Identity Crisis and Exclusion in Schools:
A Challenge for School Leadership in Botswana

Nonofo Molly Otukile[1], Mabua Mabua[2] and Nkobi Owen Pansiri[3]

[1,2]Bachelor of Educational Leadership Management, University of Botswana
[3]Department of Primary Education, University of Botswana
Contact: [1]<+26771381948>, [2]<+26776065647>, [3]<+26774002193>
E-mail: [1]<nonofootukile@gmail.com>, [2]<mabuamabua5@gmail.com>,
[3]<pansirio@mopipi.ub.bw>

ABSTRACT The existence of identity crisis and exclusion is a complex school leadership challenge particularly in post-colonial nation states. One's identity is constructed through societal interactions and determined by wider social, cultural, political and economic values and perceptions. The construction of learner identity is one critical aspect that school practices must manage. Through a comparative qualitative approach in two primary schools serving socio-culturally challenged communities, this study examines the way school leadership manages issues of identity crisis and exclusion. While in the multi-national school, issues are associated mainly with unfavourable policies, in the Tswana-medium school, they tend to arise mainly from cultural practices. Study participants were members of school leadership teams, teachers, learners, and parents. They participated in individual interviews and focus group discussions. The study confirms that issues of identity crisis and exclusion in socio-culturally challenged schools are rampant, and that school leaders need to be better trained in transformational leadership to be able to deal with them as context-based challenges.

INTRODUCTION

School leadership's overarching mandate is wholesale inclusivity. It includes daily management and protection of all issues that promote inclusion. McDougall (2016) suggests that schools should play a part in inculcating intercultural understanding and ensure poverty reduction for learners from minority groups. To successfully fulfil this mandate, school heads inevitably have a duty to manage diverse cases and practices of identity crisis and exclusion in schools. Todd (2017) argues that identity is a powerful inert human behaviour that influences societal action. Todd links the concept of identity values to language. They argue that power of language is inherent in the classifications of either homogeneity or heterogeneity in a society. In both studies, language is an empowering factor of identity. However it is argued that "…identity language homogenizes diverse phenomena from discursive framing to identification and from valuation to classification and to feelings of belonging" (Todd 2017: 85). In a school setting, language is a key social tool in all practices, either for the learner or for general social development.

Identity crisis and exclusion are related outcomes of social practices found in schools. Identity crisis positions the level or degree of exclusion; for example, in terms of a defined behaviour of one or a group of individuals. Exclusion is a characteristic of identity crisis. It is for this reason that studying the two together in a school set-up is undertaken. This is a comparative study of two public primary schools serving socio-culturally challenged communities – a multinational school (School A) in a refugee camp and a Tswana school that serves Setswana, BaSarwa and BaKalanga ethnic communities (School B) (see Fig.1 and Table 3).

Background to Identity Crisis and Exclusion in Schools

The Origin of Identity Crisis and Exclusion in Schools

Identity crisis and practices of exclusion are inevitable behaviours that negatively affect learners in schools. The two sets of behaviour are inherent in acts of resentment, animosity, dislike and other forms of anti-social discon-
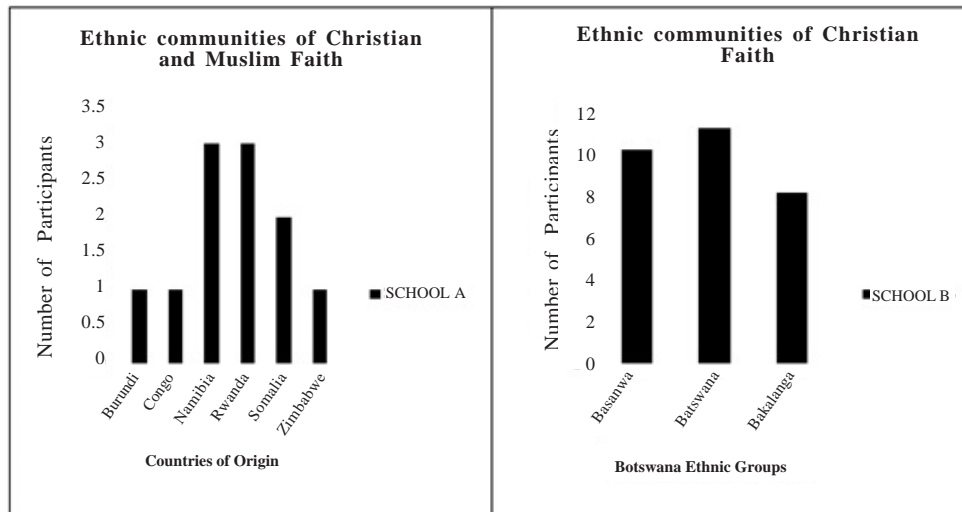
Ethnic communities of Christian and Muslim Faith

Ethnic communities of Christian Faith

Fig. 1. Sample and sampling

nect. These disconnect interrupt learners' abilities and opportunities for learning. The acts contribute to higher levels of disengagement with learning, absenteeism and greater truancy (Green 2006). They increase the likelihood of early school withdrawal commonly referred to as drop-out (Leach and Mitchell 2006). The anti-social practices cause depression, anxiety, sadness, loneliness and general low self-esteem (Bond et al. 2001; Rigby 2003). The extent to which school leadership pays attention to anti-social practices and their consequences is, therefore, a universal concern.

