Strategies for Improving the Academic Performance of Students in Botswana Primary Schools

Ms Moletlanyi Maimela[1] & Professor Pedzani Perci Monyatsi[1*]

[1] Rasetimela School, Bobonong, Botswana

[2] University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana

[*] Professor Pedzani Perci Monyatsi, E-mail: monyatsip@mopipi.ub.bw

Abstract

Background: The Government of Botswana has since attaining independence from Britain in 1966 demonstrated a lot of interest in the improvement of primary education by adopting two policies; the Education for kagisano of 1977 and the Revised National Policy on Education of 1994 to guide the development of education in the country. Other efforts include partnering with organizations from countries such as the USA and Britain and others to help improve the quality of the primary education. The other major aim for these was to improve the performance of students in the final examinations.

Purpose/Aims: The purpose of the study was to establish strategies that can be used to influence student's performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations.

Methodology: A mixed-method design allowed the researcher to triangulate data from the professional literature and a questionnaire comprised of closed and open-ended questions. Out of the two hundred questionnaires distributed, one hundred and twenty seven questionnaires were returned; while only one hundred questionnaires were properly completed and therefore used in the study. Respondents were also interviewed.

Data Analysis: For the closed ended section of the questionnaire, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used. Data from the interviews and open-ended section of the questionnaire was coded, and then emerging patterns and themes were identified and described in order to understand the meanings of these categories from the perspectives of the respondents, with verbatim texts included. The findings of the study show that there are various strategies that can be used to help improve the performance of students in PSLE. Some of the strategies include parental involvement, infrastructure provision and human resources.

Keywords

Botswana, infrastructure, parental involvement, academic achievement

1. Introduction

It has been established that the Government of Botswana has since independence from Britain in 1966 invested a lot of resources in the improvement of primary education through the adoption of two policies; the Education for *kagisano* of 1977 and the Revised National Policy on Education of 1994 to guide the development of education in the country. The first National Education Policy adopted in 1977 was based on the four national principles of democracy, development, self-reliance and unity. It emphasized quantitative developments in education rather than qualitative.

The Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE), which was adopted (Republic of Botswana, 1994), emphasized the need to improve access to education at the primary level, as well as ensuring that children received quality education which is relevant to them and their communities. In other words, it emphasized qualitative aspects of education rather than quantitative ones. One of the goals in primary education is to develop basic skills of literacy, numeracy and life skills among learners. Some of the strategies described in the policy and which aimed at improving the performance of students included: parental involvement; English Language as the medium of instruction; Introduction of school libraries; Recruitment of qualified teachers; Teacher-learner ratio; and Adequate Infrastructure like classrooms. Monyatsi and Maimela (In Press) have made reference to the Revised National Policy on Education of 1994 that in order to improve access in education and ensure that children receive quality education primary school teacher's qualifications be raised to diploma level. Prior to that, Monyatsi (2013) has described a very pathetic situation with regards the calibre of primary school teachers in Botswana. Historically, training of primary school teachers was primarily the responsibility of the Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs). Over the years, the TTCs have awarded four different kinds of teaching certificates; the Elementary Teachers Certificate (ETC), Primary Lower (PL), Primary Higher (PH), and Primary Teacher Certificate (PTC) (Republic of Botswana, 2000). Teacher education or teacher training as it was called then in Bechuanaland was offered at different institutions both locally and externally. By 1950, the training of teachers for Primary Lower Certificate whose duration was three years after the Primary School Leaving Certificate (Standard 1V) were being trained at Kanye (Bechuanal & Protectorate, 1950). For the secondary school level, teachers were being trained at Fort Hare and the University of the Witwatersrand. By 1966, the Kanye Government Teachers' Training College was moved to Lobatsi and another one was built at Serowe and they offered both Primary Lower and Primary Higher Certificates (Republic of Botswana, 1966). The New Government's immediate plan for developing its teacher training service involved the expansion of full-time training and the institution of an inservice training scheme for the untrained teachers. A new teachers' training college was opened at Francistown which also concentrated in in-service courses for the untrained teachers, and "…the scheme envisaged was a one-month residential course of intensive instruction and continuous in-service training with private study and written exercises conducted by correspondence under professional supervision" (Republic of Botswana, 1966). It was also envisaged that in future there would be vacation courses for practising qualified teachers in order to keep them up to date in

their approach to education and in their use of new aids and techniques; an innovation approapriate for the Botswana environment where teachers work in remote and isolated areas. For secondary school teachers, there were no facilities locally and students were either sent to the University of Botswana, Leasotho and Swaziland or overseas for training and it proved very expensive to a country that was among the poorest in the world.

The Revised National Policy on Education also recommended that a package of incentives be created for teachers so that their morale and motivation is raised. It is stated in the Republic of Botswana (1994, p. 11) that "Government intends to embark on a number of measures aimed at raising the status and morale of teachers so that they can perform their tasks more effectively. Such measures will include both improved pre-service and in-service training, a package of incentives and improvements in the conditions of service". Furthermore, the RNPE of 1994 stated that "The quality of instruction is one of the most important determinants of the level of learning achievement. Teachers as agents of curriculum implementation are therefore central to the education system and can make or break the system. The enhancement of the status and motivation of teachers to enable them to discharge this role effectively cannot be over-emphasized" (Republic of Botswana, 1994, p. 11).

The Government of Botswana had long realized the importance of the quality of teachers in determining the quality of education for students as stated in National Development 3: a major factor determining the quality of primary school education is the ability and training of teachers. This is in turn mainly determined by the amount and quality of formal education and professional training the teachers have received. The level of training received by the category of trained teachers is often very rudimentary and is based on minimal formal education (Republic of Botswana, 1970, p. 97).

It should be noted that that the upgrading of the entry requirements were not adequate to ensure the improvement in academic achievement i Primary Leaving Examinations as pointed out by Rathedi (1993, p. 95):

There is general consensus within teacher education that a JC academic background is inadequate to cope with the modern curriculum demands and that a two-year training period is too short to allow students to acquire the necessary knowledge base and develop skills that today's primary school teachers require.

Monyatsi (2012) clearly captured the importance of a teacher's quality to the improvement of the academic achievements of pupils. However he is not alone as to the Government of Botswana and the general populace, quality in teacher education was seen to be dependent on how far the teacher went through the formal education system; hence the first Commission on Education lamented that: few of the students at junior Certificate or Cambridge levels put teaching high on their list, and first or second class holders, in particular, opt for other courses or jobs. As a result, teacher training courses attract only those entrants with low examination grades who could not gain admission to the programme they prefer (Republic of Botswana, 1977, pp. 127-128).

