

UNIVERSITY OF NATAL

**FACTORS THAT IMPACT ON PUPIL PERFORMANCE IN THE BOTHA-BOTHE
DISTRICT PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF LESOTHO: A DESCRIPTIVE SURVEY
STUDY OF TEN SCHOOLS.**

RESEARCH REPORT

BY

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Education at the University of Natal, Durban**

***FACTORS THAT IMPACT ON PUPIL PERFORMANCE IN THE BOTHA-BOTHE
DISTRICT PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF LESOTHO: A DESCRIPTIVE SURVEY STUDY
OF TEN SCHOOLS 1994 - 2001***

*This dissertation is submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Masters
in Education (Educational Studies) by completion of eight taught modules and dissertation.*

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AUTHOR DECLARATION

1. The author has not been registered for any other academic award during the period of registration for this study.
2. The material included in this investigation has not been submitted wholly or in part at any other university or institution for any purpose, academic or otherwise.
3. The programme of advanced study of which this investigation is part has included completion of the following modules:

Addressing Barriers in Education
Comparative Studies in Education
Introduction to Educational Research Methods
Language and Education
Leadership and Strategic Management
Masculinity and Schooling
Managing for School Effectiveness
Pastoral Care and Counselling

4. The author declares that this is his own, not assisted work.

.....

Signed

Mohami Tseko Jim

.....

Date

The statement by the supervisor:

This mini-dissertation is submitted with/ without my approval.

Signed

Relebohile Moletsane

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the factors that impact on positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in the Botha-Bothe district primary schools of Lesotho. Given the pupil performance in Lesotho districts the study aimed to find out what factors lead to high pupil performance in Botha-Bothe district, as well as why some schools in the same district perform better than others, and how low performing schools and school developers can learn from the high performing schools. This study used a descriptive survey research design to collect quantitative and qualitative data from the Ministry of Education District officials, primary school principals and primary school teachers. A descriptive survey design used involved questionnaires interviews, and document analysis to collect data for the study.

The research findings in this study revealed that the Ministry of Education Officials, principals and teachers specifically identified the following factors to have positive impact on pupil performance:

- ❖ A teacher with positive relationships
- ❖ Effective teaching and learning processes
- ❖ Purposeful leadership by the principal
- ❖ The way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Using a descriptive survey design, this study attempts to explore the factors that lead to positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district in Lesotho.

Primary schools in the Botha-Bothe district in Lesotho have been known for their excellent results in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) from as far back as 1994. For example, from 1994 to 2001 the district has obtained the highest pass rate amongst all other nine districts as shown in table 1 below as per the Examinations Council of Lesotho (1994:i), (1995:i), (1996:i), (1997:i), (1998:i), (1999:i), (2000:i), and (2001:i) PSLE pass lists. Even though the district primary schools performed well over the years mentioned above, individual school performance varies. Individual school pass rate has ranged from 15.8% to 100% passes since 1994 as reflected in Appendix A.

Table 1. Analysis of PSLE results by % pass during 1994 – 2001 in the districts of Lesotho.

Pass Percentage per annum

District	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Botha-Bothe	89.5	77.5	85.1	87.5	85.9	84.8	93.6	92.4
Leribe	84.0	69.4	79.1	76.9	75.2	76.4	86.9	88.7
Berea	87.3	71.5	76.9	80.3	74.0	75.8	85.7	87.2
Maseru	89.2	75.9	83.7	77.7	72.8	79.4	88.8	87.8
Mafeteng	84.2	67.4	77.5	73.4	70.1	72.0	90.4	86.4
Mohale's Hoek	84.1	75.2	79.0	79.5	74.2	72.2	86.6	88.1
Quthing	83.3	65.7	74.8	72.3	72.1	67.2	82.8	85.8
Qacha's Nek	84.1	70.0	77.2	73.5	67.8	72.7	85.3	83.8
Mokhotlong	86.0	68.6	72.3	76.0	71.3	72.1	83.5	88.2
Thaba- Tseka	84.4	69.4	75.8	77.1	77.2	80.4	81.4	84.7

This study aimed to find out what factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, and how do teachers influence positive pupil performance in ten primary schools.

1.2 Background

The Kingdom of Lesotho is completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. Its boundaries run with those of Kwazulu-Natal to the east, Eastern Cape to the south, and the Orange Free State to the north and west. The boundaries of Lesotho follow in part a series of rivers, the Tele, the Senqu (Orange river), the Makhaleng (Kornetspruit) and the Mohokare (Caledon).

Lesotho is an agricultural country even though more agricultural produce of sorghum, maize and wheat are imported than exported. However, because of its mountainous nature most of the country is not arable. Rainfall is variable and mean annual rainfall amounts to between 700 mm and 800 mm in most parts of the lowlands. Most of it falls between October and April, but there is normally no month that has less than 12 mm. Its economy is based on subsistence agriculture, livestock, remittance from miners employed in South Africa, and a rapidly growing apparel-assembly sector. The number of mineworkers has declined steadily over the past several years impacting on parental ability to finance educational establishments.

The introduction of industries and small manufacturing bases have become the way to increase employment possibilities quickly and on large scale even though agriculture remains extremely important as a major source of food to most Basotho, and for many it is also a source of cash income. Lesotho is a small landlocked, and mountainous country whose primary natural resource is water sold to South Africa and generating royalties for Lesotho. As far as employment is concerned, Lesotho has a marked inequality in income distribution and serious unemployment/underemployment problems that will not yield to short run solutions while education system suffer financial constraints.

Lesotho has two official languages, English and Sesotho. Sesotho and English are taught in all schools and primary education is conducted in Sesotho for the first four years and mainly in English in grades five through seven (Hartwell, 1989). A large number of Basotho are thus able to speak some English. Those who already speak an African language belonging to the Bantu language family more easily learn Sesotho. For those who do not have this advantage the effort is nevertheless well worth making. Churches play a large part in Lesotho's national life and missions are found throughout the country, in both urban and rural populated areas, and most church services are held in Sesotho but some English language services are held in

Lesotho's principal towns. Lesotho has a small Muslim community mainly located in the north of the country including Botha-Bothe, which has a mosque. Lesotho is an almost completely rural country and even those Basotho who live in the small towns still have strong links with villages where their relatives live and which they often regard as their true homes. Urbanisation has decreased rural population in villages and schools. Language has not become a barrier to learning and religious affiliation used to determine schools that pupils attended, but presently schools do not regard religion as important for entry into education system.

The town of Botha-Bothe came into being as a new government sub-district headquarters in 1884 to facilitate the collecting of taxes. Botha-Bothe is the headquarters of Lesotho's smallest and northernmost district linked to Maseru by a tarred main road. From the Botha-Bothe town a left turn leads to Caledonspoort boarder post, and Monontsa boarder post further north both into the Orange Free State. The population of the town and immediately adjacent villages is approximately 6 000 (Campbell, Ambrose, and Johnson, 1983).

The district population is composed of Basotho who constitute the largest percentage, Europeans and Asians, and Sesotho, English, Zulu and Xhosa languages are used. It is mostly Christian despite the presence of some indigenous beliefs. Language and religion do not hinder entry into schools; as a result, some schools are multi racial.

Employment opportunities for Botha-Bothe residents are in the mines of South Africa, Lesotho Highland Water Project, civil service and business. The great majority households gain their livelihoods from subsistence farming, animal husbandry and migrant labour. With the prevailing state of unemployment/underemployment some parents cannot afford the average school fees of M 90.00 per annum charged in Botha-Bothe primary schools.

1.3 Educational context

Education in Lesotho is organised under proprietorship of distinct institutions. There are government schools, church schools, community schools and private schools. The government is in partnership with the proprietors in the operations of the schools, (Government of Lesotho, 1995). Examinations Council of Lesotho and the government are in charge of examinations involving Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE), Junior Certificate examinations and Cambridge Overseas School Certificate.

There are 1 234 primary schools in Lesotho in 1994 most of which are located in the lowlands, and schools in the remote mountain areas are small and a majority of them do not offer the complete seven-year primary school course (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1996). The ten primary schools that have been the concern of this study comprise both incomplete, that is, schools with less than seven-year course, and full primary schools with seven-year course. There are single and multi-standard classes within these.

1.4 Motivation for the study

I am an Education Officer in the Ministry of Education in the Department of Field Services (Field Inspectorate) in Lesotho whose duty is to “implement and influence the Ministry of Education policies and evaluate schools through school inspections”, (Drake, 1999:1). I am responsible to the Senior Education Officer for conducting annual school inspection programmes for the Qachas’ Nek District (area of assignment); inspecting and supervising educational establishments applying agreed criteria for assessment of performance in a consistent and reliable manner; developing and delivering training programmes for teachers, principals and school committees; advising the SEO on curriculum provision, school administration, management and educational facilities provision; and conducting action research on educational issues in the designed area. In addition to formal inspection, the inspectors give advice and support to teachers and schools for the improvement of teaching and learning in schools and colleges. The roles of the inspectors also involve monitoring and evaluating standards, guiding, advising and supporting the teachers; ensuring that the curriculum is effectively implemented and evaluated; ensuring accountability of educational institutions to the public, government and the pupils; and facilitating and managing educational change (ADEA, 1998).

I became interested in pupil performance as an area of study because it is one of the indicators of school improvement, efficiency, relevance and effective management, and a tool for assessment and evaluation of education system. I was concerned about low pupil performance in some schools in the Botha-Bothe district whereas the government’s objective is “the improvement of quality, efficiency and relevance of the education system; and the effective management of the education system”(Government of Lesotho, 1997:116). Given the pupil performance in Lesotho districts I wanted to find out what factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, and how do teachers influence positive pupil performance.

Some of the reasons why some schools perform worse than others are shortages of teachers, a drop in a number of applicants for teacher training and studies. Some teachers deviate from the expected teacher behaviour and behave unprofessionally due to their declining status, morale and motivation. Poor pupil performance is also attributed to contextual factors, socio-economic context, mismanagement, and corruption in schools. As well, cultural context and poor external and internal relations contribute to poor pupil performance (Herber, 1992). In Lesotho, poor pupil performance in some schools is attributed to overcrowding, high pupil: teacher ratio, and inadequate educational resources. The objective of ensuring access to education by all Basotho children up to at least primary level was attained in the 1980s, as evidenced by the increase of primary schools enrolments by 40%. Subsequently, overcrowding in primary school resulted in a high pupil: teacher ratio of 49:1. There was also the problem of inadequate educational facilities, a high pupil: classroom ratio of 82:1, an average of 4.4 books per pupil and only 36% of pupils being seated at desks in 1994 (Government of Lesotho, 1997).

It is these factors that the study reported here was concerned about. This study aimed to find out what factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, and how do teachers influence positive pupil performance. The study particularly investigated the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive impact on pupil performance.

The study also addressed the nature of pupil performance in the selected schools using the PSLE as a measure of pupil performance in Lesotho over a period of eight years because PSLE not only measures the attainment of those who complete primary school but it is also the gauge of the foundation on which all other education and training is built (The Education Sector Survey, 1982). It evaluates standards, ensures that the curriculum is effectively implemented and evaluated; ensures that schools give feedback to the public, government and the pupils; and facilitates management of educational change.