Practices contributing to identity crisis and exclusion in schools are concerns in the history of mankind. For example, Orfield and Whitla (2001) argue from a United States of America context, that the concerns are social justice issues dating as far back as 1849, when segregated schools were permissible under the State's constitution. In subsequent years, contemporary school segregation escalated due to the legitimate "separate but equal" doctrine. Orfield and Whitla (2001) and Frankenberg and Chungmei (2003) further suggest that schools were more segregated in the 2000s than in the 1970s when desegregation began. It seems that cultural divisions and the exclusion scourge continued to soar and spread globally.

Furthermore, Hue and Kennedy (2014) argue against identity crisis from a Hong Kong perspective. They suggest that there was no special attention to issues of identity crisis in education systems. They assert, for example, that no specific policy formulated for the promotion of ethnic minority or multicultural education existed. They submit that the policy of support for ethnic minority students in Hong Kong schools was more political than educational, making it less effective. As a result, teachers' struggles, experiences and concerns about ethnic minority education were not known to the public (Hue and Kennedy 2014).

Identity crisis and exclusion also exists in Africa. The continent is marred by problems of ethnicity and segregation, which have led to civil unrests in some countries. Consequently, some schools found themselves as the playfields for the anti-social issues of identity and exclusion. The Sub-Saharan region, for example, fared comparatively well in educating its young people though the countries remain under-developed, under-resourced, and impoverished (Okilwa 2015). In all spheres of development, the region and its people have been undermined and excluded for many years, dating back to the colonial era. The exclusion of the nomadic people of Kenya and the racial segregation in Rhodesia

(now Zimbabwe), South West Africa (now Namibia) and South Africa have led to unequal educational opportunities for young people in the region. In addition to the discriminative political development, socio-cultural practices, such as the nomadic lifestyle, female genital mutilation, poverty, harsh climatic and geographic conditions and poor infrastructure contributed to issues of identity crisis and exclusion in the education systems in the region (Okilwa 2015) even post-colonial period.

Identity Crisis and Exclusion in the Botswana School System

In the Botswana school system, cultural diversity is ignored by education authorities due to the one-size-fits-all education system or policy of education that speaks to standardization (Pansiri 2011b). The experience is the same with that in Kenya (Okilwa 2015). While identity crisis and exclusion problems are cultural, it could also be argued that they are linked to the aftermath of the colonial era in both Botswana and Kenya. In the Botswana case, colonisation has imagined and privileged only eight Tswana tribes (a numerical minority in the country) whose language and culture are officially recognised while many of the other 38 tribes, and their languages and cultures rank low in the national development agenda (Nyati-Ramahobo 2008; Tabulawa and Pansiri 2013; Mokibelo 2015; Pansiri and Majwabe 2020). The implication of this trend in social development has been used to explain trends in learners' performances in schools (Pansiri and Majwabe 2020). For example, the Botswana Examinations Council's (BEC) national examination shows consistently the over-representation of lower learner achievement in schools in the ethnic minority communities such as *Kgalagadi*, *Ngwaketse* West, *Kweneng* East, *Ghanzi* and *Ngamiland*. The Botswana Examination Council analysis of school results from these areas shows that they are always lower than those from elsewhere. Early school withdrawals and repetition rates are also higher in these locations (Pansiri 2011a,b; Republic of Botswana 2017). There is, therefore, a link between low performance, on the one hand, and exclusion and identity crisis, on the other hand.

Drawing from their vast experience as teachers in public primary schools in Botswana, the authors have established that students from marginalized groups are easy targets of negative beliefs, behaviours, and/or judgements. Individuals and groups are excluded on the basis of multiple socio-economic and identity indices, such as race/ethnicity, sexual orientation/gender/sexuality, economic status, age, religion and culture. Negative characterizations using these indices result in learners becoming victims of practices of moral indifference and silent exclusion in schools (Pansiri 2011a; Marumo and Pansiri 2016).