This view is summarized clearly in the National Development Plan 4: the quality of the teacher is

159

undoubtedly the biggest single factor in determining whether a child benefits from school. The relationship between teacher quality and school performance is clearly demonstrated by the study carried out by IDM. Consequently the Government attaches the highest priority to increasing the supply of trained teachers in Botswana schools (Republic of Botswana, 1976, pp. 111-112).

Khan (1997 p. 237) supports this by vehemently arguing that one of the main concerns of the first Commission on Education of 1977 was the teachers' low level of qualifications. Government had long realized the importance of the quality of teachers in determining the quality of education for students as stated in National Development 3 that a major factor determining the quality of primary school education is the ability and training of teachers. This is in turn mainly determined by the amount and quality of formal education and professional training the teachers have received. The level of training received by the category of trained teachers is often very rudimentary and is based on minimal formal education (Republic of Botswana, 1970).

Parental involvement is one of the strategies that was recommended by the two policies. The first National Policy on Education of 1977 Republic of Botswana (1977) recognised the need for parental involvement by stating that "... Education of the young is a joint responsibility of the school, community and parents ... As children grow parents may assist with school readiness by sending them to nursery schools when circumstances permit (p. 56)". It further recommended that, parents should take a general interest in their children's education, visit the school, and hold frequent discussions with teachers as their encouragement can contribute to progress in schools (Republic of Botswana, 1977).

The Revised National Policy on Education of 1994 recommended that as much as possible the communities should participate in the development and management of education through consultations with Boards of Governors, Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and other relevant bodies in the community (Republic of Botswana, 1994). Parent Teachers Associations were viewed as providing an effective forum for schools to keep in contact with the communities they served and also to ensure parents took interest and contributed to the education of their children (Republic of Botswana, 1994).

English as a language plays a vital role in the development of learners in Botswana education system as it is an official language which is used for official business transactions, examinations and at the workplace. Republic of Botswana (1977) states that: "the commission recommends that: english should be taught as a subject from standard 1, with the aim of preparing children for the transition to English as a medium of instruction at standard 5" (p. 77). The Revised National Policy on Education of 1994 called for change by also recommending that English should be used as a medium of instruction from standard one by the year 2000. Furthermore, it recommended that an accelerated programme of in-service training should be undertaken to improve the teaching of English as a subject from standard one with emphasis on oral communication (Republic of Botswana, 1994).

Some remarkable progress was made as per the Revised National Policy on Education of 1994 realized that the Government of Botswana had over the years struggled to provide adequate materials such as

textbooks. The policy recommended that all pupils should have a textbook for each core subject and variation on distribution of resources between schools and regions (Monyaku & Mmereki, 2012). To ensure the quality of inputs at primary school level in Botswana, the Revised National Policy on Education of 1994 stipulated that the Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation (DCDE) should form a Textbook Evaluation Committee (TEC). The TEC should comprise teachers' representatives, education officers and representatives of teachers' trade unions. Before any teaching-learning materials and textbooks could be used in schools in Botswana, they have to be evaluated and approved by this committee (Monyaku & Mmereki, 2012).

The two commissions had also highlighted the importance of libraries in improving the academic performance in schools. The report of the first commission, Education for Kagisano (Republic of Botswana, 1977) recommended that school librarianship courses be offered at the University of Botswana so that those teachers helping in libraries could improve their skills and knowledge. Schools were also encouraged to give a lighter teaching load to those teacher librarians. The Botswana Library Association submitted a strong petition to the commissioners of the second commission which resulted in Recommendation 14 which lists a library and resource centre among the facilities that should be standard for every primary school in Botswana (Republic of Botswana, 1994).

Another area that could lead to the improvement of the academic performance of students at primary schools is the provision of adequate infrastructure and facilities. It is a well known fact that a well constructed and furnished building makes life much easier for those working in the schools. The first policy on education of 1977 recommended that adequate furniture be provided for all existing classrooms by the beginning of 1979 and the provision of furniture should automatically accompany the construction of all new classrooms (Republic of Botswana, 1977).

2. Methodology

In investigating the stagies that could be urtilized to improve the academic performance in primary school leaving examination in this study, a mixed research approach was used. Cresswell and Clack (2011) defined it as an approach in which both quantitative and qualitative approaches are used as they provide strengths that balance the waekness of both. Futhermore, they are of the view that quantitative research makes it difficult for the researcher to understand the setting in which people talk and the voices of participants are not directly heard. Therefore qualitative research makes up for these weaknesses. Mixed methods research provided more evidence for studying a research problem than either qualitative or quantitative research alone (Cresswell & Clack, 2011). The researcher decided to use mixed approach because it provided an opportunity for gathering detailed information as it used multiple tools for data collection. Using a questionnaire with both closed and open ended questions made the research more comprehensive (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). Fifteen respondents were interviewed as well.

161

2.1 The Participants

The study population consisted of teachers and school management teams in Botswana. The researchers chose teachers because they are the key drivers of pupil's academic performance; therefore they are in a better position to judge the causes of pass or failure. School Management Teams also play a vital role of supporting implementation of development programs hence the need to include them in the target group. They are the accounting authorities in schools. School heads as instructional leaders play a vital role in directing program development and implementation (Republic of Botswana, 1994).

2.2 Sample and Sampling Procedures

A sample answers the question, who are the respondents in the study? A sample comprises of the individuals, items or events selected from a larger group referred to as a population (Gay, 2000). Similarly, Best and Kahn (2006) defined a sample as a small portion of the population that is selected for observation and analysis. The implication here was that a small portion of the population can be selected for observation and analysis, to represent the whole population. A sample is vital because it is cost effective in terms of time and money and it is the only option if accessing the population is impossible (Black, 1998).

Ten Bobirwa Inspectoral Area primary schools in the Central District of Botswana which were purposively selected were used. The sample consisted of teachers, school heads, deputies and a PTA representative from each school. The total number of respondents was two hundred which the researchers felt was cost effective for the study.

2.3 Data Collection and Instrument

Data was collected using a questionnaire with both closed and open-ended questions and and interview schedule. The instruments were piloted in schools in the Gaborone Inspectoral Area to check whether the respondents understood what was required. Feedback from the piloting exercise was incorporated into the final instruments.

The questionnaires were distributed personally to the participants. These questionnaires needed to be clearly monitored in order to achieve maximum participation. A total of twenty people were interviewed, five parents, five school heads, five deputies and five teachers. The interviews were done by the researchers.

2.4 Data Analysis

According to Obasi (2008) data processing and analysis is where a researcher represents the data collected with appropriate analytic tools already specified and adopted under methodology. In analyzing data, the researcher used various techniques such as frequency tables, pie charts and bar charts. At the end of each technique, explanations were given for reference to interpret the exact representation of the facts on tabular format. Data was presented in percentages according to responses from respondents. This was done by grouping all opinions from respondents.

