

# Basic education in lesotho



Basic Education according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), comprises of primary education and lower secondary education, whilst in Lesotho is regarded as continuous from the first seven years of primary school education level to the three years of secondary school education level. Lesotho like all the developing countries also includes pre-primary education and or adult literacy programmes - (Education Sector Strategic Plan 2005-2015: 40). Philosophy can be defined from different perspectives depending on the given situation.

Philosophy has a conventional definition, which is the study of wisdom, nature and its existence. According to Ntimo-Makara (1996), Philosophy ' is also an academic discipline, it has its own concepts, theories and pool of knowledge and it is also applicable to the study of other disciplines like education law, religion and politics among others'. As a result, it is appropriate to have philosophy of Basic education of Lesotho. Basically philosophy forms the model or the basis of the Basic Education policy and practice in Lesotho.

The latter shall be examined starting From the perspective of the traditional Sesotho education, missionary schools, colonial influences and education of Lesotho since, independence eras. In the past, Basotho learned by living and doing.

Thus, youths were taught skills, given knowledge, which they were to apply during their life span in an informal forms or ways. For instance boys and men work skills included land cultivation, heading of cattle and special

trades such as metal work, whilst girls and women skills included house cleaning and plastering, collecting wild vegetables and baby care.

The idea of the traditional education of Basotho was to transmit knowledge and skills from one generation to another, for future production of a citizen who would be useful in his or her community. The young ones were moulded to become easily intergrated in to the society which they lived in and so to become productive and loyal to their country- (Moeletsi et al 2002: 26- 28). These were maintained through teaching and learning as parents in the family were teachers and elders were teachers outside the family sector such as the initiation schools.

According to Moeletsi et al (2002), “ the youth were expected to demonstrate their mastery of the skills and knowledge essentials to the physical cultural needs of the community’.

During the missionary era, teachers were to be evangelists first and pedagogues secondly. Thus, due to the fact that the missionaries were the ones who introduced formal education in Lesotho, basic education was influenced by the need of the missionaries for communication, Bible reading and acquisition of literacy.

The European cultural values and behaviour were also emphasized-(Moeletsi et al 2002: 27). The British government later colonized Lesotho and it continued with formal education support through grants.

During the colonial period education and training for Basotho were largely directed towards the limited opportunities for employment in the

government sector and in the churches as teachers. Thus, more people sent their children to school for acquirement of skills and knowledge in order to get white collar jobs.