Pansiri (2011a) argues that teachers in schools that are serving ethnic minority communities play a blame-the-victim game. That is, they perceive the affected learners and their parents as subjects for accusation when all is not well in schools. In other cases, teachers feel disempowered to act on issues or cases of exclusion of learners (Garegae 2008). To uphold the moral values that underpin the basis for morality in schools, Mogami (2001) argues that education in every society should be an institutionalised means of 'enculturation' or cultural transmission, something that has since proved to be a challenge to school leadership. Reflecting on the context of classroom teaching in Botswana, Mulimbi and Dryden-Peterson (2017) argue that individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds do experience varying degrees of shame and a sense of exclusion from learning. Therefore, the need to address the issue of total inclusivity by the Botswana school leadership remains a challenge from both a policy and practice perspective.

To sum up, one agrees with Cline et al. (2002) that, through social development, schools have become central in pupils' self-identification. Learners from minority ethnic groups experience more identity crisis and exclusion than others in schools. Cline et al. (2002) argue that schools are unable to fully develop strategy for preparing learners for life in a diverse society through the curriculum. School and classroom practices try to treat all learners equally but more often than not down-play ethnic and cultural differences.

Theoretical Perspective to Identity Crisis and Exclusion

This study is conceived from a constructivist perspective. This perspective allows one to appreciate the perception that a school culture

is man-made and constructed through social interactions by the various participants in the school community. Various social constructivists argue that all knowledge, including the most basic, taken-for-granted common sense knowledge of everyday reality, is derived from and maintained by social interactions (Leeds-Hurwitz 2009; Garciá 2015). The social constructivists also believe that when people interact, they do so with the understanding that their respective perceptions of reality are related and, as they act upon this understanding, that their common knowledge of reality becomes reinforced. Ary et al. (2014) argue that human beings together create and sustain all social phenomena through their social practices.

The constructivist approach is in contrast to other views of ethnicity and identity such as primordialism, instrumentalism and materialism. Primordialism views ethnic identity as an innate, fixed and permanent social practice that serves a fundamental human need for belonging and meaning. Instrumentalism claims that the more privileged and dominant groups in a society psychologically agitate and provoke ethnic tensions as a means of seizing power. The dominant group presents and protects its authority as natural, and it defends itself against the minority group's threats (Fearon and Laitin 2000; Kaufmann 2005; Adlparvar and Tadros 2016). The materialistic perspective maintains that ethnic tensions and/or cases of exclusion exist between ethnically aligned groups and are the result of economic inequality and elite exploitation. Eriksen (2002) argues that ethnicity is not a product of class relations and that there is no direct link between the two categories. Rather, it is a resource relation based perspective.

The constructivist perspective appreciates that knowledge and reality are social constructs of experience and language. Language is an essential device that enables groups of people to engage in successful coordination in the context of or in reference to a shared understanding or meaning (Ary et al. 2014). Teacher pedagogy, community relational linguistic practices, culture of team work and school social practices inevitably contribute to exclusion in schools. The socio-behavioural practices in the school environment can either depict or regulate a culture of love or aversion, unity or disunity, equality or

inequality, and total inclusion or exclusion. All these contribute to identity crisis and exclusion in schools.

Settling for constructivism as an epistemological argument provides varying perspectives of society and culture as knowledge development phenomena. It is reasonable to expect cases of identity crisis and exclusion in schools where ethnic diversity exists. As such, the constructivist approach to ethnicity and the authors' vast experience in school leadership has shown that identity crisis and exclusion in schools are man-made and can, therefore, be overturned. However, it should be noted that cases of exclusion may emerge unconsciously, as a result of the diverse socio-cultural interactions amongst teachers, pupils and parents construct.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The overarching aim of this study is to examine the existence of identity crisis and exclusion in socio-culturally challenged schools. The objectives of the study were to assess awareness of issues of identity among learners in different school settings; establish practices that may constitute silent exclusion and marginalization in schools; and identify actions required of school leadership to mediate issues and cases of negative identity.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Research Methods

This study adopted a constructivist theoretical paradigm in which a qualitative approach to data generation and analysis was applied. This approach has been influenced by the works of Mogami (2001), Mulford (2008), Nyati-Ramahobo (2008) and McDougall (2016), Pansiri (2011a), Mulimbi and Dryden-Peterson (2017), that were used to study issues if exclusion in education. These works based their methodological emphasis on the context of the research topic and constituencies of their studies. In this case study, the authors' personal reflective experiences in both teaching and school leadership and their exposure to educational research directed their focus towards the need for a qualitative-focused research design. Through a blend of lecturer-

student collaborative strategy, where the lecturer brought in rich research knowledge and experience and the in-service students contributed their phenomenal practical and working knowledge as deputy school heads, this study became an interesting action research that attempts to address a practical problem in school leadership. The qualitative approach is anchored on a critical literature review and grounded on the leadership's developing action of collaboration with others and openness to collegial learning in the school set up. It is a testimony to the democratic decision- making process where the voices of others are valued.