Mortimore and his colleagues (1988) identified a number of schools, which were effective in both academic and social areas. The early school effectiveness studies on one hand identified five factors that generated effective schools and concluded that a number of factors appeared to be related to effectiveness, such as the five factors that are often mentioned: strong

educational leadership, high expectations of student achievement, an emphasis on basic skills, a safe and orderly climate, and frequent evaluation of pupil progress, (Creemers, 1996). The ten schools studied are those whose pupils have sat for PSLE from 1994 to 2001 for not less than five examination years; those with the average percentage rate performance divided into highest, middle and lowest percent attainment. Thus, four schools with high performance, two schools with average performance and four schools with low performance.

There are different views regarding reasons why some schools perform better than others. The education department has consistently analysed and discussed the examination performance with teachers in schools when there was failure and when there was good performance. Other factors responsible for the discrepancy are variations in the abilities of pupils, the examination entry policy, school catchments areas, socio-economic factors and parental attitudes and support (Boulter, 1990).

According to Creemers (1996) schools that emphasised the achievement of certain set of goals and objectives did better than other schools in pupil performance. The achievement of goals and objectives required time and an opportunity for the pupils to learn so as to secure high pupil performance by the schools. In addition studies carried out in the 1970s and 1990s revealed a number of factors, which were associated with more effective schools. These factors included students' attitudes to school; teachers' perceptions of students, internal school organisational factors, and school resources' levels (Creemers, 1996).

This study aimed to address the following research questions:

- a) What are the perceptions of (1) the District Education Officers (Field services), (2) primary school principals, and (3) teachers, regarding the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district?
- b) How do teachers influence positive pupil performance?

1.5 Organisation of the report

This chapter has introduced the study reported here and identified the major research question.

Chapter Two reviews the literature related to the factors that impact on high pupil performance. It also reviews the relevant theoretical frameworks that have been used to analyse high pupil performance internationally and identifies frameworks used to collect and analyse data in this study. It concludes with the summary of what the literature reviewed revealed and what remains unanswered.

Chapter Three discusses the research methodologies used to gather answers to the research questions and includes a description and context of the actual sites. This chapter discusses specific rationale, participants, procedures, instrumentation, and methods of analysis.

Chapter Four presents the actual findings from each procedure. This chapter also discusses methodological constraints or issues.

Chapter Five interprets the results of the study and concludes by looking at the implications and limitations of the research for present practice and policy, and for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that lead to positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district in Lesotho. In particular, the study investigated the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive impact on pupil performance. The study also addressed the nature of pupil performance in the selected schools using the PSLE as a measure of pupil performance in Lesotho over a period of eight years.

The study aimed to address the following questions:

- a) What factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district?
- b) How do teachers influence positive pupil performance?

This chapter aims to review literature related to factors that impact positively on pupil performance in general, and in Lesotho primary schools in particular. The review of literature in this chapter is concerned with the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive impact on pupil performance. The chapter also reviews relevant theoretical frameworks that have been used to collect and analyse data in this study.

2.2 Teacher Behaviours

An implicit assumption has been that there is agreement about the way teachers are expected to behave amongst themselves, those in the teaching profession, and the public at large. Therefore, aspects of teacher effectiveness focus on the importance of changing teacher behaviours rather than looking for school level initiatives to bring about change in the classroom (Gray *et al.*, 1990). The role of a teacher is divided into four sectors namely; the classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom; the way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other; the behaviour of the teacher when not teaching; and the behaviour expected of the teacher when away from the school. But the final outcome of the teacher's role is whether low or high pupils' performance is achieved

(Musgrave, 1969). This view suggests that effective teacher roles and behaviours are important determinants of positive pupil performance. In essence, the classroom interaction between the teacher and the pupil is the concern of the teaching and learning process (Nash, 1973).

An effective teacher is responsible for maintaining the standard and producing good quality of learning outcomes by the pupils. Teachers' primary task is to structure and organize learning. To this effect, the relationship between effective teaching and pupil outcomes has become the focus of considerable attention (Macgilchrist *et al.* 1997). In this regard effective teaching entails teaching capabilities possessed by the teacher and pupils' potential to learn so as to enable effective learning and high achievement to occur. Teaching and learning are separate and differ, but they are intertwined and work together in influencing pupil performance.

Teaching is an important aspect of school effectiveness, and the major contributor to school effectiveness is teaching. The more structured and reflective the approach to teaching, the more likely it is that students' academic performance will improve. Teachers still influence the learning of children. The initiatives that have changed education have come, and will continue to come, from teachers through their concern with learning (Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1993).

Therefore, this study aimed to find out whether the teacher behaviours, the role played by the teacher, classroom teacher attitudes and behaviours, and teacher-pupil interaction contribute to positive pupil performance in primary schools of Botha-Bothe district.

2.3 Contextual factors

The contexts within which schools operate are as influential as any initiatives, strategies or factors influencing pupils' performance. The achievement of pupils in a school relates to the socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school, and the areas from which pupils' come. Higher rates of behavioural and educational difficulties in the pupils are characterised by features of family adversity. But, teachers are expected to deal with all children coming from homes that are deprived or disadvantaged in any way (Rutter *et al.*, 1988). Family background affects schooling outcomes in that higher parental schooling is associated with higher schooling attainment for children (Anderson *et al.* 2001). Furthermore,

one of the most important factors in the development of every school is in its relationship with the community from which it draws its pupils (Chetwynd, 1958).

Lesotho schools are mostly in rural areas. However, in Botha-Bothe, ninety per cent of the sixteen schools are in the town and five are in the surrounding villages (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1996). This creates a problem for the many unemployed families, as many of the urban schools tend to charge high school fees, which they cannot afford resulting in overcrowding in some schools and high dropout rate.

2.4 School culture

In terms of a school, Bryk and Driscoll (1988) cited by Dalin (1998) define school culture as a common value system, a common agenda and collegial relations between the adults, including teachers' role that extends beyond the classroom in which a clear connection between culture and pupils' results exist in a school. Little (1990) cited by Dalin (1998) has shown clearly how collegial norms influence the chance that teachers have to make an impact in their own school. In such a culture, pupils are more interested in academic subjects, have a lower rate of absenteeism, and are more organised. Fewer pupils quit school, and pupils get better grades. Teachers are more satisfied with their jobs, they are sick less often, and morale is higher than at other schools. There is also a high degree of motivation for further school improvement. Macgilchrist *et al.*, (1997: 11) point out that 'the culture of a school is a deciding factor when it comes to school's state of readiness and its capacity to improve.' This network of common beliefs, norms, values, and attitudes and behaviours of those in a school enable teachers to positively influence pupil performance.

A conscious attempt by an effective school to promote a common culture for increased co-operation and collegial relations lead to improved classroom teaching and to increased teacher motivation. Dalin (1998) concludes that in order to motivate teachers for a new learning culture, he had to work with the teachers' strong points.

A strongly held school culture is an important aspect of school that influences the way a school operates since school culture is not static but dynamic, and can be affected by a variety of factors, Rossman and colleagues (1988) cited in Stoll and Fink (1996:89) identify and elaborate on school cultural changes in which a school can consciously be involved. These are evolutionary, additive and transformational changes. The school can recognise various

cultures within it; those of teachers, pupils, administrators, non-teaching staff and parents which may form around interests pertinent to a particular group and create the potential to pull a school in several directions. According to Rossman *et al.* (1988) quoted in Stoll and Fink (1996:100) 'culture defines effectiveness'. The presence of school culture promoted by an effective school culminates in positive pupil performance.

2.5 School Resources

According to the Government of Lesotho (1997:115) "there is a declining quality of education as reflected by the increasing class repetition and dropout rates in primary grades. These problems are due to a shortage of qualified teachers, inadequate inspectorate services, overcrowding, and lack of educational facilities and equipment". Therefore, if these problems are curbed quality of education will increase evidently in high pupil performance. In order to achieve this, local resource allocation (financial, teachers, training, facilities) are rationalised and resources spread equally across the education system. Improving the learning and teaching is critical and deserves high priority, and the Government policy is to reduce overcrowding and improve pupil: classroom and pupil: teacher ratios as this results in teachers' motivation and in the creation of conditions that are conducive to teaching and learning.

Amongst the available resources for the teacher enhancing pupil performance, the most important is the teacher himself. Another major resource is the school with its particular equipment and materials inside, and particular physical environment outside. The school's population which includes teaching and non-teaching staff and pupils, and what the public expects from it tends to be taken for granted though important to be considered as far as pupil performance is concerned (McFarland, 1973).

Pupil performance depends mostly on parents' involvement as a resource for learning in the school community and their relations with teachers or school. Parents' involvement in school is constituted by general participation, helping in classrooms or sponsoring and supporting school programs, and participation on the school governance (Haynes and Ben-Avie, 1996)

There are a variety of pupils' and teachers' resources, which a teacher and the pupils interact with in the teaching and learning process in order to enhance learning and achievement (Perrott, 1982: 130-132). The teacher helps pupils to identify a whole range of resources for their work. While doing so, teachers encourage pupils to consider the wide variety of

resources available both inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, the teacher's effective use of "static resources" and "audio-visual equipment" is more valuable (McFarland, (1973:74). It is then concluded that both human and material resources are essential for achieving high pupil performance. Whether the schools that perform better in Botha-Bothe are better resourced than the others was explored in this study.

2.6 Teaching and Learning processes

Teachers influence learning by ensuring that school curriculum is broad and balanced, and provides continuity and progression of learning. Teachers' wholehearted involvement enhances curriculum change, and effective teaching is a pre-requisite for subject knowledge to be translated into teaching programmes that meet the learning needs of pupils. Teaching could often be more effective if greater attention was paid to the teaching of the skills needed for subject study including how to use tools, materials and equipment effectively. Four main design components to maximize effective classroom learning are identified as presence of clear intentions, well-structured and organized design matching to the pupil's previous learning and appropriate to their stage of development (Macgilchrist *et al.*, 1997).

The base for learning in schools is the learning process itself; a learning process that develops the pupil's ability for achieving high performance. Teachers know what they do to get there. There is motivation, an interest, and a will to do their work with new knowledge and an individual teacher has the necessary skills to implement new practices, which foster high pupil performance (Dalin, P., 1998).

This chapter reviewed literature pertaining to the factors that impact on positive pupil performance. In particular, the literature addressed teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, resources, and teaching and learning processes that positively impact on pupil performance in schools.

Chapter three discusses the research methodologies used to gather answers to the research questions, includes a description and context of the actual sites. It discusses specific rationale, participants, procedures, instrumentation, and methods of data collection and analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study investigated factors that lead to positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district in Lesotho, and how do teachers influence positive pupil performance from the Ministry of Education District officials, primary school principals and primary school teachers. In particular, the investigation focused on whether the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes are some of the factors that may lead to positive pupil performance in the district schools.

In this chapter, the research design and methodology for answering the research questions, and data collection methods are discussed in order to ensure accuracy, validity and reliability of the results. The chapter gives a description and context of the actual site of research study. This chapter specifically outlines the analysis methods.

3.2 Research design and Methodology

This study used a descriptive survey research design to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from the population on which the survey was to focus (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000:172). The survey research was the most suitable for the study because it explored various perceptions regarding the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance, and how teachers influence positive pupil performance. Using questionnaires and interviews, it was possible to generate frequencies of responses amenable to basic statistical treatment and analysis, and to follow-up unexpected responses and to go deeper into the motivations of the respondents and their reasons for responding as they did. The study attempted to describe the nature of the existing conditions by looking at Ministry of Education District Education Officials', principals and teachers' perceptions on teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes in each school. Through the survey, I aimed to document, analyse and interpret the prevailing attitudes and perceptions related to the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance.