2.5 Ethical Issues

The researchers were equipped with request letters from the University of Botswana, which was used to introduce the researcher to the participants and show validity of the research. Each participant was assured all data collected was to be treated as confidential and used only for the purpose it was collected for. Particpants were not required to write their names anywhere on the questionnaire. They were also informed that participation was voluntary and they were free to terminate their participation at any stage of the study. The instruction on how to answer were clearly stated on the front page of the questionnaire for simplicity.

3. Results

The findings of this study are presented according to the main research question. First of all the rate of return and the reasons are presented. Then the concept of academic performance is defined followed by the strategies that were identified by the respondents. Discussions of the findings are also presented.

3.1 Return Rate

Of the two hundred questionnaires distributed, one hundred and twenty seven questionnaires were returned. However, only one hundred questionnaires were utilized as they were properly completed and contained meaningful data. This represents fifty percent of the expected questionnaires. The remaining twenty seven questionnaires were considered unusable as they were not filled properly as some were not complete. One of the reasons for the low return rate was because data was collected during the second term when most of the teachers were busy with sporting activities and mid-year examinations. Furthermore teachers have developed negative attitudes towards cooperating with University of Botswana researchers as they claim it does not add value.

3.2 The Concept of Academic Performance

Ayo (2000) defines students' academic performance as outcome of students' assessments through comprehensive, systematic, cumulative, diagnostic, formative and summative evaluation of what they have gone through in a school setting. Ogunsaju (2004) defined students' academic performance as desirable changes or outcomes in students' performance after a period of teaching and learning activities as related to educational objectives which provide information to students, teachers, school administrators and parents on the level at which educational objectives have been achieved. Umoh (2004) defines student' academic performance as the final grade which students get after a systematic and comprehensive measurement and evaluation of the individual student in a school setting for the purpose of making decision or judgment on his/her cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

Academic performance has been defined in the literature as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as co-curricular activities. It also includes excellence in sporting behaviour, confidence, communication skills, punctuality, arts, culture and the like which can be achieved only when an individual is well adjuste (Ganai & Mir, 2013). In order to adequately answer the first research question, the researchers felt that there was a need to establish whether both parties understood the concept of

163

academic performance the same way. Research question one sought to establish the concept of academic performance under the following headings: academic performance as the outcome of education; as measured by examinations; and as an indicator of the standard of education.

3.2.1 Academic Performance as the Outcome of Education

This section presents and discusses the respondents' understanding of academic performance as the outcome of education.

Table 1. The Outcome of Education

Item	Agree	Percent
Academic performance as the outcome of education.	99	99%

Table 1 shows that ninety nine of the respondents understood academic performance as the outcome of education. From the interviews, one teacher respondent defined academic performance as:

Academic performance refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers. Academic performance is the ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate. The meaning of academic performance in students is how well a student is doing in class. Sometimes it could mean how well they are doing and close they are coming to achieving there goals. A head teacher interviewed posited that: it is a measure of knowledge gained in formal education usually indicated by test scores, grade, grade points, average and degrees. Here, the achievement level of the student is judged by the marks that the students have scored in the quarterly examinations. ... The way in which a learner, teacher or an institution have achieved their educational goals. It is usually measured by the way the teachers and the learners in a school perform and progress to the next level. It is reflected in the transition rates from a lower grade to a higher one. A school that is able to have more students progressing is judged to be performing well academically and in most cases parents prefer to send their children there.

From the open ended section of the questionnaire, another teacher respondent believes that academic performance is:

The ability of the learner to study hard and remember, and being able to communicate ones' knowledge orally or in written form. It also manifests itself in the results achieved based on intellectual ability of the learner. Mostly it is judged by the learner's pass mark.

A senior teacher interviewed concurs that academic performance means: ... the overall display of what the learner has learnt and captured. It is the rate at which the learner's progress in their learning field such as the results they obtain after sitting for a test or an exam, thus the level of education that can be attained and improved.

Literature shows that measuring academic performance can occur at multiple levels and serve multiple purposes; for instance teachers in the classrooms conduct formative and summative tests to evaluate student mastery of course content and provide grades for students and parents. It is clear that several

factors are used to compute the final grade in a particular course; and they include such items as scores in oral or written examinations, quizzes, practical and written projects, papers, reports, laboratory practica, skill demonstration, clinical performance and class attendance/participation. The teacher then selects the grading components for a given course according to the nature of that course. Ganai and Mir (2013, p. 5) posit that: academic achievement may be defined as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as co-curricular activities. It includes excellence in sporting behaviour, confidence, communication skills, punctuality, arts, culture and the like which can be achieved only when an individual is well adjusted.

This is in line with what Trow (1956) cited in Ganai and Mir (2013, p. 5) defined academic achievement as "knowledge attaining ability or degree of competence in school tasks usually measured by standardized tests and expressed in a grade or units based on pupils' performance". Good (1959) also cited in Ganai and Mir (2013, p. 5) referred to academic achievement as, "The knowledge obtained or skills developed in the school subjects usually designed by test scores or marks assigned by the teacher". According to Ebenuwa-Okoh (2010, p. 99) academic performance is: … defined or regarded as participants' examination grades (Grade point average) at the end of a particular semester or programme. It could also be seen as the level of performance in a particular field of study.

These sentiments are shared by Uwezo (2010) who declares that it is always good to track academic performance because it satisfies a number of purposes like areas of accomplishment and failure in a learner's academic work which needs to be evaluated in order to foster improvement and make full use of the learning process.

3.2.2 Academic Performance as Measured by Examinations

Tan (2013, p. 121) explained that "in educational institutions, success is measured by academic performance, or how well a student meets standards set out by local government and the institution itself". This section presents and discusses the respondents' understanding of academic performance as measured by examination and continuous assessment.

Table 2. Measures of Academic Performance

	Agree	Disagree	Total
Examination and continuous assessment as measures of academic performance	100 (100%)	0 (0%)	100 (100%)

Table 2 shows that 100% of the respondents understood academic performance as measured by examinations and continuous assessment. In this study, academic performance was understood to mean, grades obtained in tests, in course work and in examination. A deputy head teacher interviewed clarified that:

Examinations have been found to be the most adequate way to measure students' academic performance. One reason why they are thought to be adequate is because when students know that they are going to write an examination they prepare hard for that and try to do better. They make enough

165

time and do extensive research. Therefore examinations can be regarded as adequate as a measure of students' academic performance.

A teacher respondent in the open ended section of the questionnaire explained that:

The overall achievements/results of the whole school based on the theoretical education that makes up the syllabus. It is based on examinations, tests, class exercises and quizzes. Academic performance is measured by grades, standardized tests, teacher rating scales (emphasizing academic behaviors and attitudes), and an overall measure of all components of academic achievement combined. It is influenced by the nature of the school and how it is managed; that is the leadership styles applied by those in management. It is also influenced by teachers, parents and learners' behaviour.