Two primary schools were used for the study. These were a multi-national school (School A) and a Tswana medium school (School B). 'Multi-national' refers to a school that has learners from different countries. The *Tswana* medium school is one that has local (*Batswana*) learners of mixed ethno-linguistic background. The participants were selected using purposive and convenience sampling methods. There were forty (40) participants in total, including twenty-five (25) learners, aged between 9 and 14 years. From School A, ten (10) multinational learners participated in the study while from School B fifteen (15) learners participated. Five (5) Parents Teachers Association members and ten (10) *Batswana* teachers were purposively and conveniently selected. Figure 1 presents the distribution of the sample used in this study. In approach, the methods of Bahar and Bilgin (2003) and Alkan (2016), of concrete experience and active participation of individuals in the activity, as well as reflective observation for the development of various perspectives were applied. Researchers were on ground to observe and interact with the school community.

The researchers observed and studied the behaviour of the teachers, parents and children. They participated in one-on-one interviews, focus group discussions and intensive case analysis (Fraenkel et al. 2012). To build rapport and trust with the participants, self-introductions by the researchers and preliminary one-on-one interviews with the teachers from both Schools A and B were conducted. Follow-up questionnaires were also used to elicit the participants' interpretation of issues to be further discussed. An interview was held with a Principal Education Officer (PEO) of the research constituency. Follow up discussions were conducted with more parent, teacher and pupil participants in their focus groups, to get more insightful interpretations and opinions about social relations and behavioural practices in their schools. The actual data collection was conducted between 26 November, 2018 and 11 January, 2019. The time frame presented itself as a limitation of the study.

To uphold ethical research, the following codes have been used to refer to the participants cited in this paper:

School A – multinational school, **School B** – Tswana medium school, **S** = Student, **T** = teacher, **P** = parent and **F/G** = Focus Group

Descriptive analysis was used. Different responses to a given research question were grouped and discussed together, to try and understand the underlying reasons for the observed behaviours, thoughts and feelings (Creswell 2010).

RESULTS

The fieldwork data gathered from different sources has led to the main argument that identity crisis and exclusion issues are common in schools. The findings have established new themes of identity centred on economic, educational and social-cultural factors of marginalization, leading to the school leadership's inability to connect well within the communities they serve. It has also been found that groups other than school leadership display certain behaviour and have beliefs and values that are unacceptable to the broader community (Petkovska 2015). All this leads to social stereotyping of identity among people. Hallinger (2010) suggests that the suitability or effectiveness of a particular leadership practice is linked to factors in the external environment and the local context of a school. As such, key identity themes, although closely related in meanings and implications, were drawn from the field work data as illustrated in Tables 1 and 2. The discussion below is an interpretation of each theme of identity.

Data Analysis

Qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis are widely recognised as being trans-

Table 1: Participants' verbatim statements and observed behaviours

Themes	Verbatim statements	Observable behaviours
Insecurity (trepidation and fear)	"I like school but I don't like this school because I don't feel safe"(SAS I) "Here, we live in fear. For some days peace would prevail, but for some there would be so much tension that we even fear for our lives. We even feel we might be attacked in our houses. But we put all our security in God's hands as we strive to give these people normalcy in their lives, to the best of our abilities" (SAT 1).	- Unwillingness to talk openly to the researchers - Avoidance to talk about certain events
Inequity (no hope)	"Our lives end here. Form five is like the end of school. You watch your friend who was here in school with you become a president"(SAS 4)"Some [of us] came here for independence and running away from civil wars" (SAP 1)	- Shaky tone (of voice) - Nervousness of the speaker - Faint voice
Alienation (deprived)	"Because we are regarded as BaSarwa, even our learnersare intentionally deprived of education" (SBP 1)"We want to have rights, the right to movement"(SAS 4)"You have intentionally separated us [from the rest of the village]" (SAP 2)	- Divisive and identity of deprivation through social interactions between the students
Averseness	"May be we fear that we are not educated and would not know what is inside the children's books) (SAP 2)	- Avoidance identity to participate in school activities- Lack of enthusiasm
Attention seeking	"We don't want Teacher X because when we were doing standard 5, he gave us 24 percent because he was always on the phone or is out to town" (F/G)	- Making pleas (for example, to be transferred elsewhere for better living conditions)

