INVESTIGATING GEOGRAPHY TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES AND ASSESSMENT PRACTICES ON FIELDWORK IN LESOTHO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Presentation outline

- Introduction
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- Research questions
- Significance of the study
- Literature review
- Theoretical Framework
- Methodology
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- Conclusions and recommendations

Introduction

Geography fieldwork:

- engages learners with the physical environment, to attain competencies that foster commitment to the earth's sustainability (de la Vega 2022).

- develops skills that enable learners to address socio-economic and environmental challenges (Wilson et al., 2016)

- Fieldwork experiences are integral in geography as real-world manifestations of geographic processes are observed and analysed (Lambert & Reiss 2014)

Purpose of the study

Problem statement	Underperformance of LGCSE candidates in Geography fieldwork-based questions, and there is limited literature on teachers' experiences and assessments practices of fieldwork in the Lesotho context.
Purpose	To explore Geography secondary school teachers' experiences and assessment practices in Geography fieldwork.

Research questions

Main research question

What are the Geography teachers' experiences and assessment practices in fieldwork?

Research questions

1. What are the Geography teachers' experiences in assisting learners carry out Geography fieldwork?

2. How do teacher's assess Geography fieldwork?

3. What are the teachers' challenges in assessing Geography fieldwork?

Significance of the study

Inform:

- Education policy makers
- Teacher training institutions
- Teachers

Literature review

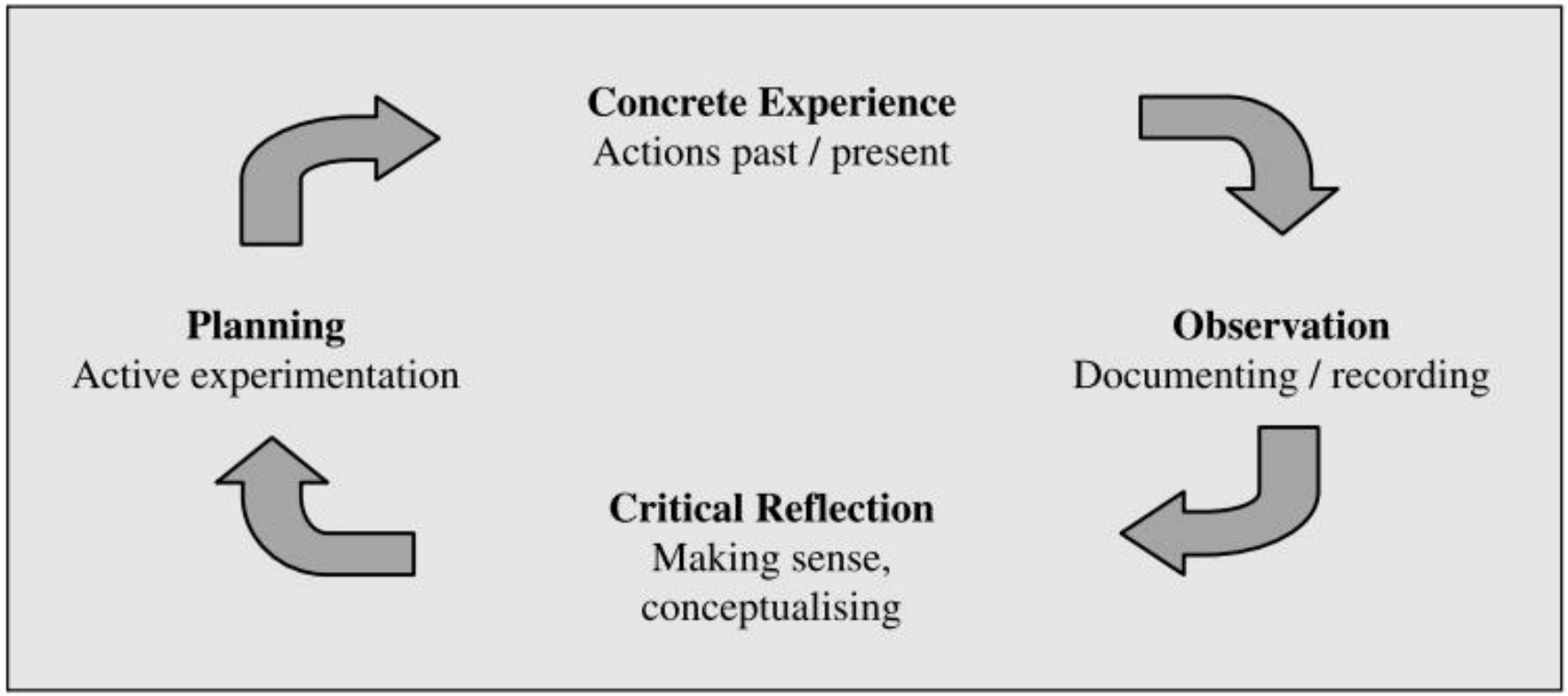
- Fieldwork allows observation of geographical phenomena on its own environment (Balci & Tuna 2014).