Stratified random sampling was used in this study to divide the population into subgroups: schools with high pupil performance, schools with average performance and schools with low

performance. Once the population was divided, samples were drawn from each subgroup. The same number of teachers and principals was selected from each school. This method was chosen for its efficacy because a smaller number of subjects were used. Dividing the population into subgroups also enabled the researcher to compare subgroup results.

3.3 Data collection methods

More than one method of data collection in this study was employed to solicit data from various sources through the use questionnaires, interviews and analysis of documents. This is termed triangulation (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989). Triangulation can add some depth to the analysis and potentially increase the validity of the data and consequently the analysis made of them. This triangulation was directed to investigating the role played by teachers in pupil performance, teacher behaviours that lead to positive pupil performance, factors leading to high performance in Botha-Bothe district, why some schools in the same district perform better than others, and how low performing schools and school developers can learn from the high performance. Triangulation enabled the study of the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance in the ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district of Lesotho, and the manner in which teachers influence positive pupil performance by particularly focusing on teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes, as some of the factors that may lead to positive pupil performance.

The data collection methods: questionnaires, interviews and document analysis were used in this study. First, the questionnaires were piloted at Falimehang and Masianokeng Primary schools of the Maseru district, which are composed of eight and nineteen teachers respectively. This raised a number of issues, which led to the revision of the questionnaires: The questionnaires did not contain a full range of possible responses as could be reasonably foreseen. In addition, from the pilot, it became evident that the number of items needed reduction and the most relevant items selected in order to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaire.

Second, data collection exercise took two weeks. In the first week questionnaires were distributed, administered and collected from eleven Ministry of Education District Education Officials, ten Primary School Principals and ninety-six teachers of the ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district within a period of a week, while simultaneously analysing documents from the schools and Ministry. The second week was spent preparing and holding group

interviews, first with the eleven Ministry of Education District Education officials and then the ten primary schools' principals.

3.3.1 Questionnaires

I chose to use questionnaires for the fact that questionnaires usually contain questions aimed at getting specific information on a variety of topics. The questionnaire questions were designed both in closed and open form, so that quantification and analysis of the results may be carried out efficiently, and so that the results for each item may be analysed and reported separately.

These were administered to eleven high ranking Ministry of Education District Education Officials based in the Botha-Bothe district; ten primary school principals of the schools under study (Appendix C); and ninety-six primary school teachers (Appendix D) in the ten selected primary schools since they are already based in the District Resource Centre and selected primary schools of the district respectively.

3.3.2 Interviews

Informal group interviews were conducted with eleven high-ranking Ministry of Education District Education Officials because of their availability and willingness as colleagues, status and role in the District Resource Centre and, ten primary school principals because of their status and role in their schools. These groups could gather on appointment in specified place whereas teachers could not and, timing could not permit. Interviews were used in conjunction with questionnaires and documents analysis to validate them. An interview protocol was prepared and used for data collection (Appendix E).

3.3.3 Document analysis

Document analysis was used in this study to address the main research question: what factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, and how do teachers influence positive pupil performance. These documents were useful in providing additional insight or information to the responses from questionnaires and interviews. The relevant documents in this research were those produced by the Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL), Ministry of Education officials, primary schools and about teachers in education such as PSLE examinations pass lists, District PSLE

analysis, and primary schools' logbook. The study also addressed students' rates of success in the selected schools, and noted the high pupil performance experienced by the Botha-Bothe district with the main concern on performance of the schools under study.

3.4 A description of the context of the actual research site(s)

There were several criteria that influenced the choice of schools studied here. To start with, I wanted to study the best performing district ever since 1994. This was Botha-Bothe district whose primary schools are known for their excellent results in the (PSLE). Teachers from ten primary schools whose pupils have sat for PSLE from 1994 to 2001 for not less than five examination years were selected. All schools were selected based on the number of times their pupils sat for examinations; and the average percentage rate divided into highest, middle and lowest percent attainment. Thus, four schools with high performance, two schools with average performance and four schools with low performance were selected. This study involved all principals and teachers in each school and Ministry of Education officials in the district as the major stakeholders in school organisations. The schools' profile is shown below:

Table 2. The ten-school profile 2002

School	Proprietor	District Dissemination Centre	Number of Teachers	Standard (multi/single)	Performance in % since 1994-2001
B.B.Mopeli	LEC	BBC	13	Single	99.2
Hololo	LEC	Khukhune	10	Single	98.5
Liqobong	LEC	Liphakoeng	05	Single	69.2
Monont'sa	ACL	Mechachaneng	09	Single	55.8
Sefako	ACL	Mechachaneng	12	Single	58.4
Jane Com.	Community	Khatibe	10	Single	62.1
Soofia Eng.Medium	Private	BBC	08	Single	100
Thabong SABMS	SABMS	Liphakoeng	18	Single	99.4
Thaka-Banna	ACL	Liphakoeng	05	Multi-standard	87.5
Tlholo	RC	Shishila	05	Multi-standard	87.3

The envisaged participants in this study were the Ministry of Education officials. They are composed of a District Senior Education Officer, four District Education Officers, four District Resource Teachers, one Lesotho College of Education officer, one Lesotho Distance Teacher Centre official, and one School Self-Reliance Feeding Unit Extension officer. In

addition, at the school level ten Principals and ninety-six class teachers from the ten schools were involved. This selection was made because these groups of potential sample participants permitted practicable access and there were no restrictions to the release of data collected.

In the first place, the district has been my duty station for about six years and it is not even half a year since my transfer to another district to operate from. Therefore, I assumed that since I had warm relations with the district education officials, principals, and teachers, they would be willing to offer access and whatever information I requested. They are also the chief subjects directly or indirectly influencing pupil performance, major stakeholders directly dealing with schools, parents, Examinations Council of Lesotho, and other agencies related to the school, and there was envisaged cooperation as they possibly understand the importance of the study.

The District Senior Education Officer (DSEO) in charge of the district education matters in the Botha-Bothe district was informed and asked to grant permission to carry out the study with officers in the district education office, principals and teachers in the ten selected schools. Principals were asked to participate in the study. Questionnaires were used to collect data because with them as it is easy to handle and manage large amount of qualitative and quantitative data. The first set of questionnaires was administered to the District Senior Education Officer and District Education Officers (Field Inspectorate), the second set was administered to the principals, and the last set with the teachers. This survey study also used structured group interviews first conducted with the District Education Officials and with principals because of the possible grouping of the sample and its accessibility.

3.5 Data Analysis

Responses were checked, assembled into meaningful units and analysed through the procedures including preparing data from subjects for analysis by checking to see that data are complete, sorting the data by groups; summarising the data from the subjects into meaningful units (descriptive statistics) interpreting the results by deciding whether and how well the information answers the research question (Sowell and Casey, 1982). Qualitative data was categorised and organised according to themes and analysed for consensus, similarities and unpredicted responses. Group interviews were transcribed identifying data categories and organising it according to guiding framework including recurring and notable themes that had not been identified in advance. Pre-identified themes such as the expected teacher behaviour

and role, district performance, the selected school performance and performance of pupils in the schools under study became the object of the study within the documents.

Triangulation as applied in this study, required the researcher to collect, organise and read data, and then compare the data from each of the data collection instruments or techniques with each other, and to analyse and code data. Data analysis attempted to map out more fully the complexity of teacher behaviour and pupil performance, making use of quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The data from the ten principals, ninety-six teachers and district officers will be integrated for the purpose of reporting.

3.6 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to eleven high ranking Ministry of Education District Education Officials ignoring those in the lower ranks, ten primary school principals from the ten schools, and ninety-six primary school teachers. This limited the findings of the study in that not all the district education officials, primary school principals and primary school teachers were represented in the sample population. This means that the results cannot be said to apply to all primary schools in Lesotho. However, the findings have implications for education policy and practice regarding factors that contribute to positive pupil performance in primary schools of Botha-Bothe district of Lesotho, and the manner in which teachers influence positive pupil performance.

The next chapter presents findings from the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This study aimed to investigate the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, particularly the role of teachers in influencing positive pupil performance. The study particularly investigated the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive pupil performance. The study also addressed the nature of pupil performance in the selected schools using the PSLE as a measure of pupil performance in Lesotho over a period of eight years. PSLE is the gauge of the foundation on which all other education and training is built, and it is a measure of attainment of those who complete primary school. It evaluates standards, effective implementation of the curriculum and ensures that schools give feedback to the public, government and the pupils. It is crucial to note the high pupil performance experienced by the Botha-Bothe district with the main concern on performance of the schools under study.

The major questions of the research were as follows:

- a) What factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district?
- b) How do teachers influence positive pupil performance?

As indicated in the last chapter, major data collection methods included questionnaires, group interviews and document analysis. Data collected through these methods from 117 respondents including Ministry of Education District Officials, primary school principals and primary school teachers is presented below. The responses are organised into themes informed by the research questions.

4.2 Factors that lead to positive pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE)

Table 3. Responses on the factors that impact on pupil performance

Factors	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. Purposeful leadership of the staff by the head Teacher	100%	90%	66%	85%
B. Consistency among teachers	73%	70%	46%	63%
C. Structured sessions	64%	100%	36%	67%
D. Intellectually challenging teaching	91%	70%	65%	75%
E. Work-centred environment	73%	60%	48%	60%
F. Maximum communication between teachers and students	91%	70%	58%	73%
G. Good Record-keeping	73%	60%	58%	64%
H. Parental involvement	100%	20%	73%	64%
I. Positive climate	91%	90%	37%	73%

From their responses in the questionnaire, the Ministry of Education Officials, principals and teachers mostly identified purposeful leadership by the principal as the major factor. It is significant that 100% of the officials view parental involvement as an important factor, but that 80% of the principals and 27% of the teachers disagree. The staff at the school seem to have adopted a leadership style which excludes parents, and have decided to act contrary to the Teaching Service Regulations, Education Act of 1995 (Rules governing teaching service) and other Education policies. The Act and Ministry of Education policies stipulate various ways in which parents should be involved in school activities such as in Advisory School Committees, parents meetings, field trips, and School Self-Reliance Projects (Government of Lesotho, 1995).

Another significant finding is that only 37% of the teachers viewed positive climate (positive ethos and pleasant atmosphere), and 36% viewed structured sessions as important. Teachers may not have been practically exposed to other schools and classrooms with positive ethos and pleasant atmospheres; they only know of their schools. Therefore one would suggest inter-school visits to be put in place. This state of affairs may also be existent in schools where teachers hesitate to share knowledge and negative working relationships prevail. The

National Curriculum Development Centre provides guidelines on structured sessions for implementation in schools. The principals are aware of this but the teachers might not be implementing the timetables, schemes of work done and the lesson plans, and responsible stakeholders may not be monitoring teachers' work properly.

It is also worth noting that only 46% of the teachers saw consistency among teachers, and work-centred environment (48%) as important factors. Lack of consistency among teachers is probably prevalent in multi standard schools where the schools are characterised by shortage of teachers, alarming pupil-teacher ratios, and lack of resources. The ability to create a work centred classroom environment challenges teachers classroom management ability and skills which goes further to the consideration of whether the teacher is well qualified or not.