Table 2: Comparative analysis of the findings

Themes	School A	School B
Insecurity	Socio-political influences lead to ethnic tensions/rivalry – hence fear identities	Pedagogically teacher-influenced (for example, what the teacher(s) might say or do to the students, leading to early school withdrawals)
Alienation	From unfavourable education system, resulting in: - some pupils deliberately failing themselves – protest behaviour	From unconducive school environment (for example, degradation/humiliation) of those in disadvantaged positions)
Alienation and Inequity	- Desire for equal treatment like the locals- Wish to enjoy both human and civil rights alike just like the locals (for example, right to free movement)	The minorities feel oppressed by those from the dominant groups (from discrimination, prejudice and othering them)
Averseness	Lack of parental involvement due to:-illiteracy – identity social and symbolic capital	Lack of parental involvement due to:Illiteracy – identify with no qualification for better job opportunities in the society
Attention Seeking	Unfavourable education system, teacher pedagogy (for example, silent exclusion)	Unconducive school environment (for example, practices of moral indifference

parent and systematic in terms of research processes (Vaismoradi et al. 2016). The analytical importance of each theme is based on the research participants' subjective meanings and social reality as appropriately conveyed in research report (Braun and Clarke 2006; Vaismoradi et al. 2016). The data collected from the interviews and observations have been categorized into themes. With reference to the Appendix,

Table 1 shows the themes derived from the participants' verbatim responses and their behaviours as observed by the researchers during the interviews. Table 2 displays a comparative analysis of the researchers' interpretation of the themes.

In presenting the findings, some quotations or verbatim presentations are used (see examples in Tables 1). In terms of limitations, inter-

pretations of findings could be viewed differently by other researchers. It is also possible that very significant intended meaning could have been lost during transcription of informants' comments from Setswana to English.

DISCUSSION

The discussion presents themes that emerged from this study. These are insecurity, inequity, alienation, averseness, and attention seeking.

Insecurity

The results raised the issue of insecurity propelled by fear or trepidation. In School A, parents and learners lamented that they experienced social ills such as murder/homicide, abuse including rape, child trafficking and trauma. The SMTs explained that social ills lead to parents becoming too protective of their children and, therefore, tend to build a 'wall' around their families, something that escalates marginalisation in the school community. The pupils raise the alarm that the teachers, pupils and parents alike live in fear almost every day. For example, a pupil from School A (Table 1) said, '*I like school but I don't like this school because I don't feel safe*' (SAS I). This student's voice attaches a clear message of a cry for help. The feeling of fear was observed among learners. They were unwilling to talk openly to the researchers. They

avoided talking about certain events, an indication of lack of social intelligence (Lester 2009). For example, a submission such as '*We even feel we might be attacked in our houses. But we put all our security in God's hands as we strive to give these people normalcy in their lives, to the best of our abilities*' (SAT 1), express great fear and lack of social intelligence among teachers. In School A, fear was from external socio-political forces while in School B, it was more an in-school factor of deficient pedagogy (Table 2). The feeling of fear, usually attached to emotional experiences, has a significant role in organising the construct system, and, hence, regarded a result of conscious construction (Kirsch and Jordan 2000; Walker and Winter 2007; Butt 2008; Lester 2009). As already indicated, Hallinger (2010) suggests that the suitability or effectiveness of a particular leadership practice is linked to factors in the external environment and the local context of a school. The school leadership, therefore, has the mammoth task of creating safe havens for learners to co-exist through the use of social intelligence that is adaptive and that allows individuals to understand others' hopes, fears, beliefs and wishes (Lester 2009).

Inequity

School A served learners from Christian and Muslim multinational families (see Table 3). This cultural setting poses a challenge to the school leadership. One learner (SAS3) stated that they

Table 3: Analysis of socio-cultural setting

	School A	School B
Religion	- Muslim-Christianity-worship passively (expected to attend a Christian assembly	- Christianity - African Traditional Religion - All children attend Christian assembly
Dress	- Tailor-made school uniforms that cover limbs - Allowed to wear head gear in school	- Wear normal school uniform - Eat non-*halaal* food
Food	- Do not eat non-*halaal* food	
Language	- English (the official language) in Botswana is a challenge as some children come from non-English speaking countries	- English (the official language) - Setswana (the national language) - Children from the BaSarwa or BaKalanga communities have Setswana as a second or third language and makes the learning of English more difficult
Tradition	- Practice poses a restriction for the male teachers to come into close contact with female learners	- Practice does not pose a restriction for the male teachers to come into close contact with female learners