- Assessment practices promote transferable skills in learners (Wilson et al., 2016).
  - Assessment in Geography should not be left behind, in inculcating and promoting the 21st century skills.

- Fieldwork assessment - takes place in stages; use of tools in the field, project report and post field portfolios or articles (Munandar et.al., 2020)

Theoretical Framework

Kolbs' Experiential Learning Cycle (Dummer et al., 2008)



Methodology

Approach & design	QUANT+ qual concurrent mixed method (Fetters et al.,2013, Koskey & Stewart 2014, Han 2019)
Population	Geography teachers from 3 regions (North, Central and South) of Lesotho.
Sample	54 teachers (27 secondary schools; 9 North, 9 Central, & 9 South region).
Sampling	Purposive sampling was used to select the 54 teachers.
Instruments	Semi-structured online questionnaire and document analysis Response rate: 49 (91%)
Data analysis	descriptive statistics of quantitative and thematic analysis of qualitative data

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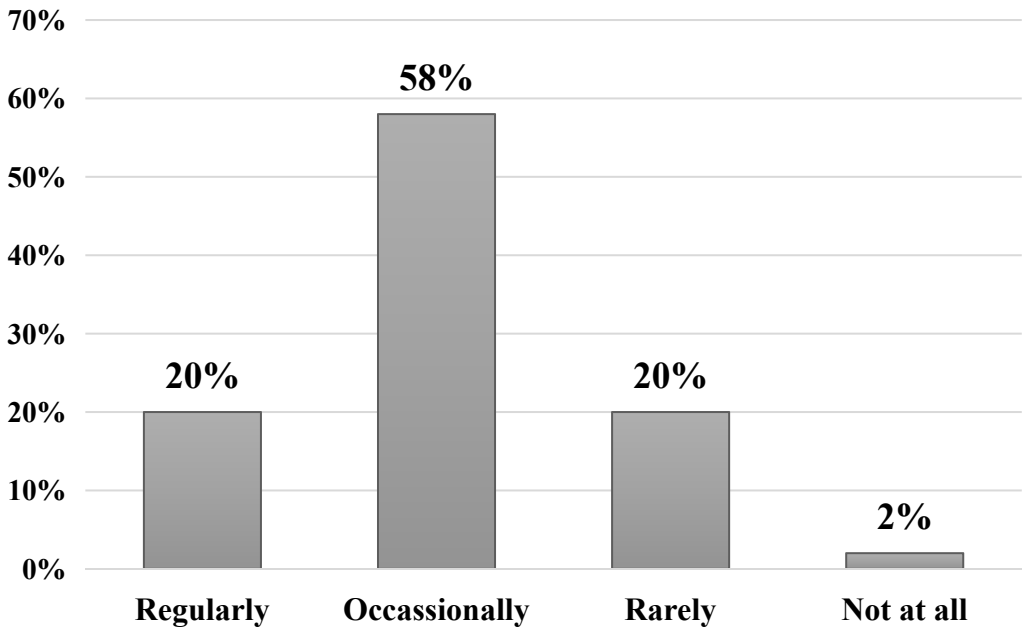
Findings and discussions

- Qualitative and qualitative data from the questionnaire and the documents (LGCSE candidates' scripts) are presented simultaneously.
- Data is presented according to the themes generated from the qualitative data.
- Themes are categorised according to the study research questions as illustrated in Table 4.2.