Another head teacher interviewed described it thus:

It is how a centre of learning performs or achieves based on subject categories available. School performance can either be good or poor with regards academics. It is measured by pass rates at different grades or levels and periods. Schools have monthly tests and term examinations which are meant to assess the progress of students in their learning. There are also assessments such as quizzes and class-work which assess the progress of students on a daily basis per subject. All these reflect the academic performance of the school However the most used type of assessment of academic performance is the terminal examination which comes at the end of level, for example primary education.

Yet another senior teacher expressed almost similar sentiments that:

It is the observable and measurable behaviour of a student in a particular situation such as the academic performance of a student in any subject and includes observable and measurable behaviour of a student at any point in time during a course. Academic performance consists of the scores at any particular time obtained from a teacher-made test. Therefore, we can equate academic performance with the observed behaviour or expectation of achieving a specific statement of or statement of educational intention in a research. Academic performance of students consists of scores obtained from teacher-made test, first term examination, mid-term test.

Academic performance in schools is done after teaching and learning has taken place then the teacher evaluates whether learners have acquired what they learnt in a number of ways. For regular grading, students demonstrate their knowledge by taking written and oral tests, carrying out presentations, doing homework and participating in class activities and discussions. Teachers evaluate in the form of letter or number grades and remarks, to describe how well a student has done.

The above sentiments are also emphasized in the literature by Siddiek (2012, p. 144) when he declares that:

By means of examinations, we can be sure about the quality of teaching done in the classroom by teachers. We can also be sure about the quality of the learning output judged by students' performance in their achievement examinations. Examinations are tools of measurement of the degree of the attainment of the national educational, social, political and religious objectives (agendas) of the nation

166

or the government. Ministries/Departments of education are the arms which the government let free to supervise the educational objectives of the country and make them attainable.

Siddiek (2012, p. 136) further pointed out that:

National examinations are a means by which learners' academic achievements can be judged, through national competitions of standardized examinations. The examination is an effective tool for the assessment of educational objectives; as from the results achieved by students in these examinations, we can measure: the degree of their performance, to see the points of strength to reinforce them or to spot weaknesses to cure them. These tests can also tell us about the effectiveness of the teaching force in their practice in classrooms, as well as telling us about the success of the teaching units (curriculum). Although examinations should be a fair and just criterion to provide equal opportunities to all candidates, it should also be the means with which to measure the students' performances as well as to assess the teaching methods (Siddiek, 2012). Adeyemi (2005) sees academic achievement as a scholastic standing of a student at a given moment. That is, the ability of an individual to demonstrate his or her intellectual abilities. The RNPE of 1994 recommended that "… a more systematic approach in terms of data collection, statistical analysis etc should be adopted".

3.3 Strategies for Improvement of Academic Performance

There are several strategies that were identified by the respondents in this study which they believed if utilized could lead to improvements in the performance of students in the final examinations. These include parental involvement in the education of their children, school learning environment, infrastructure and facilities, educational resources, English as a medium of instruction, libraries in schools.

3.3.1 Parental Involvement and Learners' Academic Performance

One of the most powerful but neglected factors that support students' learning and development is parental or family involvement both in and out of school. For many years, researchers have been accumulating evidence to demonstrate that parental involvement is one of the strongest predictors of learners' school success, and that families play pivotal roles in their children's cognitive, social, and emotional development from birth through adolescence. The impact of parental involvement on student academic achievement has been recognized by teachers, administrators, and policy-makers who consider parental involvement to be one of the integral parts of new educational reforms and initiatives

Table 3. Parental Involvement

	Agree	Disagree	Total
Parental involvement accelerate learning	99 (99%)	1 (1%)	100 (100%)

In Table 3 above, it is succinctly clear that ninety nine of the respondents are of the view that the involvement of parents in their children's education can accelerate the learners' learning. From the semi structured interview, one deputy head teacher pointed out that:

167

The parents in our school relate very well with the teachers even though they are not that educated and most of the time they help their children with their homework, they try their best to help them with everything the school needs. Parents are always very supportive of teachers' initiatives to improve learners' academic performance by encouraging their children to come to school prepared. Therefore both teachers and parents are always there making decisions together that why we are always performing well in PSLE.

A head teacher interviewed declared that:

Communication between parents and children regarding school, checking and helping with homework, parental educational expectations and aspirations for their children attendance and participation in school activities. In schools where parents do not participate in the education of their children, the school management should hold parents seminars and conferences where the duties and roles of parents are spelt out so that they know why they are expected to come to school. Parents need to be educated on these. They should not be taken for granted. Teachers can also attend kgotla meetings to inform the community of what is happening in their school; and how parents can help improve the academic performance.

A teacher interviewed concured with the above and declared that:

As a school we encourage parental involvement in the education of learners by holding parents' meetings regularly and communicating with them well in time through their children. We also urge the learners to encourage their parents to attend meetings. Communication is the hallmark of successful parental involvement.

Schunk and Pajares (2001) believe that parents' academic socialisation is the way in which parents influence students' academic performance by shaping students' skills, behaviours and attitudes towards school. Furthermore, academic socialisation can be influenced by parents' socio-economic status as highly educated parents tend to have a more stimulating learning environment (Meece, 1997). In most cases, parents "provide a warm, responsive and supportive home environment which in turn encourages exploration and stimulate curiosity, provide play and learning materials which accelerate children's intellectual development" (Meece, 1997).

It has been pointed out that when schoolwork involves parents, students learn more (Meece, 1997). Schools are encouraged to build strong alliances with parents and welcome their active participation in the classroom (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996) if they are to succeed in improving the academic performance of the learners. Educators are encouraged to inform parents of the school's educational goals, the importance of high expectations for each child, and ways of assisting with homework and classroom lessons (Bandura, 1997).

Literature search on parental involvement highlights several factors that can influence parents' involvement in their children's education (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). However, if they are not adequately addressed, they may present themselves as barriers to achieving parent involvement. The factors that are "barriers range from logistical issues associated with parents getting out to school

168

events to factors associated with the school culture and how welcoming the school is to parents" (Mitchell, 2008, p. 2). For instance, in the current study a class teacher in the open ended section of the questionnaire felt that some of the challenges faced by schools include lack of parental involvement and suggested that:

One strategy schools can use is to force them to come to school to discuss the progress of their children is by making it a condition that during PTA meetings and other school activities, each parent sits next to his/her child or the child is made to go back to collect the parent. training parents to teach their children to read proved to be more effective than training parents to listen to their children read, although both interventions had a statistically significant impact on achievement.

Yet another class teacher from the open ended section of the questionnaire declared:

Parental involvement refers to the process of communicating with children about school, communicating with school, attending and participating in school activities, involvement at home, parental expectations regarding academic achievement, and parental attitudes toward education.