4.3 Teacher behaviours that lead to positive pupil performance

Table 4. Responses on teacher behaviours impacting on pupil performance

Teacher behaviours	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. Understanding of school's and pupil needs.	100%	80%	73%	84%
B. Sharing power with pupils.	55%	70%	66%	64%
C. Consistent approach to teaching.	82%	90%	58%	77%
D. Structuring sessions for pupils.	82%	50%	83%	72%
E. Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching.	91%	90%	66%	82%
F. Creating work-centred environment.	82%	70%	40%	64%
G. Communicating maximally with pupils.	82%	60%	77%	73%
H. Devoting most of their time to individual pupil.	55%	40%	57%	51%
I. Using opportunities to talk to the whole class.	91%	80%	71%	81%

J. Teachers' planning and assessment of pupils.	91%	90%	85%	89%
K. Participating in open-door policy.	82%	50%	42%	58%
L. Teachers with positive relationships.	100%	100%	89%	96%

The Ministry of Education District Officials, principals and teachers surveyed in the study were asked to identify teacher behaviours that impact on pupil performance. It is of importance that only 40% of the principals saw devoting most of teachers' time to individual pupil, 40% of the teachers saw creating work-centred environment, and that 42% of the teachers saw participation of teachers in open-door policy as teacher behaviours that lead to positive pupil performance.

From their standpoint, principals seem to be implying that the time teachers spend with pupils is enough if not too much already, and this is contrary to the teachers stipulated pupil contact hours per day and per week, that is, eight hours per day and forty hours per week (Government of Lesotho, 1995). Attention is to be drawn to the fact that pupils would require teacher's attention more often individually as far as this concerns their work. Once created, a positive work-centred environment result in pupils enjoying their work, low noise level, work related movements, which are not excessive. This would require a high level of classroom management and skills from the teacher; therefore, it implies teachers' need for training and experience, and the consideration of qualification and experience of teachers by the deployment authorities such as the Advisory School Committee, Management Committee of the schools and the Teaching Service Department. It also implies the establishment of the informal open-door policy by the schools in order to involve parents in school activities.

4.4 Reasons for high pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations

Table 5. Responses on the reasons for high pupil performance

Reasons	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. Resources.	73%	80%	66%	73%
B. Teacher behaviours.	82%	90%	57%	76%
C. Positive school context.	64%	80%	59%	68%
D. Effective teaching and learning processes.	94%	100%	92%	95%

When asked to comment on the possible reasons for some schools performing better than others in the Primary School Leaving Examinations, the District Education officials, principals and teachers mostly identified effective teaching and learning processes.

It is surprising that only 57% of the teachers viewed teacher behaviours as a reason for high pupil performance. Teachers do not like it when their personal and professional activities are associated with pupil performance. This includes the behaviour expected of them when not teaching and when away from the school.

A lower percentage of teachers compared to that of officials and principals think that the reasons for high pupil performance mentioned in table 5 above are important. Whereas teachers themselves interact with materials and pupils in effective teaching and learning processes they are of the idea that they are not to blame if pupils do not perform well. Instead they think many other factors are involved even though they are responsible for the implementation of the curriculum. Most teacher respondents strongly believed that their training is outdated in order for them to cope efficiently with the modern changes, and with the present generation. As a result teachers think that the management of teaching and learning processes and the interaction involved are important reasons for high pupil performance.

4.5 Reasons for low pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations

Table 6. Responses on the reasons for low pupil performance

Reasons	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. Teacher behaviour.	100%	80%	30%	70%
B. Lack of professionalism.	91%	80%	34%	68%
C. The declining status, morale and motivation of teachers.	100%	90%	32%	74%
D. Shortages of teachers.	100%	80%	38%	73%
E. Resources.	100%	50%	31%	60%
F. The contextual factors; socio-economic context and mismanagement and corruption.	64%	30%	32%	73%
G. Cultural context where parents, staff and pupils may hold values that differ or are at variance with those of school organisation.	64%	30%	29%	41%
H. Poor external and internal relations.	91%	70%	36%	66%

It is also worth noting that 30% of the principals saw each of contextual factors and cultural context in more or less the same way, as did the teachers. This is in spite of the contexts in which their schools are and the cultural aspects of the communities from which pupils come, and thus, which may impact negatively on the schools, for example, poverty, HIV/AIDS and others.

The results indicate that fewer teachers than principals and officials in the study associated any of the factors with pupil performance. Less than 31% of the teachers have attributed low pupil performance to the reasons given above, while most officials and principals have done so. The difference between the officials' responses and those of the principals and teachers say that officials blame teachers and schools for low pupil pass rate, while the schools put the blame elsewhere. For all the officials, teacher behaviour; declining status, morale and

motivation of teachers; shortage of teachers; and resources are factors responsible for low pupil performance. In this case both the principals and teachers are charged with the responsibility to arrange for the availability of resources and teachers, and changing their status, morale, motivation and behaviour.

The Officers and the principals claim that there is a decline in the status of teachers, low morale and lack of motivation. This impacts negatively on the teaching and learning processes resulting in low pupil performance because they are not satisfied, so they cannot carry out their duties properly. The respondents argue that in understaffed schools performance is low because the teaching staff was overloaded and sometimes children are not looked after when teachers are occupied with other classes. There is also a failure to adapt appropriate mechanism in this regard. Factors within the school and outside the school may affect both pupils and teachers since they do not only live within the school but also have to interact with their communities.

4.6 Teacher behaviours that contribute to positive pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations

Table 7. Responses on teacher behaviours that impact on pupil performance

Teacher roles	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. The classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom.	91%	72%	72%	78%
B. The way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other.	91%	75%	75%	80%
C. The behaviour of the teacher when not teaching.	45%	82%	82%	70%
D. The behaviour expected of the teacher when away from the school.	55%	66%	66%	62%

There are two extremes with regard to officials' responses to the teacher behaviours: First, a high percentage of the officials view the classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom, and teacher and pupils interaction as important. In this case the

officials believe that the teachers are in control of their subjects in classrooms and the interaction involved, so they would be blamed in case of pupil failure.

The officials tend to disagree that the behaviour of the teacher when not teaching and when away from school affects pupil performance. Eighty-two percent (82%) of both the principals and teachers agree that this affects pupil performance. This implies that a teacher remains a teacher even when not performing his/her duties.

4.7 Contextual factors that contribute to positive pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations

Table 8. Responses on contextual factors that impact on pupil performance

Contextual factors	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. Socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school.	55%	50%	51%	52%
B. The areas from which pupils' come.	73%	80%	72%	75%
C. Features of family adversity.	73%	70%	67%	70%
D. Homes that are deprived or disadvantaged.	73%	80%	68%	74%
E. Family background.	100%	70%	90%	87%
F. Family structure.	75%	60%	60%	65%

It is significant that 55% of officials, 50% principals and 52% teachers attribute pupil performance to socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school. However, high percentages of officials, principals and teachers believed that other contextual factors, rather than socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school lead to positive pupil performance.

4.8 Summary of findings

This study aimed to investigate the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, and how teachers influence positive pupil performance. The study particularly investigated the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive pupil performance.

From data collected through questionnaires, group interviews and document analysis, it was concluded that: First, when asked to identify factors that impact on pupil performance, the respondents generally agreed on a number of factors. However, a significant number of teachers did not attribute high pupil performance to structured sessions, a positive school climate, and consistency among teachers or to a work-centred environment. The results suggest that a variety of factors are seen as contributing to positive pupil performance in primary schools of Botha-Bothe.

Second, the majority of all respondents identified similar teacher behaviours as impacting on pupil performance. However, lower percentages of teachers identified creation of work-centred environment and participating in an open-door policy as significant. Nevertheless, the respondents identified the majority of teacher behaviours to positively impact on pupil performance.

Third, all the respondents generally agreed that resources, teacher behaviours, positive school context and effective teaching impact positively on pupil performance. However, fewer teachers identified teacher behaviours and positive school context as important.

Fourth, when asked to identify reasons for low pupil performance, significantly low numbers of teachers selected any of the factors as significant. Further interviews, were they used with this group, would have probed responses for this, as well as identified the factors to which teachers attribute low pupil performance.

Fifth, all the three groups of respondents identified similar teacher behaviours as impacting on pupil performance, with fewer officials identifying the behaviour of a teacher while not teaching as significant.

Last, a high percentage of all respondents agreed on the role played by different contextual factors on pupil performance. However, only about half of them thought that a learner's socio-economic status and poverty in the community significantly impacted on positive pupil performance.

The next chapter discusses the implications of these findings on policy and practice in the schools and district, and makes recommendations for improving performance in all schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In the last chapter data collected through questionnaires, group interviews and document analysis from 117 respondents including Ministry of Education District Officials, primary school principals and primary school teachers were presented. The responses were organised into themes informed by the research question, which was to present the perceptions of the respondents, regarding the factors that lead to positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district in Lesotho, and how teachers influence positive pupil performance. In particular, the role of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive pupil performance was explored.

This chapter analyses the findings presented qualitatively and quantitatively in the last chapter and identifies implications for policy and practice aimed at improving school performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations, and makes recommendations for improving performance in all schools. It draws conclusions from the Ministry of Education Officials, principals and teachers responses informed by theoretical frameworks pioneered by Creemers (1996), Schreens and Creemers (1989), and (Harber and Muthukrishna, 2000) elaborated upon in the second chapter.

5.2 Analysis of findings

First, data from questionnaires were analysed using both quantitative and qualitative analysis. These were complemented by data from group interviews and document analysis. The data were organised in themes and categories suggested by the research questions.

From this analysis, it was found that: Firstly, the majority of the respondents in this study agreed on the various factors impacting on pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations. These include purposeful leadership, structured sessions, intellectually challenging teaching, consistency among teachers, work-centred environment, maximum communication between teachers and students, good record-keeping, parental involvement,

and positive climate. However, a significant number of teachers did not think that a positive school climate is an important factor in pupil performance. This is contrary to research literature, (for example, Mortimore, *et al.*, 1988) which suggests that an effective school has a positive ethos. Overall, the atmosphere is more pleasant in schools with positive school climate (Effective schools). Thus, in Botha-Bothe schools, further research is needed to examine the extent to which the school climate plays a role in pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations.

Secondly, fewer teachers than officials and principals in this study identified the creation of work-centred school environment as significant for improving pupil performance. Clearly, since school success is judged mostly by academic performance, it would follow that a work-centred environment would be conducive to effective learning and teaching (Scott, 2000). In Botha-Bothe schools, further research is needed to examine the extent to which the school climate plays a role in pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations. To address this, continuing staff development is necessary to ensure, not only, so that teachers become aware of the significance of this factor, but also that they actively create such an environment in the schools and in their classrooms.

Thirdly, most officers, principals and teachers identified the declining status, morale and motivation of teachers as the reason for low pupil performance. They were of the opinion that restructuring schools improve learning, as in the re-allocation of teachers to meet the school design specifications and restructuring the use of time, but that static teacher education; inexperienced teachers and low teacher salaries have great impact on student test scores, and are the determinants of low student performance. Low pupil performance is attributed to lack of commitment and dedication of the staff to their work.