Categories	Themes
Teachers' fieldwork experiences	factors dictating teachers' fieldwork experiences
	factors influencing types of fieldwork activities teachers engage learners
Teachers' fieldwork assessment practices	assessment strategies and methods teachers use in fieldwork
	contradicting data on fieldwork skills teachers engage learners
Teachers' challenges on fieldwork	no fieldwork guidelines and marking descriptors
	limited skills in developing inquiry-based questions
	difficulty of assessing individual learners

Findings and discussions

Factors dictating fieldwork frequency



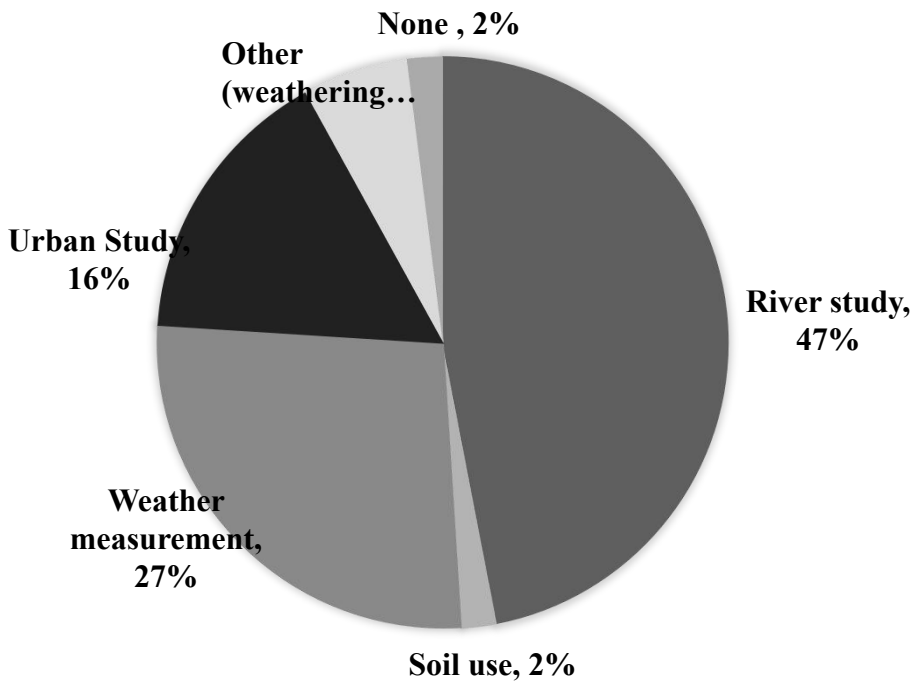
T03: *Time constraint! due to limited number of gadgets learner's struggle to complete the given task.*

T37: *Unpredictable weather conditions, lack of proper tools or equipment such as phones or cameras, financial constraints and limited time are our problems.*

Aligns with - Oost et al., (2011), Lambert & Reiss (2014), Mohammed (2016), Wilson et al., (2017), Tenha (2019)

Findings and discussions cont…

Factors influencing types of fieldwork activities teachers engage learners



T08: *lack of instruments like a clinometer to measure gradient of the slope of a river and flow meter to measure velocity of water.*

T21: *Fieldwork places are sometimes far away and learners are expected to be back at school and attend the other lessons.*

Aligns with - Wilson et al., (2017), Tenha (2019)

Findings and discussions cont…

Assessment strategies and methods teachers use on fieldwork

Assessment during fieldwork
Usage of fieldwork gadgets/instruments
Implementation of guide on fieldwork activities
Participation in teamwork
Oral questions
Assessment in the classroom
Scenarios
Presentations
Report writing
Oral questions, quizzes, tests

T06: *I evaluate their ability to use equipment correctly and organisation of their field notes.*

T34: *I observe their correct use of equipment and participation in teamwork tasks.*