Studies on parental involvement have indicated that parents with higher levels of education are more likely to be involved in their children's schools (Tinkler, 2002). Students with parents who are involved in their school tend to have fewer behavioral problems and better academic performance, and are more likely to complete high school than students whose parents are not involved in their school (Henderson & Berla, 1994). Bronfenbrenner (1974) postulated that the family seems to be the most effective and economical system for fostering and sustaining the child's development. Without family involvement, intervention is likely to be unsuccessful, and what few effects are achieved are likely to disappear once the intervention is discontinued Positive effects of parental involvement have been demonstrated at both the elementary and secondary levels across several studies, with the largest effects often occurring at the elementary level. The current study shows that primary schools in Botswana are trying very hard to involve parents in the education of their children but they are met with various challenges. They are also guided by the RNPE of 1994 which stated that (p. 52): "the Government should intensify the efforts to encourage the establishment of PTAs".

3.3.2 School Learning Environment and Academic Performance

Apart from the home environment described above, another very critical factor influencing academic performance is the school learning environment. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2012, p. 12), learning environment refers to:

… The complete physical, social and pedagogical context in which learning is intended to occur. The term most often refers to school classrooms but may include any designated place of learning such as science laboratories, distance learning contexts, libraries, tutoring centres, teachers' lounges, gymnasiums and non-formal learning spaces. The components and attributes of a learning environment are conceptualized in relation to their impact on learning processes and outcomes in both cognitive and affective domains. This term may also refer to the natural environment surrounding school buildings when they are used as a learning space.

169

Literature search has described school learning environment as encompassing those factors within the school that may or may not provide suitable conditions for the promotion of effective teaching and learning; and these include teacher qualification, teacher availability, class size, availability of teaching and learning materials, monitoring, contact hours, school ownership (i.e., private or public), motivation of teachers and teachers absenteeism/commitment to duty (Abdalla, Fussein, Abudu, & Nuhu, 2014; Win & Miller, 2004). This study has revealed that teachers in Botswana primary schools are well educated and experienced. Respondents were further asked to rate the impact of the learning environment on academic performance.

Table 4. Impact of Learning Environment on Academic Performance

	Agree	Disagree
Learning environment as having impact on learners' academic performance.	88 (88%)	12 (12%)

Table 4 shows that 88% of the respondents were of the opinion that the learning environment had great impact on the academic performance of the learners in the PSLE results. Those interviewed had the following to say concerning the different components of the Learning environment.

A head teacher interviewed concurs with the above sentiments by ephasising that:

The school environment is of paramount importance in shaping and reshaping the intellectual ability of students at school. This is so because students usually spend between six and seven hours at school where the environment plays a significant/critical role in the development of the student. Students also spend a lot of time in the school yard or travelling to and from school. As a result there is a need for careful planning and designing to optimize experiences that support education, health and stewardship.

Usaini and Baker (2015) succinctly capture the influence of the school environment on students' academic performance by stating that: the physical facilities, human resources and the relationship among them determine the physical environment of the school.

3.3.3 Infrastructure

Research has shown that the availability of basic infrastructure and services (water, electricity, sewage), didactic facilities (sport installations, labs, libraries), as well as the number of books in the library and computers in the school do have an effect on the achievement of primary education students, but their relative weight varies significantly from country to country. The Government of Botswana recognized the crucial role played by infrastructure in providing quality education as illustrated in the National Development 8 where it is stated that: "facilities of primary schools will be improved by adding libraries, providing electricity, adding more classrooms to ensure reduced class sizes from 40 to 30 and procurement and distribution of school supplies will be improved" (Republic of Botswana, 1997, p. 359). With respect to primary school facilities and standards, the RNPE of 1994 stipulated that a standard school should have the following as a minimum (p. 15):

Physical Facilities:

1) Adequate number of classrooms up to a maximum of 22;

2) Administration block with office space for the headteacher, deputy headteacher and typists, staffroom and 2 storerooms for storage of books and food;

3) Library;

4) Resource centre;

5) Fully equipped Science room/Science Equipment;

6) Room for health activities;

7) A sports field for various sporting activities;

8) A tool shed for storage of agricultural and other tools;

9) Teachers' quarters with a minimum of 2 bedrooms;

10) Adequate toilet facilities (including provision for the disabled);

11) Sufficient land for agricultural purposes and future development;

12) Electrification of school buildings including teachers' quarters.

On the issue of the state of the school infrastructure, a headteacher interviewed declared that:

Poor infrastructure has been a major challenge which caused academic failure but the government has done its best by renovating old buildings and even building new ones. In the olden days teaching used to take place under trees but this is a thing of the past as all students are taught in well-established classroom and this is one of the best developments which have improved the schools today. Also we have the administration block which has offices and a big staffroom where teachers work comfortably. Teachers' houses are also up to standard.

A deputy headteacher interviewed suggested that:

Much as the Government has provided infrastructure in schools, they must ensure that they maintain the buildings regularly so that the learners and their teachers feel confortable during lessons and there is effective learning. This will solve the problems they suffer during inclement weather when the windows and doors are broken. Learners learn better when the environment is conducive.

An often observed argument is that poor school facilities can have negative consequences for the students' learning environment. It has been suggested that suggested that improving school environmental conditions such as infrastructure may gain student achievements by reducing distractions and missed school days (Earthman, 2002; Mendell & Heath, 2005).

A parent interviewed supported the above assertion by pointing out that:

Government schools in Botswana are the same in terms of facilities they offer, the buildings in them are the same the teachers' houses are the same, they write the same examination, and they go for vacation at the same time and students are taught the same subjects and content all over the country. For better results, classrooms must be well furnished.

Ayeni and Adelabu (2012, p. 62) emphasized the importance of the school learning infrastructure by pointing out that the quality of learning the facilities available within an educational institution such as

171

a school has a positive relationship with the quality of teaching and learning activities which in turn lead to improved academic performance. They further highlight that the quality of the school buildings and furniture can also have an impact in the performance of students in their final year.

3.3.4 Educational Resources and Academic Achievement

Research shows that there is a relationship between the availability of quality educational resources in schools and academic performance. Savasci and Tomul (2013, p. 114) have argued that "... the effects of educational resources on student achievement depends on the development of a country as well".

Table 5. The Impact of Resource on Academic Performance

	Agree	Disagree	Total
Enough teaching and learning materials improves learners' achievement.	100 (100%)	-	100 (100%)

Table 5 shows that all (hundred percent) of the respondents agreed that by providing schools with enough teaching and learning materials will improve. From the open ended section of the questionnaire a headteacher had this to say: schools are given adequate teaching and learning materials like stationery and books but the problem is that in our school management likes keeping these resources in the storeroom (for security reasons) without allocating them for classes to utilise. This makes teachers to struggle as they improvise most of the time while materials are rotting in the storerooms.