(the Muslims) were not allowed to pray in school. Another learner said '*Our lives end here. Form Five is like the end of school. You watch your friend who was here in school with you become a president*' (SAS 4). This learner (SAS 4) further lamented that when they complete their Form Five, they do not go to university but stay in the camp. Then they start stealing, and engaging in sexual relationships. Education, as they put it, is their only hope towards living meaningful lives. Due to what they see as unequal treatment, some learners resort to desperate protest behaviour such as deliberately failing at school, so as to hopelessly 'cling' to the education system a little longer. Parents of learners in School A also submitted the desire for equal treatment like the locals. They expressed the wish to enjoy both human and civil rights just like the locals do (such as right to worship and free movement). While Botswana is committed to Education for All and Ten-year basic education (Republic of Botswana 1994), lack of attention to identity practices in schools limits the progression of some students. It was observed that in School B, students from ethnic minority families felt oppressed by those from the dominant groups. In both schools, the identity issues of equity and equal treatment are a concern. The issues are influenced by both out of school factors such as religion, and in-school practices such as language (see Table 3). Walter and Griffin (2014) submit that if transformational leaders are to address evolving economic and societal demands, they are required to adopt a holistic approach that covers all aspects of schooling.

Alienation

Alienation explains the pain of rejection and hopelessness. Negative self-identity and exclusion from classroom or school activities cut off a child from the rest, rendering them unloved and isolated.

Data (Table 1) reveals that those (both parents and children) from the minority families feel excluded. One parent in School B had this to say: '*Because we are regarded as BaSarwa, even our [learners] are intentionally deprived of education*' (SBP 1 on Table 1). A student in School A said, '*We want to have rights, the right to movement' like all the other learners who*

enjoy the freedom to travel to any part of the country' (SAS 4 on Table 1). Both statements carry a strong connotation of alienation in divisive social interactions among both parents and learners in the schools. The minorities feel alienated by those from the dominant groups and, therefore, leave in rejection and despair (Nyathi-Ramahobo 2008). It has been argued that provision of education to the "so-called minorities" remains a great challenge in Botswana (Republic of Botswana 2014; Marumo and Pansiri 2016). Nyathi-Ramahobo (2008) notes that education standards in rural minority-dominated areas are generally lower than elsewhere and fit the definition of education of alienation. Transformational approach would expect school leadership to level the education playground for all children, thus eliminating possibilities of learner alienation, lest the goals of Revised National Policy on Education (Republic of Botswana 1994), Education for All (UNESCO, 2016), Vision 2036 (Republic of Botswana 2017) and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG4) (UNESCO 2015) remain a far-fetched dream.

Averseness

Averseness is linked to student and school performance. The findings have revealed that avoiding participation in school activities and the lack of enthusiasm displayed by parents in both schools may be due to lack of education and/or illiteracy. The statement (Table 1), "*maybe we fear that we are not educated and would not know what is inside the children's books*" (SAP 2) as uttered by one of the parents in the study, echoes the effects of fear or uncertainty. Parents' lack of social capital and illiteracy render them unable to help their learners to effectively participate in school assignments. School B (Table 3) serves BaSarwa and BaKalanga ethnic groups. Here, a few elders who requested anonymity and some pupils confirmed that learners struggle academically because they are subjected to negative name calling by some teachers. They submitted that vulnerable learners such as orphans and the needy were not spared from such humiliating atterances. Assenting to these allegations, the SMTs also confirmed that they received such reports from parents. An education officer for the area expressed awareness of

the problems in School B. The officer, however, acknowledged loopholes in school leadership practices. He said "*The situation becomes worse if the school head comes from a different ethnic tribe as they [the BaSarwa] feel looked down upon*". The observation, however, is that education practitioners (Education Officer, School Management Team and teachers) perceive behaviour of victims as self-discrimination by the 'marginalised communities' themselves. Their reasoning seems to be based on existing stereotypes. These stereotypes find their way into the school system, thus leading to an ineffective relationship between the school and the Parents Teachers Association. It is noted that Rogošiæ and Baranoviæ (2016) attribute the differences in educational success to different levels of existing social capital which is produced in the networks and connections of families that the school serves. In addition, Plagens (2011) argues that it is often difficult to identify the exact reason why some learners and schools do perform better than others despite the equal distribution of resources across schools.

Attention Seeking

The study also revealed that the unfavourable education system, ineffective teacher pedagogy and unconducive school environment continue to lead to the exclusion and withdrawal of many learners from schools. With reference to Table 1, the focus group used in the study lamented that they do not want Teacher X because when they were doing Standard 5, '*he was always on the phone*' (F/G). The teacher '*was always out*' (F/G). These comments are an indication that the learners needed teacher attention. Learners experience little attention from their teachers. Messiou (2006) asserts that children's voices were a challenging starting point for the creation of more inclusive practices within schools. As such, failure to pay attention to learners subjects them to the practice of silent exclusion. Learners prefer to be continually engaged on issues that matter the most regarding their education (Messiou 2006; Kristiæ et al. 2017). Consequently, the use of children's voices is essential, not only as a tool for gathering information, but also as a critical way of proving

that schools are truly engaging with those involved in the process of inclusive education.