It is high time for the government through the Ministry of Education to fulfil the long awaited promise mentioned in the Educational Policy Guidelines (1981) that community/local cooperation will be solicited to help in putting up suitable teachers' living quarters and other essential educational facilities.

Fourthly, that half of the teachers in the study did not think that the learners' socio-economic status and poverty in the community impact on pupil performance is both worrying and reassuring. It is reassuring if it means that teachers do not have different expectations for

learners' performance depending on their social background that could result in their performing poorly. It is worrying if they are just ignorant of the impact of these factors on pupils' schooling and performance. Thus, further research to examine the impact of these factors is necessary. In addition, continuing discussion with schools and teachers should be held to ensure that this is always on the schools' and teaching agenda. The respondents viewed family background to affect schooling outcomes in that higher parental schooling is associated with higher schooling attainment for children and that the education of parents directly influences performance of their children. Pupils acquire the human capital in their home environment through factors such as parents' ability to get involved in reading at home and help children with their homework (Anderson, Case and Lam, 2001). Therefore, parents' educational levels determine performance of their children.

This would suggest that teachers be considerate of pupils' family backgrounds so as to be able to handle pupils according to their differences. Teachers and learners are experiencing problems with regard to parents who have not undergone schooling because they are unable to play their role effectively and efficiently. This also reflect on the teaching profession in that adult education should be strengthened and restructured to accommodate learning by parents as it is with the Free Primary Education where adults are included in the mainstream through the education system policy. In this way even teachers are to be equipped with adult teaching in the mainstream.

Fifthly, a remarkably low number of principals in the study think that parental involvement is an important factor impacting on pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations. This is inspite of literature which suggests that schools with an informal open-door policy, which encouraged parents to get involved in reading at home, helping in the classroom and on educational visits, tended to be more effective (Mortimore, *et al.*, 1988). Pupil performance depends mostly on parents' involvement and their relations with teachers or school. Thus, Macbeth in Preedy (1993:194) suggests initiation of a minimum programme of parent-teacher liaison within a school. This may be achieved through parents' consultation with teachers; organisation of class meetings; establishment of parents' association; and putting in full force the School Governing Body. Therefore, the school has to seek parents' collaboration with teachers and emphasise their responsibilities of parenthood, their legal duty to provide education and the knowledge that active interest and co-operation will help the child to benefit from schooling. The Education Act of 1995 stipulates that four parents whose

children attend a particular school should represent other parents in the Advisory School Committee. Based on these, more visits to schools by officials to ensure that policy is correctly interpreted and implemented are necessary.

In addition, officials, principals and teachers identified effective teaching and learning processes. All of the respondents believed that knowledge and understanding about the content of teaching, knowledge and understanding about how pupils learn, and knowledge and understanding about how to manage the process of learning and teaching constitute the process of effective teaching and learning. Teacher knowledge, experiences and perceptions largely contribute in improving student performance in the examinations (Dalin, 1998). But the lowest percentage of teachers felt that teacher behaviours impacts on pupil performance. This is opposite to Hargreaves and Hopkins (1993) assertion that teaching is an important aspect of school effectiveness, and that the major contributor to school effectiveness is teaching, and that the more structured and reflective the approach to teaching, the more likely it is that students' academic performance will improve. Thus, schools need to develop policies for supporting teaching and learning, which focus on ways of tackling the processes of teaching and learning for more rapid improvement, and include aspects of teacher effectiveness focused on the importance of changing teacher behaviours.

In terms of The Educational policy Guidelines, (1981) on The Training, conditions of Service and the Role of Teachers the effective implementation of educational policies depends on the commitment, understanding and skills of the teaching force. Therefore, it is necessary to improve and expand on the present level of training for teachers and principals.

Almost all the officials, principals and teachers were of the opinion that the way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other is a vital role that impact on pupil performance. Pupils spent most of their time at school; teachers need to take advantage of this time to effectively interact with them. This is in line with The Teaching Service Regulations 2002 (2002) that a teacher shall, in addition to the performance of his duties during school hours, take part when required by the Principal in any matter affecting the general work and welfare of the school including such sporting and extra-mural activities as may be conducted for the benefit of the pupils. A teacher may be required to carry out reasonable duties during school vacation or during weekends.

It is necessary that the Teaching Service Department of the Ministry of Education nominate teachers and principals annually for further training and refresher courses. Provision should also be made for the District Education Officials to hold workshops and seminars for schools with the purpose of ensuring high pupil performance in schools. Policies such as that which provides for pupils' meals in schools should cover the whole school circle in order to meet pupils' need for food and address poverty.

Additional recommendations based on the findings of this study include:

- ❖ More visits to schools by officials to ensure that policy is correctly interpreted and influenced,
- ❖ Professional development of teachers and principals on latest teaching innovations is undertaken,
- ❖ More research on the factors that impact on pupil performance that uses qualitative methodologies and includes more schools and respondents.

5.3 Conclusions

This study has addressed the factors that impact on high pupil performance in primary schools of Botha-Bothe district of Lesotho through particular investigation into the perceptions of the District Education Officers (Field services), primary school principals, and teachers, regarding teacher behaviours that affect curriculum delivery, network of relationships and school organisation, and ultimately high performance in the Botha-Bothe district. The study found that leadership by the principal, teachers with positive relationships, effective teaching and learning processes, and teacher behaviours such as the classroom behaviour and teacher-pupil interaction are some of the factors that are seen as impacting on high pupil performance. While poor performance may be attributed to the absence of the above factors, further research is still required into factors that influence poor performance.

In addition, the findings of the study raise a number of limitations associated with the methodology. First, that a significantly low number of teachers identified any of the suggested factors as contributing to low pupil performance may mean two things. The first is that the respondents may not have understood the question and could not respond appropriately. The second may be that the design of the questionnaire did not include the factors that they would identify as significant. This implies that further interviews would need to be conducted with this group in order to identify such factors. This may suggest that a questionnaire was not the

best method to use. Further research that involves the use of in-depth interviews, school visits (prolonged) and other methods that would enable probing into the realities of these schools and the factors that impact on performance would have been more useful.

Also, a small sample of ten schools out of sixty was used and the time spent collecting data was not enough to generalise to all schools in Botha-Bothe. Also the time was not enough to really understand the factors impacting on pupil performance and what is really going on in all schools studied.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Individual school performance from 1994-2001 in Botha-Bothe

Analysis of PSLE results by % pass during 1994 – 2001 in the Botha-Bothe district of Lesotho.

Pass Percentage per annum

Reg. No.	School	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Mean	Position
131.005	Bokoro	100	72.7	85.4	100	96.4	100	100	100	94.3	46
121.018	B.B. Camp	89.6	93	94.7	100	95.4	98.9	100	100	96.4	50
121.019	B.B. Mopeli	100	100	100	98.3	100	96.9	100	100	99.2	57
131.008	Cartwright	88.9	52.2	100	86.7	100	80	100	100	88.4	34
121.002	Hololo	100	100	100	100	100	100	90.6	97	98.5	56
131.012	Jane	100	94.1	66.7	57.5	70.8	91.3	100	72.7	81.6	19
131.015	Khaketla	85.7	68.6	79.4	52.5	47.5	60	96.7	100	73.8	7
121.009	Khatibe	94.2	88.9	90.4	74.7	76.8	82.2	91	94.4	86.6	27
141.010	Khukhune	93.7	79.5	76.4	91.5	76.8	85.7	93.5	90	85.8	24
141.013	Lebesa	100	70	77.3	72.4	69	100	78.3	65.5	79	14
111.003	'Moteng Community	-	-	-	60	64.3	70.5	81.3	95	74.2	8
141.005	Lekula	92	84.4	88.5	100	83.3	73	96.6	94.4	89	37
131.014	Lepatoa	87.9	71.4	95.8	72.4	86.2	76.6	63	61.8	76.8	12
121.021	Likhutlong	84.2	66.7	62.5	71.4	77.4	100	95.8	94.4	81.5	18
121.003	Linokong	94.1	70.7	98.3	93.2	94.6	47.9	91.7	100	86.3	25
121.010	Liphakoeng	91.2	94.7	92.9	84.4	100	74	100	100	92.1	42
121.011	Liqobong	22.7	-	-	-	86.6	50	92.3	94.7	69.2	5
121.016	Mafika-Lisiu	90	48.8	95	100	63.2	57.6	72.7	75	75.2	10
131.017	Mahlekefane RC	90.9	100	64.3	94.7	73.9	84.6	73.7	100	85.2	21
121.012	Makhunoane	90	34.5	68.2	83.3	87	85.2	97.2	88.9	79.2	16
121.020	'Makong	92.9	98.6	94.7	92.2	71.1	85.7	98.6	100	91.7	41
121.004	Manamela	97.2	88.2	97.1	97.7	100	100	97.8	100	97.2	51
131.004	Mariestella	92.4	67.6	95.4	79.3	89.2	88.3	100	91.2	87.9	33
131.007	Maryvale	64.3	76.5	80	58.8	100	85.1	97.7	95.5	82.2	20
121.013	Mechachaneng	85.2	99	65.4	67.9	100	74	90.9	100	85.3	23
121.007	'Makuini	87.2	83.7	83	93.8	94.1	73.3	100	96.2	88.9	36
121.006	'Malefiloane	85.7	70.3	84.6	96.8	96	100	100	100	91.6	40
131.002	'Moteng RC	100	45.5	100	91.4	100	97	94.3	80	88.5	35
141.012	'Muella ACL	85.7	53.2	94.4	78.9	87	96	96.9	90	85.2	22
131.003	'Mutlanyana	100	45.5	85.7	100	100	100	88.9	81	87.6	32
141.009	Mononts'a	71.4	41.7	60.7	72.2	35.7	58.6	90.9	15.8	55.8	2
121.022	Motete	55	94.1	81.3	83.2	65	58.3	97.5	82.3	77.1	13
121.014	Ngoajane	94.3	31.4	82.6	77.8	91.4	55	73	100	75.6	11
161.002	Nqabene	100	97.5	88.6	97.6	69.6	100	100	100	94.2	45
131.013	Paramente	100	67.2	91.9	100	100	100	100	100	94.9	48
121.015	Phoku	100	100	97.2	93.3	100	96.7	100	100	98.4	55
121.001	Qalo	98.7	84.2	97	100	93.5	98.7	95.7	100	96	49
121.008	Qholaqhoe	84.8	94.9	88.6	92.7	64.1	89.7	92.1	84.8	86.5	26
141.003	Sefako	61.3	34.6	36.8	63	65.5	42.8	77.5	85.7	58.4	3
141.001	Sekubu	96.4	87.1	77.9	89.2	40	95.8	80.3	69.5	79.5	17
151.001	Serutle	97	58.5	95.5	80.6	100	73.1	97.8	92.8	86.9	28
111.004	Jane Community	-	-	-	43.5	40	68.7	58.3	100	62.1	4
131.16	Shishila	85.2	26.9	52.8	64.2	73.3	83.8	93.8	85.7	70.7	6
161.003	Soofia Eng. Medium	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	60
131.009	St. Alphonse	98	100	97.8	100	96.4	91.6	100	100	98	54
131.011	St. Charles	43.9	33.3	61.7	89.6	100	89.2	95.5	86.7	75	9

141.002	St. Cyprians	67.5	72.1	88	98.6	100	100	100	98.5	91	38
131.006	St. Paul RC	96.9	95	99.3	100	100	92.4	100	97.9	97.7	53
141.006	St. Paul ACL	100	100	100	100	85	100	100	95.8	97.6	52
131.001	St. Peters	100	-	73.3	86.6	96.6	90	94.3	100	91.5	39
161.001	Thabong SABMS	100	100	100	100	97.6	97.5	100	100	99.4	58
141.004	Thaka-Banna	100	-	83.3	69.2	100	92.8	93.8	73.3	87.5	31
131.019	Tlholo	100	100	87.5	80	100	82.2	51.4	97.1	87.3	30
141.007	Ts'a-le-moleka	82.6	100	67.5	70	88.9	88.4	100	100	87.2	29
121.005	Tsime	100	-	85.1	97.7	97.6	88.3	97.1	97.8	94.8	47
121.026	Mpatloane	-	-	-	-	87.5	85.2	100	100	93.2	44
111.006	Botha-Bothe Community	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	-	20	1
111.007	Makhoakhoa Community	-	-	-	-	-	-	87.5	70.8	79.2	15
111.008	Lekopa Community	-	-	-	-	-	-	96.2	90	93.1	43
111.002	Likileng Eng. Medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	100	59
TOTAL	60	89.5	77.5	85.1	87.5	85.9	84.8	93.6	92.4	87	

Appendix B:

Ministry of education District education officials' questionnaire

In the interest of confidentiality you are not required to supply your name to this questionnaire. However a few personal and professional details will be most useful. Please give a frank answer to each question. Add extra paper if you run out of space. Please tick the appropriate answer or write the answer in the space provided.