This study has also illustrated that while schools were provided with enough teaching and learning materials, there were instances of mismanagement of resources in schools as allocation is not done effectively. From the open ended section of the questionnaire a classteacher pointed out that:

If the results were to improve, schools should be supplied with adequate resources so that teachers can teach more effectively and students can therefore learn well. All students must be supplied with books, teachers should have enough textbooks to consult when preparing. We used to have plenty of materials in the olden days but nowadays when you talk about materials all they say at the Regional Offices is that companies which are supposed to supply delayed or they talk about issues of tight budgets. Sometimes schools take the whole term without preparation books and students are told to buy their own books and most don't buy as they claim that they do not have money for that. Whether they write or not it is the teacher's problem.

This study has revealed that there are a lot of challenges when it comes to the procurement of educational resources which hindered the teachers from effectively carrying out their duty properly. For instance if at the beginning of the term there are no preparation books teachers start the term at a very low morale wise worrying about the fate of learners who had no exercise books to write on and this has an undesirable influence on the academic performance. These sentiments shared by Yara and Otieno (2010). One respondent in this study had this to say:

The syllabus has changed drastically; it is complex and demanding, but as teachers we are only provided with shallow text books which are full of contradictions to use as reference materials. Schools

172

are not provided with social media like internet so that teachers and learners can make further research on certain topics they do not understand.

The situation is sometimes compounded by the Government taking decisions without first ascertaining the availability or otherwise of educational resources in the schools. Teaching and learning materials need to always be available to foster understanding (Adekomi, 1998). It has also been stressed that a good instructional material supplements spoken or written word and it can bring teaching to life more than the word can. A head teacher interviewed echoed this by saying that:

The Ministry of Education and Skills Development prematurely implemented the new syllabus without assessing its demands. For example, the syllabus objectives of Science, Agriculture and Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) call for a lot of practical work and experiments to be done but there are no labs or even the apparatus to do these experiments. Pupils are taught the theory because of lack of the required materials which cannot be substituted for, consequently learners fail at a high rate than before the new syllabus was implemented.

These confirm the assertion that there is a relationship between academic performance and educational resources. On top of the physical facilities stipulated in the RNPE of 1994, the policy lists the following as the standard minimum for primary schools (Republic of Botswana, 1994, p. 16):

Equipment/Supplies:

1) Typewriter/computer (*Headteachers have been provided with laptops since 2014*);

2) Reprographic equipment (cyclostyling machine/photocopier);

3) Telephone where available (*Headteachers have been provided with cellphones since 2014*);

4) Library books.

Support staff:

1) School secretary (to be shared where practicable).

The policy further recommends that: "PTAs should be encouraged to add to this minimum, for example in the provision of computers and library books, in order to enrich the curriculum of the school".

The inclusion of such recommendations in the policy demonstrate the commitment of the Botswana Government to enhance the academic performance of all learners at primary school irrespective of locality. This was to achieve issues of access and equity as required by the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand (5-9 March, 1990) to make primary education accessible to all children and to massively reduce illiteracy before the end of the decade.

3.3.5 English as a Medium of Communication

Like most former British colonies, Botswana adopted English as the official language and language of instruction from the early stages of the education system and this has come with its challenges. For instance deputy headteacher from the open ended section of the questionnaire had this to say:

From standard two all subjects are taught in English in exclusion of Setswana to pupils who never attended pre-school therefore it is hard for them to comprehend and respond to anything which is communicated to them in English. There is nothing we can do about this, since we have too many

173

objectives to cover in a short period and a lot of unexpected activities throughout the year which affect the class calendar. So our plans as teachers to integrate activities which can help pupils to practice and gain knowledge in English Language are always failing due to lack of time.

A class teacher added by declaring that:

Most standard seven learners are struggling to communicate in English and that could be one of the factors that put them at a disadvantage, since that is the language used to respond to questions in the examination.

Hoang (2008, p. 32) identified the same challenges and and posited:

Learning English is not relevant to learners' purposes. They can't understand a lecture in English. They can't communicate in English (in daily or professional situations). They can't read their professional or common sense reading materials texts. They can't write in English. Therefore, although their motivation to learn English is high, they achieve very little. Nevertheless, English is still a subject at higher education institutions.

One parent interviewed felt that:

I think if our children were taught in Setswana they could be performing much better their major problem is that they do not understand English because when I help my child with her schoolwork she will fail to respond to questions but when I ask her in Setswana she responds well, which means she understood English she could have been performing better.

In Botswana, the RNPE of 1994 emphasized that with respect to the teaching of languages in primary school:

a) English should be used as the medium of instruction from Standard 2 as soon as practicable.

This recommendation was based on the realization that there is poor performance of primary school children in English and part of the problem is that children do not get used to using English early enough in the learning process and yet they are required to write their examinations in the language. Using English as the medium of instruction from Standard 2 will improve their performance (Republic of Botswana, 1994, p. 60).

The medium of instruction plays a crucial role in teaching and learning process as it is significant in the academic outcomes of the students (Flowerdew, 1994). It is the language through which teachers and students communicate with each other during the teaching and learning process. The medium of instruction is of vital importance in schools because through it learners understand what is being taught. (Flowerdew, 1994). Another major driving force behind this English-medium instruction policy is a common belief that teaching subject courses in English can promote students' interest and motivation in learning the English language, and hence improve their proficiency, while at the same time facilitating their academic performance and increasing their knowledge (Dupuy, 2000).

174

3.3.6 Libraries in Schools

Research has shown that that school libraries play an important role in student achievement, curriculum development and instruction. It has been argued that through political support, primary school library programs can serve as consistent drivers for student achievement in times of constant change and churning educational reform (New York Comprehensive Center, 2011). It has been pointed out that school libraries can assist in strengthening teacher effectiveness, supplementing early childhood education, raising graduation rates for at risk students, providing professional development and support for aligning curriculum to standards, and preparing students for high-quality assessments.

Libraries are an important but poorly developed feature of infrastructure in Botswana primary schools. This was emphasized by head teacher in the open ended section of the questionnaire who declared that:

Although the education system in Botswana has certainly improved, one of the major issues which is still lagging behind is the lack of libraries in primary schools. For teachers to instil the culture of reading among learners there has to be a foundation laid from an early age so that learners can get used to visiting the library and be able to research on their own and realise that if they carried some research on a certain topic, they became competent in it and consequently easy for them to pass.

A class teacher pondered that:

Poor academic performance is caused by not having libraries especially in remote areas where one finds that if you don't understand something and try to ask other co-workers they also don't understand. One ultimately gives up because there is nothing one can do about it since there is no where you can go to find that information. It would be a good idea if schools in the remote areas can have libraries because we can spend time studying and preparing better content for learners also learners can develop some good reading and research skills, this will also kill boredom since we have nothing to do at all.