T01: *I give them a scenario on the topic researched and a quiz*

T35: *I make them present their findings and assess their project reports*

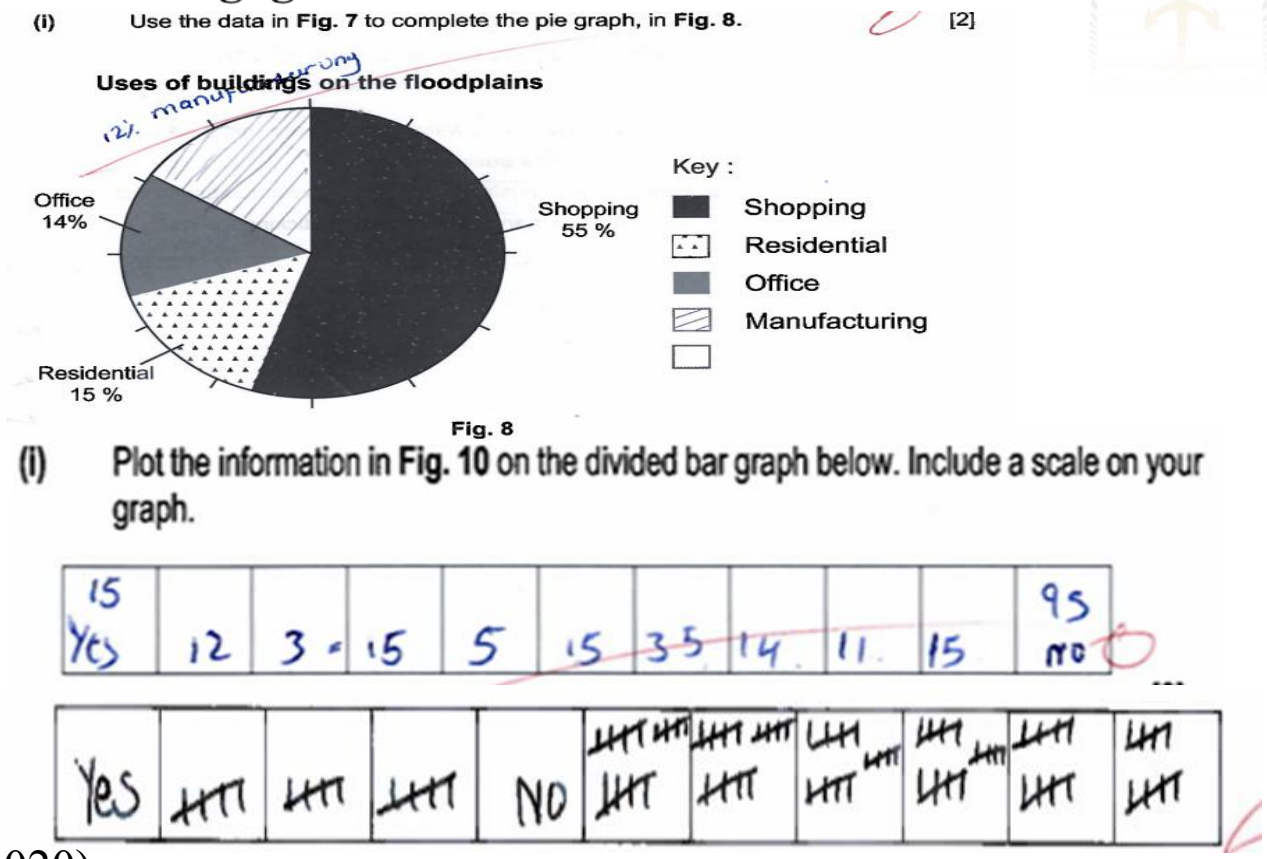
Aligns with - Kent et al., (2007), Dummer et al. (2008), Munandar et al., (2020), de la Vega (2022)

Findings and discussions cont…

Contradictory data on fieldwork skills teachers engage learners

Data collection skills	
Survey & interviews	16%
Measurement	18%
Using weather instruments	16%
Observation and sketching	47%
Fieldwork recording methods skills	
Field notes	45%
Sketches	18%
Photographs and videos	35%
Data presentation techniques skills	
Graphs	43%
Tables	41%
Statistics	6%
Pictograms and paragraphs	10%

Contrary to - Mohammed (2016) Wilson et al., (2017), Kim (2020)



Findings and discussions cont…

Teachers challenges in fieldwork assessment

- Lack of fieldwork guidelines and marking descriptors

T22: *No standard lay-out or template to use for fairness in assessing.*

- Limited skills in developing inquiry-based questions

T24: *Limited time and knowledge on structuring fieldwork assessments.*

- Difficulty in assessing individuals

T08: *Learners copy from others and present the same information so it becomes difficult to see the true picture of their work.*

Aligns with - Dummer et al., 2008, Munandar et.al 2020 Kim, M. 2020

Limitations and research implications

- Although the findings of the study provided insight in Geography fieldwork, the study focused on Geography teachers in 27 schools in Lesotho.

  - Teachers' experiences and assessment practices in other schools may vary.

- Future studies may include other teachers and carry out fieldwork observation for more in depth data.

Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusions:

- limited fieldwork excursions due to time constraints and lack of tools hinders acquisition and application of geographical skills.
- learners responses to inquiry based questions shows limited exposure to data presentation techniques

Recommendations:

- capacitation of teachers in intensive planning of fieldwork and identification of competencies targeted in the excursion
- support teachers on skill-based assessment practices

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The end.

Thank you!

Kea leboha!!