- MALE
- FEMALE

AGE RANGE...

POSITION ...

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THIS POSITION...

NUMBER OF YEARS IN BOTHA-BOTHE DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICE....

Question 1.

Which of the following are the factors that impact on pupil performance in Primary schools of Botha-Bothe district (Tick whichever is applicable.)?

- A. Purposeful leadership of the staff by the head Teacher
- B. Consistency among teachers
- C. Structured sessions
- D. Intellectually challenging teaching
- E. Work-centred environment
- F. Maximum communication between teachers and students
- G. Good Record-keeping
- H. Parental involvement
- I. Positive climate

Question 2

Do you agree or disagree with the statement that teacher behaviours that impact on pupil performance Botha-Bothe district are: (Key: A = Agree, D = Disagree)

- A. Understanding of school's and pupil needs.
- B. Sharing of power with pupils.
- C. Consistent approach to teaching.
- D. Structuring sessions for pupils.

- E. Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching.
- F. Creation of work-centered environment.
- G. Communicating maximally with pupils.
- H. Devoting most of their time to individual pupil.
- I. Using opportunities to talk to the whole class.
- J. Teachers' planning and assessment of pupils.
- K. Participating in open-door policy.
- L. Teachers with positive relationships.

Question 3

Why is it that some schools in the Botha-Bothe district are more effective than others in pupil performance? (Please circle).

- A. Resources.
- B. Teacher behaviours.
- C. Positive school context.
- D. Effective teaching and learning processes.
- E. Other (Please specify).

Question 4

Which of these are some of the reasons why some schools perform worse than others in PSLE in the Botha-Bothe district? (Please circle)

- A. Teacher behaviour.
- B. Lack of professionalism.
- C. The declining status, morale and motivation of teachers.
- D. Shortages of teachers.
- E. Resources.
- F. The contextual factors; socio-economic context and mismanagement and corruption of education systems.
- G. Cultural context where parents, staff and pupils may hold values that differ or are at variance with those of school organisation.
- H. Poor external and internal relations.
- I. All of the above.
- J. Other (Please specify)

Question 5

Which of the following roles of the teacher impact on pupil performance in Botha-Bothe primary schools? (Please tick).

- A. The classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom.
- B. The way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other.
- C. The behaviour of the teacher when not teaching.
- D. The behaviour expected of the teacher when away from the school.
- E. None of the above.

Question 6

Do the following (contextual) factors impact on the achievement of pupils in Botha-Bothe district primary schools? (Key: Yes = Y, No = N).

- A. Socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school.
- B. The areas from which pupils' come.
- C. Features of family adversity.
- D. Homes that are deprived or disadvantaged.
- E. Family background.
- F. Family structure.
- G. Other (Please specify).

Appendix C:

Primary school principals' questionnaire

In the interest of confidentiality you are not required to supply your name to this questionnaire. However a few personal and professional details will be most useful. Please give a frank answer to each question. Add extra paper if you run out of space.

Please tick the appropriate answer or write the answer in the space provided.

- MALE
- FEMALE

AGE RANGE

QUALIFICATION

SCHOOL

NUMBER OF YEARS AS PRINCIPAL

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THIS SCHOOL

Question 1.

Which of the following are the factors that impact on pupil performance in your school? (Tick whichever is applicable.):

- A. Purposeful leadership of the staff by the head Teacher.
- B. Consistency among teachers.
- C. Structured sessions.
- D. Intellectually challenging teaching.
- E. Work-centred environment.
- F. Maximum communication between teachers and students.
- G. Good Record-keeping.
- H. Parental involvement.
- I. Positive climate.

Question 2

Do you agree or disagree with the statement that teacher behaviours that impact on pupil performance in your school are: (Key: A = Agree, D = Disagree)

- A. Understanding of school's and pupil needs.
- B. Active involvement in school.

- C. Sharing of power with pupils.
- D. Active involvement in the school.
- E. Sharing power with pupils.
- F. Total control over pupils.
- G. The involvement of the pupils.
- H. Consistent approach to teaching.
- I. Structured sessions for pupils.
- J. Organised pupils' work.
- K. Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching.
- L. Creation of work-centered environment.
- M. Limited focus within sessions.
- N. Communicates maximally with pupils.
- O. Devotes most of their time to individual pupil.
- P. Uses opportunities to talk to the whole class.
- Q. Teachers' planning and assessment of pupils.
- R. Participates in open-door policy.
- S. Teachers with positive relationships.

Question 3

Why is it that some schools in the Botha-Bothe district are more effective than others in pupil performance? (Please circle).

- A. Resources.
- B. Teacher behaviours.
- C. Positive school context.
- D. Effective teaching and learning processes.
- E. Other (Please specify).

Question 4

Which of these are some of the reasons why some schools perform worse than others in PSLE in the Botha-Bothe district? (Please circle)

- A. Teacher behaviour.
- B. Lack of professionalism.
- C. The declining status, morale and motivation of teachers.
- D. Shortages of teachers.

- E. Resources.
- F. The contextual factors; socio-economic context and mismanagement and corruption of education systems.
- G. Cultural context where parents, staff and pupils may hold values that differ or are at variance with those of school organisation.
- H. Poor external and internal relations.
- I. All of the above.
- J. Other (Please specify).

Question 5

Which of the following roles of the teacher affect pupil performance in your school? (Please tick).

- A. The classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom.
- B. The way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other.
- C. The behaviour of the teacher when not teaching.
- D. The behaviour expected of the teacher when away from the school.
- E. None of the above.

Question 6

Do the following (contextual) factors relate to the achievement of pupils in your school?

(Key: Yes = Y, No = N).

- A. Socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school.
- B. The areas from which pupils' come.
- C. Features of family adversity.
- D. Homes that are deprived or disadvantaged.
- E. Family background.
- F. Family structure.
- G. Other (Please specify).

Appendix D:

Primary school teacher's questionnaire

In the interest of confidentiality you are not required to supply your name to this questionnaire. However a few personal and professional details will be most useful. Please give a frank answer to each question. Add extra paper if you run out of space.

Please tick the appropriate answer or write the answer in the space provided.

- MALE
- FEMALE

AGE RANGE

QUALIFICATION

SCHOOL

NUMBER OF YEARS AS TEACHER

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THIS SCHOOL

Question 1.

Which of the following are the factors that impact on pupil performance in your class? (Tick whichever is applicable.):

- A. Purposeful leadership of the staff by the head Teacher.
- B. Consistency among teachers.
- C. Structured sessions.
- D. Intellectually challenging teaching.
- E. Work-centred environment.
- F. Maximum communication between teachers and students.
- G. Record-keeping.
- H. Parental involvement.
- I. Positive climate.

Question 2

Do you agree or disagree with the statement that teacher behaviours that impact on pupil performance in your class are: (Key: A = Agree, D = Disagree)

- A. Understanding of school's and pupil needs.
- B. Sharing of power with pupils.

- C. Active involvement in the school.
- D. Sharing power with pupils.
- E. Total control over pupils.
- F. The involvement of the pupils.
- G. Consistent approach to teaching.
- H. Structured sessions for pupils.
- I. Organised pupils' work.
- J. Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching.
- K. Creation of work-centered environment.
- L. Limited focus within sessions.
- M. Communicated maximally with pupils.
- N. Devotes most of their time to individual pupil.
- O. Uses opportunities to talk to the whole class.
- P. Teachers' planning and assessment of pupils.
- Q. Participates in open-door policy.
- R. Teachers with positive relationships.

Question 3

Why is it that some schools in the Botha-Bothe district are more effective than others in pupil performance? (Please circle).

- A. Resources.
- B. Teacher behaviours.
- C. Positive school context.
- D. Effective teaching and learning processes.
- E. Other (Please specify).

Question 4

Which of these are some of the reasons why some schools perform worse than others in PSLE in the Botha-Bothe district? (Please circle)

- A. Teacher behaviour.
- B. Lack of professionalism.
- C. The declining status, morale and motivation of teachers.
- D. Shortages of teachers.
- E. Resources.

- F. The contextual factors; socio-economic context and mismanagement and corruption of education systems.
- G. Cultural context where parents, staff and pupils may hold values that differ or are at variance with those of school organisation.
- H. Poor external and internal relations.
- I. All of the above.
- J. Other (Please specify).

Question 5

Which of the following roles of the teacher do not affect pupil performance in your school? (Please tick).

- A. The classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom.
- B. The way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other.
- C. The behaviour of the teacher when not teaching.
- D. The behaviour expected of the teacher when away from the school.
- E. None of the above.

Question 6

Do the following (contextual) factors relate to the achievement of pupils in my school? (Key: Yes = Y, No = N).

- A. Socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school.
- B. The areas from which pupils' come.
- C. Features of family adversity.
- D. Homes that are deprived or disadvantaged.
- E. Family background.
- F. Family structure.
- G. Other (Please specify).

Appendix E:

Interview schedule

Ministry of Education Officials' interviews

1. What are the factors that impact on pupil performance in Primary schools of Botha-Bothe district?
2. What do you think are the teacher behaviours that affect curriculum delivery, network of relationships and school organisation in the Botha-Bothe district?
3. What do you think are the teacher behaviours that positively impact on pupil performance?
4. Why, in your opinion, is it that some schools in the Botha-Bothe district experience high pupil performance while others do not?
5. What do you think contributed to the high pupil performance of the Botha-Bothe district primary schools over eight years since 1994?
6. What factors do you think lead to high pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district?
7. What roles of the teacher do you think determine pupils' achievement?
8. What do you see as contextual aspects that influence pupils' performance in Botha-Bothe district?
9. What can other districts and schools learn from the high performing schools in the Botha-Bothe district?