Libraries are important in helping academics generate information for the purpose of effective teaching of students and research (Ubegu, 2006). Baffour-Awuah (2002, p. 26) posits that in Botswana, the "responsibility for school libraries has been shared by two ministries, a situation that is still hurting Botswana's school library development. The Ministry of Education is responsible for providing library structures, stock, and equipment in educational institutions, and the National Library Service is responsible for staffing educational libraries. The National Library Service helps schools to start school libraries, lends books on request, holds training courses for teacher-librarians and students assistants and provides bibliographies and catalogues to assist teachers in book selection".

Morris (2004) asserts that, school libraries are distinct from public libraries because they serve as "learner-oriented laboratories which support, extend and individualise the school's curriculum... A school curriculum serves as the center for coordinating agency for all materials used in the school" (32). Advocates of school library media programs have long been convinced of the relationship between quality library media programs and academic achievement (Lance, 1993). This is supported by Lansdale (2003) who says that researchers have demonstrated that school libraries have a positive impact on students' achievement. In terms of student achievement, in every grade, students who score better in

175

reading tests were likely to do better on their use of language and use of the library media center (Roser & Forest, 1990). For this reason, reading scores alone are highly used to represent academic achievement, (Roser & Forest, 1990).

4. Discussions and Conclusions

The findings of this study show that there are several strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of primary school students in the PSLE in Botswana. It was demonstrated in the findings that academic performance can be looked at differently by different people but it ultimately has connotations of examinations and outcomes. Most of the respondents in the study understood the concept of academic performance and were able to come up with the strategies that can be applied.

The findings have established that one of the most powerful strategies that can help improve the performance of students' in their final examinations is the involvement of parents in their children's examinations. The respondents came up with various ways such as holding parents conferences, workshops and seminars to educate parents on the schools' expectations and also establish parents' expectations of the school. The study clearly unpacked the roles parents can play to help their children to perform well academically.

Another very important strategy is to develop a welcoming learning environment. The school learning environment has been described as encompassing those factors within the school that may or may not provide suitable conditions for the promotion of effective teaching and learning; and these include teacher qualification, teacher availability, class size, availability of teaching and learning materials, monitoring, contact hours, school ownership (i.e., private or public), motivation of teachers and teachers absenteeism/commitment to duty. What has become clear from this study is that teachers in Botswana are well educated, and therefore need some support such as that from parents and government.

The infrastructure is said to be good but the respondents lamented the lack of maintenance and provision of resources in the schools. The study findings also illustrated that while schools were provided with enough teaching and learning materials, there were instances of mismanagement of resources in schools as allocation is not done effectively.

The findings have also demonstrated the importance of language in education. What it demonstrated well is the importance of the use of mother tongue in learning. The Government of Botswana has turned a deaf ear concerning the debate on mother toungue and education and they always defend themselves by preaching the national unity gospel. The study has also revealed the role teachers play in the language of instruction debate. Teachers are also not proficient in English and they need to improve if students are to perform well.

One strategy that can be used is to establish well functioning libraries in primary schools as currently they are non-existent.

176

5. Recommendations

From this study it can be concluded that:

1) Parents' involvement in the education of their children should be made compulsory. In other words Government must legislate this if it were to work well.

2) Local authorities who are responsible for infrastructure should maintain the school buildings regularly so that the learning environment is condusive. The lispan of the buildings will also improve.

3) Government must consider providing libraries in all primary schools as recommended by the Revised National Policy of 1994. Trained teacher librarians should also be provided to manage the libraries.

4) Government should consider the use of mother tongue in primary schools.

References

Abdallah, H., Fuseini, M. N., Abudu, A. M., & Nuhu, Y. (2014). Dilemma of Basic School Pupils in Northern Ghana with respect to Their Learning Context. *Education Research International, 2014,* 1-13.

Adeyemi, B. (2010). Teacher Related Factors as Correlates of Pupils Achievement in Social Studies in South West Nigeria. *Electronic journal of Research in Educational psychology, 8*(1), 313-332.

Adeyemi, T. O. (2005). Predicting students' performance in senior secondary certificate examinations from performance in the junior secondary certificate examinations in Ondo state, Nigeria. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Research Development, 6*(3), 74-85.

Ayeni, A. J., & Adelabu, M. A. (2012). Improving learning infrastructure and environment for sustainable quality assurance practice in secondary schools in Ondo State, South-West, Nigeria. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education, 1*(1), 61-68.

Baffour-Awuah, M. (2002). *School libraries in Botswana: A state of the art report.* Gaborone: Botswana National Library Services. Educational Libraries Division.

Bandura, A. (1995). *Self-efficacy in Changing Societies.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control.* New York: Freeman.

Bandura, A., Barbaranelli, C., Caparara, G. V., & Pastaroli, C. (1996). Multifacted impact of self-efficacy beliefs on academic functioning. *Child Development, 67*(3), 1206-1222.

Bechuanaland Protectorate. (1950). *Education Department Annual Report: For the Year ended 31st December 1950.*

Best, J. W., & Kahn, J. V. (2006). *Research in education.* United state of America: Pearson.

Black, S. (1998). Money and the Art of Staff Development. *Journal of Staff Development, 19*(4), 14-17.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1974). Is early intervention effective? *Teachers College Record, 76*(2), 279-303.

Caprara, G. V., Barbaranelli, C., Steca, P., & Malone, P. S. (2006). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs as determinants of job satisfaction and students' academic achievement: A study at the school level. *Journal of School Psychology, 44,* 473-490.

Chandler, M., & HYPERLINK. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.muse.jhu.edu/results?section1=auth

Creswell J. W., & Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1999). *Teacher quality and student achievement*. Washington: Centre for the Study of Teaching and Policy, University of Washington.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). Teachers' Quality and Students' Achievement. *A Review of State Policy Evidence*, *8*(1).

Darling-Hammond, L., Chung, R., & Frelow, F. (2002). Variation in teacher preparation: How well do different pathways prepare teachers to teach? *Journal of Teacher Education*, *53*(4), 286-302.

Dupuy, B. C. (2000). Content-based instructions: Can it help ease the transition from beginning to advance foreign classes? *Foreign Language ANNALS*, *33*(2), 205-223.

Earthman, G. I. (2002). *School Facility Conditions and Student Academic Achievement*. UCLA's Institute for Democracy, Education and Acces (IDEA). Paper no. wws-rr008-1002.

Ebenuwa-Okoh, E. E. (2010). Influence of Age, Financial Status, and Gender on Academic Performance among Undergraduates. *Journal of Psychology*, *1*(2), 99-103.

Feltz, D., Short, S., & Sullivan, P. (2008). *Self-efficacy in sport—Research and strategies for working with athletes, teams, and coaches*. United States: Human Kenetics.