CONCLUSION

This study has revealed that the identity crisis and exclusion cases in the two socio-culturally challenged schools are influenced by different but closely linked environments as outlined in Table 3. In School A, socio-cultural settings and challenging experiences bother all stakeholders (teachers, parents and learners). In School B, the bigger challenge is associated with sociological and psychological issues of social and symbolic capital. In both schools, identity crisis and exclusion behaviours come as socio-cultural challenges to school leadership. It is evident that when poor social capital is experienced, weak networks and connections between the school, parents and the community present themselves as factors to 'educational exclusion' that inevitably affect learning. The role of school leadership should, therefore, be to ensure that schools become more than learning factories where inputs are used to generate outputs and social environments are essentially child-friendly. Schools should put in place strategies that can be employed to deal with averseness and academic exclusion that tend to detach schools from the communities they serve. Schools are yet to adopt pragmatic, progressive and modest school leadership practices that are inspirational and that value total inclusivity and learner empowerment for sustainability.

Cases of exclusion experienced in both schools are a manifestation of identity crisis that is not yet effectively mediated by school leadership practices. Both external and internal school environments could be controlled through transformational leadership activities and by more constructive context-based strategies. Lack of focused leadership that is transformational and multicultural breeds a variety of social and psychological ills amongst members of a community, and negatively affects learners the most. The resultant identity crisis leads to insecurity, inequity, alienation, averseness and attention seeking.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Leadership practices should be geared towards to the acquisition of skills on inclusivity

in order to satisfy the learning needs of all children. The move would in turn motivate improved quality parental participation in children's education. There is an urgent need for school leadership and teachers' training on mind-set change. School leadership require on-site and context-based training on critical thinking and reflective practices in managing identity crisis and exclusion behaviours. This study, also proposes more research on understanding socio-cultural challenges facing school leadership across the country. The emerging themes from this study provide a philosophical argument and framework for policy and curriculum development that may motivate proactive measures of dealing with cases of identity crisis and exclusion in schools.

REFERENCES

Adlparvar N, Tadros M 2016. The evolution of ethicity: Intersectionality, geopolitics and development. *Development Studies - Past, Present and Future,* 47(2): 123-136.

Alkan F 2016. Experiential learning: Its effects on achievement and scientific process skills. *Journal of Turkish Science Education,* 13(2): 15-26.

Ary D, Jacobs L, Sorensen C, Walker D 2014. *Introduction to Research in Education.* Washington D.C.: Cengage Learning.

Bahar M, Bilgin I 2003. Literature study of learning styles. *Journal of Social Sciences,* 1(1): 41-66.

Bond L, Carlin JB, Toma L, Rubin K, Patton G 2001. Does Bullying cause emotional problems? A prospective study of young teenagers. *British Medical Journal,* 323(1): 480-484.

Braun V, Clarke V 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology,* 3(2): 77-101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Butt T 2008. *George Kelly. The Psychology of Personal Constructs.* Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, Macmillan.

Cline T, de Abreu G, Fihosy C, Gray H, Lambert H, Neale J 2002. *Minority Ethnic Pupils in Mainly White Schools.* London: Stationary Office.

Creswell, J. W. 2002. *Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research (4th ed.).* Boston: Pearson Education.

Eriksen TH 2002. *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives, Culture, Anthropology and Society Series.* 2nd Edition. London: Pluto Press.

Fearon DJ, Laitin DD 2000. Violence and the social construction of identity. *International Organization,* 54(4): 845-877.

Fraenkel JR, Wallen NE, Hyun HH 2012. *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education* 8th Edition. Singapore: McGraw-Hill International Edition.

Frankenberg E, Chungmei L 2003. *Charter Schools and Race: A Lost Opportunity for Integrated Education.* Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

Garciá MR 2015. Reality construction, communication and daily life - An approach to Thomas Luckmann Work. *Intercom, Rev Bras Ciênc Comun,* 38(2): 19-36.

Garegae KG 2008. The crisis of student discipline in Botswana Schools: An impact of culturally conflicting disciplinary strategies. *Educational Research and Review,* 3(1): 48-55.

Green M 2006. Bullying in schools: A plea for measure of rights. *Journal of Social Issues,* 62(1): 63-79.

Hallinger P 2010. Leading educational change: Reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 33(3): 329-352.

Hue M, Kennedy K 2014. The Challenge of promoting ethnic minority education and cultural diversity in Hong Kong Schools: Fro policy to practice. *Revista Española de Educación Comparada,* 23(1): 117-134.

Kaufmann C 2005. Rational choice and progress in the study of ethnic conflict: A review essay. *Security Studies,* 14(1): 178-207.

Kirsch H, Jordan J 2000. Emotions and personal constructs. In: JW Scheer (Ed.): *The Person in Society.* Giessen, Germany: Psychosozial-Verlag, pp. 290-302.