Primary school principals' interviews

In your opinion/view:

1. What are the factors that impact on pupil performance in your school?
2. What are teacher behaviours that affect curriculum delivery network of relationships and school organisation in your school?
3. What are your behaviours that positively impact on pupil performance in your school?
4. Why is it that some schools in your district experience high pupil performance while others do not?
5. What contributes to the pupil performance of your school over eight years since 1994?
6. Why do some primary schools in the Botha-Bothe district perform better than others or worse than others?
7. What are your schoolteachers' roles that determine pupils' achievement?
8. What contextual aspects influence your school pupils' performance?
9. What can other teachers and schools learn from your school factors that impact positively on pupil performance?

Appendix F:

Document Analysis schedule.

PSLE examinations pass lists

District PSLE analysis reports

Government documents

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Signed

UNIVERSITY OF NATAL

**FACTORS THAT IMPACT ON PUPIL PERFORMANCE IN THE BOTHA-BOTHE
DISTRICT PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF LESOTHO: A DESCRIPTIVE SURVEY
STUDY OF TEN SCHOOLS.**

RESEARCH REPORT

BY

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Faculty of Education Department: University of Natal, Durban

December 2002

Supervised by DR. R. MOLETSANE

**This dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of
Education at the University of Natal, Durban**

***FACTORS THAT IMPACT ON PUPIL PERFORMANCE IN THE BOTHA-BOTHE
DISTRICT PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF LESOTHO: A DESCRIPTIVE SURVEY STUDY
OF TEN SCHOOLS 1994 - 2001***

*This dissertation is submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Masters
in Education (Educational Studies) by completion of eight taught modules and dissertation.*

202520462

2002

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AUTHOR DECLARATION

- 1.The author has not been registered for any other academic award during the period of registration for this study.
- 2.The material included in this investigation has not been submitted wholly or in part at any other university or institution for any purpose, academic or otherwise.
- 3.The programme of advanced study of which this investigation is part has included completion of the following modules:

Addressing Barriers in Education
Comparative Studies in Education
Introduction to Educational Research Methods
Language and Education
Leadership and Strategic Management
Masculinity and Schooling
Managing for School Effectiveness
Pastoral Care and Counselling

- 4.The author declares that this is his own, not assisted work.

.....

Singed

Date

Mohami Tseko Jim

The statement by the supervisor:

This mini-dissertation is submitted with/ without my approval.

Signed

Relebohile Moletsane

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the factors that impact on positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in the Botha-Bothe district primary schools of Lesotho. Given the pupil performance in Lesotho districts the study aimed to find out what factors lead to high pupil performance in Botha-Bothe district, as well as why some schools in the same district perform better than others, and how low performing schools and school developers can learn from the high performing schools. This study used a descriptive survey research design to collect quantitative and qualitative data from the Ministry of Education District officials, primary school principals and primary school teachers. A descriptive survey design used involved questionnaires interviews, and document analysis to collect data for the study.

The research findings in this study revealed that the Ministry of Education Officials, principals and teachers specifically identified the following factors to have positive impact on pupil performance:

- ❖ A teacher with positive relationships
- ❖ Effective teaching and learning processes
- ❖ Purposeful leadership by the principal
- ❖ The way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Using a descriptive survey design, this study attempts to explore the factors that lead to positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district in Lesotho.

Primary schools in the Botha-Bothe district in Lesotho have been known for their excellent results in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) from as far back as 1994. For example, from 1994 to 2001 the district has obtained the highest pass rate amongst all other nine districts as shown in table 1 below as per the Examinations Council of Lesotho (1994:i), (1995:i), (1996:i), (1997:i), (1998:i), (1999:i), (2000:i), and (2001:i) PSLE pass lists. Even though the district primary schools performed well over the years mentioned above, individual school performance varies. Individual school pass rate has ranged from 15.8% to 100% passes since 1994 as reflected in Appendix A.

Table 1. Analysis of PSLE results by % pass during 1994 – 2001 in the districts of Lesotho.

Pass Percentage per annum

District	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Botha-Bothe	89.5	77.5	85.1	87.5	85.9	84.8	93.6	92.4
Leribe	84.0	69.4	79.1	76.9	75.2	76.4	86.9	88.7
Berea	87.3	71.5	76.9	80.3	74.0	75.8	85.7	87.2
Maseru	89.2	75.9	83.7	77.7	72.8	79.4	88.8	87.8
Mafeteng	84.2	67.4	77.5	73.4	70.1	72.0	90.4	86.4
Mohale's Hoek	84.1	75.2	79.0	79.5	74.2	72.2	86.6	88.1
Quthing	83.3	65.7	74.8	72.3	72.1	67.2	82.8	85.8
Qacha's Nek	84.1	70.0	77.2	73.5	67.8	72.7	85.3	83.8
Mokhotlong	86.0	68.6	72.3	76.0	71.3	72.1	83.5	88.2
Thaba- Tseka	84.4	69.4	75.8	77.1	77.2	80.4	81.4	84.7

This study aimed to find out what factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, and how do teachers influence positive pupil performance in ten primary schools.

1.2 Background

The Kingdom of Lesotho is completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. Its boundaries run with those of Kwazulu-Natal to the east, Eastern Cape to the south, and the Orange Free State to the north and west. The boundaries of Lesotho follow in part a series of rivers, the Tele, the Senqu (Orange river), the Makhaleng (Kornetspruit) and the Mohokare (Caledon).

Lesotho is an agricultural country even though more agricultural produce of sorghum, maize and wheat are imported than exported. However, because of its mountainous nature most of the country is not arable. Rainfall is variable and mean annual rainfall amounts to between 700 mm and 800 mm in most parts of the lowlands. Most of it falls between October and April, but there is normally no month that has less than 12 mm. Its economy is based on subsistence agriculture, livestock, remittance from miners employed in South Africa, and a rapidly growing apparel-assembly sector. The number of mineworkers has declined steadily over the past several years impacting on parental ability to finance educational establishments.

The introduction of industries and small manufacturing bases have become the way to increase employment possibilities quickly and on large scale even though agriculture remains extremely important as a major source of food to most Basotho, and for many it is also a source of cash income. Lesotho is a small landlocked, and mountainous country whose primary natural resource is water sold to South Africa and generating royalties for Lesotho. As far as employment is concerned, Lesotho has a marked inequality in income distribution and serious unemployment/underemployment problems that will not yield to short run solutions while education system suffer financial constraints.

Lesotho has two official languages, English and Sesotho. Sesotho and English are taught in all schools and primary education is conducted in Sesotho for the first four years and mainly in English in grades five through seven (Hartwell, 1989). A large number of Basotho are thus able to speak some English. Those who already speak an African language belonging to the Bantu language family more easily learn Sesotho. For those who do not have this advantage the effort is nevertheless well worth making. Churches play a large part in Lesotho's national life and missions are found throughout the country, in both urban and rural populated areas, and most church services are held in Sesotho but some English language services are held in

Lesotho's principal towns. Lesotho has a small Muslim community mainly located in the north of the country including Botha-Bothe, which has a mosque. Lesotho is an almost completely rural country and even those Basotho who live in the small towns still have strong links with villages where their relatives live and which they often regard as their true homes. Urbanisation has decreased rural population in villages and schools. Language has not become a barrier to learning and religious affiliation used to determine schools that pupils attended, but presently schools do not regard religion as important for entry into education system.

The town of Botha-Bothe came into being as a new government sub-district headquarters in 1884 to facilitate the collecting of taxes. Botha-Bothe is the headquarters of Lesotho's smallest and northernmost district linked to Maseru by a tarred main road. From the Botha-Bothe town a left turn leads to Caledonspoort boarder post, and Monontsa boarder post further north both into the Orange Free State. The population of the town and immediately adjacent villages is approximately 6 000 (Campbell, Ambrose, and Johnson, 1983).

The district population is composed of Basotho who constitute the largest percentage, Europeans and Asians, and Sesotho, English, Zulu and Xhosa languages are used. It is mostly Christian despite the presence of some indigenous beliefs. Language and religion do not hinder entry into schools; as a result, some schools are multi racial.

Employment opportunities for Botha-Bothe residents are in the mines of South Africa, Lesotho Highland Water Project, civil service and business. The great majority households gain their livelihoods from subsistence farming, animal husbandry and migrant labour. With the prevailing state of unemployment/underemployment some parents cannot afford the average school fees of M 90.00 per annum charged in Botha-Bothe primary schools.

1.3 Educational context

Education in Lesotho is organised under proprietorship of distinct institutions. There are government schools, church schools, community schools and private schools. The government is in partnership with the proprietors in the operations of the schools, (Government of Lesotho, 1995). Examinations Council of Lesotho and the government are in charge of examinations involving Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE), Junior Certificate examinations and Cambridge Overseas School Certificate.

There are 1 234 primary schools in Lesotho in 1994 most of which are located in the lowlands, and schools in the remote mountain areas are small and a majority of them do not offer the complete seven-year primary school course (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1996). The ten primary schools that have been the concern of this study comprise both incomplete, that is, schools with less than seven-year course, and full primary schools with seven-year course. There are single and multi-standard classes within these.

1.4 Motivation for the study

I am an Education Officer in the Ministry of Education in the Department of Field Services (Field Inspectorate) in Lesotho whose duty is to “implement and influence the Ministry of Education policies and evaluate schools through school inspections”, (Drake, 1999:1). I am responsible to the Senior Education Officer for conducting annual school inspection programmes for the Qachas’ Nek District (area of assignment); inspecting and supervising educational establishments applying agreed criteria for assessment of performance in a consistent and reliable manner; developing and delivering training programmes for teachers, principals and school committees; advising the SEO on curriculum provision, school administration, management and educational facilities provision; and conducting action research on educational issues in the designed area. In addition to formal inspection, the inspectors give advice and support to teachers and schools for the improvement of teaching and learning in schools and colleges. The roles of the inspectors also involve monitoring and evaluating standards, guiding, advising and supporting the teachers; ensuring that the curriculum is effectively implemented and evaluated; ensuring accountability of educational institutions to the public, government and the pupils; and facilitating and managing educational change (ADEA, 1998).

I became interested in pupil performance as an area of study because it is one of the indicators of school improvement, efficiency, relevance and effective management, and a tool for assessment and evaluation of education system. I was concerned about low pupil performance in some schools in the Botha-Bothe district whereas the government’s objective is “the improvement of quality, efficiency and relevance of the education system; and the effective management of the education system”(Government of Lesotho, 1997:116). Given the pupil performance in Lesotho districts I wanted to find out what factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, and how do teachers influence positive pupil performance.

Some of the reasons why some schools perform worse than others are shortages of teachers, a drop in a number of applicants for teacher training and studies. Some teachers deviate from the expected teacher behaviour and behave unprofessionally due to their declining status, morale and motivation. Poor pupil performance is also attributed to contextual factors, socio-economic context, mismanagement, and corruption in schools. As well, cultural context and poor external and internal relations contribute to poor pupil performance (Herber, 1992). In Lesotho, poor pupil performance in some schools is attributed to overcrowding, high pupil: teacher ratio, and inadequate educational resources. The objective of ensuring access to education by all Basotho children up to at least primary level was attained in the 1980s, as evidenced by the increase of primary schools enrolments by 40%. Subsequently, overcrowding in primary school resulted in a high pupil: teacher ratio of 49:1. There was also the problem of inadequate educational facilities, a high pupil: classroom ratio of 82:1, an average of 4.4 books per pupil and only 36% of pupils being seated at desks in 1994 (Government of Lesotho, 1997).

