educational technologies, teaching strategies, and curriculum changes. Without ongoing training, teachers may struggle to effectively integrate modern tools and resources into their teaching practices, which can hinder the delivery of high-quality education. This gap in professional development means that teachers are often left to rely on outdated methods, limiting their ability to engage students and convey social studies concepts effectively.

For example, without trainings workshops aimed to equip primary school teachers, teachers may no be proficient in using digital tools such as interactive maps that can bring social studies topics to life. In the scenario where a teacher is attempting to explain the layout of Lesotho rivers without knowledge on how to drive interactive maps can be quite challenging. This scenario strengthens the importance of continuous professional development for teachers as it equips them with necessary skills to utilise modern tools effectively.

To address this challenge requires a joined effort from the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Education and Training to provide regular training workshops, and access to educational resources that empower teachers with the skills and knowledge needed to enhance their teaching practices continuously.

A third challenge faced by teachers in Lesotho primary schools is the poor attitude of students towards social studies, often fueled by their daily living conditions and experiences. Many students view social studies as irrelevant or uninteresting, largely because they struggle to see its connection to their everyday lives. In villages where immediate survival and economic concerns dominate, subjects that do not appear to offer direct, tangible benefits can be undervalued. This disinterest is worsen when students do not have access to engaging educational resources or when the curriculum fails to relate historical and cultural content to their current realities. Consequently, students may not appreciate the importance of understanding their heritage, governance, and societal structures, making it challenging for teachers to foster enthusiasm and engagement in social studies classes.

For example, students might prioritise learning practical subjects such as Agriculture that can help them to support their families economically over social studies, which they perceive as less directly beneficial. A student living at MASOWE who spends hours after school helping his/her parent to balance business books may find it difficult to see the relevance of learning about historical events of social studies.

To mitigate this issue requires the Ministry of Education to develop the curriculum that is more relevant to students' lives and designing teaching policies that force primary school teachers to employ teaching methods that connect social studies content to their immediate context and possible future desires. In addition to a revised curriculum, primary school teachers could organise field trips to nearby historical sites within Lesotho to make social studies more tangible and relevant.

Another notable challenge is the time constraint resulting from the reduction of primary school years from seven to six. This change has compelled teachers to allocate a smaller number of time in minutes to each subject, and social studies is no exception. With a compressed curriculum, teachers are often forced to prioritise subjects deemed more critical for immediate academic progression, such as Mathematics and English language, leaving less time for social studies. This limited time allocation means that social studies lessons must be rushed, often at the expense of depth and engagement.

For example, with the reduced years of study, a primary school teacher might only have 40 minutes per week to cover social studies topics, compared to 60 minutes previously. This reduction forces the teacher to trim lessons on significant topics, such as the journey from Menkhoaneng to Thaba Bosiu or the importance of the Basotho attire, into brief overviews rather than comprehensive, engaging lessons.

To address this challenge requires the Ministry of Education to conduct a reassessment of the curriculum structure and time management strategies to ensure that social studies receives adequate attention and that students can fully benefit from its educational value.

In conclusion, based on my experience as a primary teacher, it is apparent that challenges face in teaching social studies in primary schools are significant. Lack of teaching resources, the lack of continuous teacher training, students' poor attitudes towards the subject, and time constraints due to a shortened academic schedule all contribute to a challenging teaching environment. Through my observations, it is clear that there is an imbalance between the challenges and the benefits of teaching social studies in primary schools, with the challenges often outweighing the benefits. This imbalance highlights the urgent need for targeted interventions and resource allocations to enhance the quality and effectiveness of social studies education, ensuring that students can fully appreciate and understand the subject.