Kristiæ K, Iliæ I, Videnoviæ M 2017. Student dropout in primary and secondary education in the Republic of Serbia. *Psihološka istra•ivanja,* XX(1): 27-50.

Leach F, Mitchell C 2006. *Combating Gender Violence In and Around Schools [Introduction].* London: Sterling.

Leeds-Hurwitz W 2009. *Social Construction of Reality: Encyclopedia of Communication.* Thoysand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Lester D 2009. Emotions in Personal Construct Theory: A Review. *Personal Construct Theory and Practice,* 6(1): 90-98.

Marumo BB, Pansiri NO 2016. Early school withdrawals and underperformance as indicators of poor attention to learners' welfare: Botswana in 50 years of self-rule. *Journal of Educational Issues,* 2(2): 367-384.

McDougall GJ 2016. *The First United Nations Mandate on Minority Issues.* New York: United Nations Development Programme.

Messiou K 2006. Understanding marginalisation in education: The voice of children. *European Journal of Psychology of Education,* XXI(3): 305-318.

Mogami TD 2001. *National Policy on Culture.* Gaborone: Government Printer.

Mokibelo E 2015. The Outcomes of learning a foreign language: Cases of rural primary schools in Botswana. *US-China Education Review A,* 5(9): 573-590.

Mulford B 2008. *The Leadership Challenge: Improving Learning in Schools.* Victoria: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Mulimbi B, Dryden-Peterson S 2017. Responses to cultural diversity in Botswana's schools: Links between national policy, school actions and students' civic equality. *Journal of Curriculum Studies,* 1(1): 1-23.

Nyati-Ramahobo L 2008. *Minority Tribes in Botswana: The Politics of Recognition.* London: Minority Rights Group International.

Okilwa N 2015. Educational marginalization: Examining challenges and possibilities for improving educational outcomes in Northeastern Kenya. *Global Education Review,* 2(4): 5-18.

Orfield G, Whitla D 2001. Diversity and Legal Education: Student Experiences in leading Law Schools. In: G Orfield (Ed.): *Diversity Challenged: Evidence on the Impact of Affirmative Action.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Publishing Group, pp. 143-174.

Pansiri NO 2011a. Silent exclusion: The unheard voices in remote areas of Botswana. *International Journal of Educational Sciences,* 3(2): 109-118.

Pansiri NO 2011b. Performativity in school management and leadership in Botswana. *Educational Management, Administration and Leadership,* 39(6): 751-766.

Pansiri NO, Majwabe S 2020. A historical analysis of educational leadership preparation and development in Botswana. In: P Moorosi, T Bush (Eds.): *Preparation and Development of School Leaders in Africa.* London: Bloomsbury, pp. 17-35.

Petkovska V 2015. Coping with marginalized students inclusion in EL Teacher Training. *Journal of Education and Practice,* 6(18): 216-219.

Plagens G 2011. Social capital and education: Implications for student and school performance. *Education and Culture,* 27(1): 40-64.

Republic of Botswana 1994. *The Revised National Policy on Education of 1994. Ministry of Education.* Gaborone: Government Printer

Republic of Botswana 2014. *Affirmative Action Framework for Remote Area Communities.* Gaborone: Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development.

Republic of Botswana 2017. *Government of Botswana and United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF 2017-2020).* Gaborone: United Nations Botswana.

Rigby K 2003. Consequences of bullying in schools. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry,* 48(9): 583-590.

Rogošiæ S, Baranoviæ B 2016. Social capital and educational achievements: Coleman vs. Bourdieu. *CEPS Journal,* 6(2): 81-100.

Tabulawa R, Pansiri ON 2013. Botswana: Aspects of general education. In: C Harber (Ed.): *Education in Southern Africa.* London: Bloomsbury, pp.33-54.

Todd J 2017. The politics of identity change and conflict: An agenda for research. *Politics,* 38(1): 84-93.

UNESCO 2015. *Education 2030: Ensuring Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities For All.* Paris. UNESCO.

UNESCO 2016. *Education for People and Planet: Creating Sustainable Futures For All.* Paris. UNESCO.

Vaismoradi M, Jones J, Turunen H, Snelgrove S 2016. Theme development in qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis. *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice,* 6(5): 100-110.

Walker B, Winter D 2007. The elaboration of personal construct psychology. *Annual Review of Psychology,* 58(1): 453-477.

Walter A, Griffin D 2014. Tell me, teach me, involve me: Transformational leadership, mentoring, and you. In: CEKD Kirstein (Ed.): *Strategies for Teaching Leadership: Proven Practices in Higher Education.* Washington DC: Library of Congress, pp. 132-145.