Flowerdew, J. (1994). *Academic listening: Research perpective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ganai, M. Y., & Mir, M. A. (2013). A comparative study of adjustment and academic achievement of college students. *Journal of Educational Research and Essays*, *1*(1), 5-8.

Ganai, M. Y., & Mir, M. A. (2013). A Comparative Study of Adjustment and Academic Achievement of College Students. *Journal of Educational Research and Essays*, *1*(1), 5-8.

Heffer, R. W. (2009). The Influence of Parenting Styles, Achievement Motivation, and Self-Efficacy on Academic Performance in College Students. *Journal of College Student Development*, *50*(3), 337-346.

Henderson, A. T., & Berla, N. (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement*. Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education.

Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory*. Austin.

Hoang, V. V. (2008). Factors affecting the quality of English education at the Vietnam National. University, Hanoi. *Journal of Science, Foreign Language*, *24*, 22-37.

Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A., & Turner, L. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *1*(2), 122-133.

Lance, K. C., Welborn, L., & Hamilton-Pennell, C. (1993). *The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement*. Hi Willow Research and Publishing, Castle Rock, Colorado.

178

Lansdale, M. (2003). *Impact OF school libraries on student achievement: A review of the research*. Retrieved from http://www.asla.org.au/research/research.pdf

Meece, J. L. (1997). *Child and adolescent development fo educators*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Mendell, M. J., & Heath, G. A. (2005). Do indoor pollutants and thermal conditions in schools influence student performance? A critical review of the literature. *Indoor Air*, *15*, 27-52.

Ministry of Education. (2010). *Botswana lower primary syllabus*. Retrieved from http://www/index.php?id=171

Mitchell, C. A. (2008). *Parent Involvement in Public Education: A Literature Review*. Philadelphia: Research For Action.

Mmereki, O. A. (2011). *Quality of Primary School Inputs in Botswana*. Gaborone: Ministry of Education.

Monyaku, B., & Mmereki, O. A. (2012). *Availability and distribution of resources in Botswana primary schools and their relationship with pupils' learning achievements*.

Monyatsi, P. P. (2013). Trends in teacher education reforms in Botswana since independence in 1966. In I. O. Chinedu, & C. B. S. Mndebele (Eds.), *Education Reforms in the SADC Region: Challenges and responses in the 21st Century* (pp. 323-346). Scientific & Academic Publishing, USA.

Monyatsi, P. P., & Maimela, M. (In Press). Factors that Influence the Performance of Students in Botswana Primary Schools. *Education and Society in Southern Africa (ESSA): An interdisciplinary Journal of Critique, Debate and Analysis*, *3*(1).

Morris, B. (2004). *Administering the school library media centre* (p. 32). Westport: Libraries Unlimited.

New York Comprehensive Center. (2011). *Informational Brief: Impact of School Libraries on Student Achievement*.

Nordin, S., Ahmad, W. F. W., Nayan, M. Y., Yahya, N., & Abdullah, A. (2012). A Conceptual Framework in Examining the Contributing Factors to Low Academic Achievement: Self-Efficacy, Cognitive Ability, Support System and Socio-Economic. Paper presented at the International Conference on Management. *Social Sciences and Humanities*.
or&search1=Robert%20W.%20Heffer

Rathedi, M. (1993). Improving the supply and quality of teachers for basic education. In S. Seisa, & F. Youngman (Eds.), *Education for all in Botswana* (pp. 90-103). Gaborone: Macmillian.

Republic of Botswana. (1966). *Transitional plan for social and economic development*. Gaborone: Government Printers.

Republic of Botswana. (1970). *National development plan, 1970-1974*. Gaborone: Government Printers.

Republic of Botswana. (1977). *Education for Kagisano*. Gaborone: Government Printers.

Republic of Botswana. (1977). *Report of the national commission on education: Education for*

179

kagisano (Social Harmony) 1977. Gaborone: Government Printers.

Republic of Botswana. (1994). *Revised National Policy on Education*. Gaborone: Government Printers.

Republic of Botswana. (2000). *The EFA 2000 Assessment: Country Reports*. Botswana.

Retrieved from http://www.muse.jhu.edu/results?section1=author&search1=Erlanger%20A.%20

Turner Turner, E. A. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://muse.jhu.edu/results?section1=author&search1=Megan%20Chandler

Rockoff, J. E., Jacob, B. A., Kane, T. J., & Staiger, D. O. (2008). *Can you recognize an effective teacher when you recruit one*? (NBER Working Paper No. 14485). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from http://www.nber.org/papers/w14485

Roser, N. L., Hoffman, J. V., & Farest, C. (1990). Language literature and at-risk children. *The Reading Teacher*, *43*(8), 554-559.

Savasci, H. S., & Tomul, E. (2013). The Relationship between Educational Resources of School and Academic Achievement. *International Education Studies*, *6*(4), 114-123.

Shunk, D. (2001). *Development of acchievement motivation*.

Siddiek, A. G. (2012). The General Certificate Examinations as a Tool of Measurement & Quality Control of Educational Objectives in Some Arab Countries with Special Reference to Saudi Arabia. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, *2*(5), 138-148.

Tan, R. D. (2013). Psychometric Examination Results and Academic Performance of Irregular Students in a University, Cebu City Philippines. 2nd International Conference on Management. *Humanity and Economics* (ICMHE'2013).

Tinkler, B. (2002). *A review of literature on Hispanic/Latino parent involvement in K-12 education*. Available on ERIC database (D469134). Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED469134.pdf

Tschannen-Moran, M., & Woolfolk-Hoy, A. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *17*, 783-805.

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2012). *A PLACE TO LEARN: Lessons from Research on Learning Environments*. Succursale Centre-Ville Montreal: Quebec.

University of Botswana. (2010). *An Evaluation of the Substance of the Prmary Schools*. Gaborone.

University, Y. (1998). *Sampling; Social Research Methods: Procedures in Sampling*. Yale Statistics Department of Statistics.

Uwezo. (2010). *Are our children learning: Annual Learning Assessment Report*. Dar es salaam: Uwezo TENMET & Hivos/Twaweza.

Win, R., & Miller, P. W. (2004). *The effects of individual and school factors on university students' academic performance*. CLMR Discussion Paper Series 04/4, The Centre for Labour Market Research, The University of Western Australia.

Yala, P. O., & Wanjohi, W. C. (2011). Performance Determinants of KCSE in Mathematics in Secondary Schools in Nyamira Division, Kenya. *Asian Social Science*, *7*(20), 107-112.

Yara, P. O., & Otieno, K. O. (2010). Teaching/Learning Resources and Academic Performance in Mathematics Secondary Schools in Bondo District of Kenya. *Asian Social Science (ASS)*, *6*(12), 126-132.