It is these factors that the study reported here was concerned about. This study aimed to find out what factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, and how do teachers influence positive pupil performance. The study particularly investigated the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive impact on pupil performance.

The study also addressed the nature of pupil performance in the selected schools using the PSLE as a measure of pupil performance in Lesotho over a period of eight years because PSLE not only measures the attainment of those who complete primary school but it is also the gauge of the foundation on which all other education and training is built (The Education Sector Survey, 1982). It evaluates standards, ensures that the curriculum is effectively implemented and evaluated; ensures that schools give feedback to the public, government and the pupils; and facilitates management of educational change.

Mortimore and his colleagues (1988) identified a number of schools, which were effective in both academic and social areas. The early school effectiveness studies on one hand identified five factors that generated effective schools and concluded that a number of factors appeared to be related to effectiveness, such as the five factors that are often mentioned: strong

educational leadership, high expectations of student achievement, an emphasis on basic skills, a safe and orderly climate, and frequent evaluation of pupil progress, (Creemers, 1996). The ten schools studied are those whose pupils have sat for PSLE from 1994 to 2001 for not less than five examination years; those with the average percentage rate performance divided into highest, middle and lowest percent attainment. Thus, four schools with high performance, two schools with average performance and four schools with low performance.

There are different views regarding reasons why some schools perform better than others. The education department has consistently analysed and discussed the examination performance with teachers in schools when there was failure and when there was good performance. Other factors responsible for the discrepancy are variations in the abilities of pupils, the examination entry policy, school catchments areas, socio-economic factors and parental attitudes and support (Boulter, 1990).

According to Creemers (1996) schools that emphasised the achievement of certain set of goals and objectives did better than other schools in pupil performance. The achievement of goals and objectives required time and an opportunity for the pupils to learn so as to secure high pupil performance by the schools. In addition studies carried out in the 1970s and 1990s revealed a number of factors, which were associated with more effective schools. These factors included students' attitudes to school; teachers' perceptions of students, internal school organisational factors, and school resources' levels (Creemers, 1996).

This study aimed to address the following research questions:

- a) What are the perceptions of (1) the District Education Officers (Field services), (2) primary school principals, and (3) teachers, regarding the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district?
- b) How do teachers influence positive pupil performance?

1.5 Organisation of the report

This chapter has introduced the study reported here and identified the major research question.

Chapter Two reviews the literature related to the factors that impact on high pupil performance. It also reviews the relevant theoretical frameworks that have been used to analyse high pupil performance internationally and identifies frameworks used to collect and analyse data in this study. It concludes with the summary of what the literature reviewed revealed and what remains unanswered.

Chapter Three discusses the research methodologies used to gather answers to the research questions and includes a description and context of the actual sites. This chapter discusses specific rationale, participants, procedures, instrumentation, and methods of analysis.

Chapter Four presents the actual findings from each procedure. This chapter also discusses methodological constraints or issues.

Chapter Five interprets the results of the study and concludes by looking at the implications and limitations of the research for present practice and policy, and for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that lead to positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district in Lesotho. In particular, the study investigated the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive impact on pupil performance. The study also addressed the nature of pupil performance in the selected schools using the PSLE as a measure of pupil performance in Lesotho over a period of eight years.

The study aimed to address the following questions:

- a) What factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district?
- b) How do teachers influence positive pupil performance?

This chapter aims to review literature related to factors that impact positively on pupil performance in general, and in Lesotho primary schools in particular. The review of literature in this chapter is concerned with the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive impact on pupil performance. The chapter also reviews relevant theoretical frameworks that have been used to collect and analyse data in this study.

2.2 Teacher Behaviours

An implicit assumption has been that there is agreement about the way teachers are expected to behave amongst themselves, those in the teaching profession, and the public at large. Therefore, aspects of teacher effectiveness focus on the importance of changing teacher behaviours rather than looking for school level initiatives to bring about change in the classroom (Gray *et al.*, 1990). The role of a teacher is divided into four sectors namely; the classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom; the way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other; the behaviour of the teacher when not teaching; and the behaviour expected of the teacher when away from the school. But the final outcome of the teacher's role is whether low or high pupils' performance is achieved

(Musgrave, 1969). This view suggests that effective teacher roles and behaviours are important determinants of positive pupil performance. In essence, the classroom interaction between the teacher and the pupil is the concern of the teaching and learning process (Nash, 1973).

An effective teacher is responsible for maintaining the standard and producing good quality of learning outcomes by the pupils. Teachers' primary task is to structure and organize learning. To this effect, the relationship between effective teaching and pupil outcomes has become the focus of considerable attention (Macgilchrist *et al.* 1997). In this regard effective teaching entails teaching capabilities possessed by the teacher and pupils' potential to learn so as to enable effective learning and high achievement to occur. Teaching and learning are separate and differ, but they are intertwined and work together in influencing pupil performance.

Teaching is an important aspect of school effectiveness, and the major contributor to school effectiveness is teaching. The more structured and reflective the approach to teaching, the more likely it is that students' academic performance will improve. Teachers still influence the learning of children. The initiatives that have changed education have come, and will continue to come, from teachers through their concern with learning (Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1993).

Therefore, this study aimed to find out whether the teacher behaviours, the role played by the teacher, classroom teacher attitudes and behaviours, and teacher-pupil interaction contribute to positive pupil performance in primary schools of Botha-Bothe district.

2.3 Contextual factors

The contexts within which schools operate are as influential as any initiatives, strategies or factors influencing pupils' performance. The achievement of pupils in a school relates to the socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school, and the areas from which pupils' come. Higher rates of behavioural and educational difficulties in the pupils are characterised by features of family adversity. But, teachers are expected to deal with all children coming from homes that are deprived or disadvantaged in any way (Rutter *et al.*, 1988). Family background affects schooling outcomes in that higher parental schooling is associated with higher schooling attainment for children (Anderson *et al.* 2001). Furthermore,

one of the most important factors in the development of every school is in its relationship with the community from which it draws its pupils (Chetwynd, 1958).

Lesotho schools are mostly in rural areas. However, in Botha-Bothe, ninety per cent of the sixteen schools are in the town and five are in the surrounding villages (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1996). This creates a problem for the many unemployed families, as many of the urban schools tend to charge high school fees, which they cannot afford resulting in overcrowding in some schools and high dropout rate.

2.4 School culture

In terms of a school, Bryk and Driscoll (1988) cited by Dalin (1998) define school culture as a common value system, a common agenda and collegial relations between the adults, including teachers' role that extends beyond the classroom in which a clear connection between culture and pupils' results exist in a school. Little (1990) cited by Dalin (1998) has shown clearly how collegial norms influence the chance that teachers have to make an impact in their own school. In such a culture, pupils are more interested in academic subjects, have a lower rate of absenteeism, and are more organised. Fewer pupils quit school, and pupils get better grades. Teachers are more satisfied with their jobs, they are sick less often, and morale is higher than at other schools. There is also a high degree of motivation for further school improvement. Macgilchrist *et al.*, (1997: 11) point out that 'the culture of a school is a deciding factor when it comes to school's state of readiness and its capacity to improve.' This network of common beliefs, norms, values, and attitudes and behaviours of those in a school enable teachers to positively influence pupil performance.

A conscious attempt by an effective school to promote a common culture for increased co-operation and collegial relations lead to improved classroom teaching and to increased teacher motivation. Dalin (1998) concludes that in order to motivate teachers for a new learning culture, he had to work with the teachers' strong points.

A strongly held school culture is an important aspect of school that influences the way a school operates since school culture is not static but dynamic, and can be affected by a variety of factors, Rossman and colleagues (1988) cited in Stoll and Fink (1996:89) identify and elaborate on school cultural changes in which a school can consciously be involved. These are evolutionary, additive and transformational changes. The school can recognise various

cultures within it; those of teachers, pupils, administrators, non-teaching staff and parents which may form around interests pertinent to a particular group and create the potential to pull a school in several directions. According to Rossman *et al.* (1988) quoted in Stoll and Fink (1996:100) 'culture defines effectiveness'. The presence of school culture promoted by an effective school culminates in positive pupil performance.

2.5 School Resources

According to the Government of Lesotho (1997:115) "there is a declining quality of education as reflected by the increasing class repetition and dropout rates in primary grades. These problems are due to a shortage of qualified teachers, inadequate inspectorate services, overcrowding, and lack of educational facilities and equipment". Therefore, if these problems are curbed quality of education will increase evidently in high pupil performance. In order to achieve this, local resource allocation (financial, teachers, training, facilities) are rationalised and resources spread equally across the education system. Improving the learning and teaching is critical and deserves high priority, and the Government policy is to reduce overcrowding and improve pupil: classroom and pupil: teacher ratios as this results in teachers' motivation and in the creation of conditions that are conducive to teaching and learning.

Amongst the available resources for the teacher enhancing pupil performance, the most important is the teacher himself. Another major resource is the school with its particular equipment and materials inside, and particular physical environment outside. The school's population which includes teaching and non-teaching staff and pupils, and what the public expects from it tends to be taken for granted though important to be considered as far as pupil performance is concerned (McFarland, 1973).

Pupil performance depends mostly on parents' involvement as a resource for learning in the school community and their relations with teachers or school. Parents' involvement in school is constituted by general participation, helping in classrooms or sponsoring and supporting school programs, and participation on the school governance (Haynes and Ben-Avie, 1996)

There are a variety of pupils' and teachers' resources, which a teacher and the pupils interact with in the teaching and learning process in order to enhance learning and achievement (Perrott, 1982: 130-132). The teacher helps pupils to identify a whole range of resources for their work. While doing so, teachers encourage pupils to consider the wide variety of

resources available both inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, the teacher's effective use of "static resources" and "audio-visual equipment" is more valuable (McFarland, (1973:74). It is then concluded that both human and material resources are essential for achieving high pupil performance. Whether the schools that perform better in Botha-Bothe are better resourced than the others was explored in this study.

2.6 Teaching and Learning processes

Teachers influence learning by ensuring that school curriculum is broad and balanced, and provides continuity and progression of learning. Teachers' wholehearted involvement enhances curriculum change, and effective teaching is a pre-requisite for subject knowledge to be translated into teaching programmes that meet the learning needs of pupils. Teaching could often be more effective if greater attention was paid to the teaching of the skills needed for subject study including how to use tools, materials and equipment effectively. Four main design components to maximize effective classroom learning are identified as presence of clear intentions, well-structured and organized design matching to the pupil's previous learning and appropriate to their stage of development (Macgilchrist *et al.*, 1997).

The base for learning in schools is the learning process itself; a learning process that develops the pupil's ability for achieving high performance. Teachers know what they do to get there. There is motivation, an interest, and a will to do their work with new knowledge and an individual teacher has the necessary skills to implement new practices, which foster high pupil performance (Dalin, P., 1998).

This chapter reviewed literature pertaining to the factors that impact on positive pupil performance. In particular, the literature addressed teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, resources, and teaching and learning processes that positively impact on pupil performance in schools.

Chapter three discusses the research methodologies used to gather answers to the research questions, includes a description and context of the actual sites. It discusses specific rationale, participants, procedures, instrumentation, and methods of data collection and analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study investigated factors that lead to positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district in Lesotho, and how do teachers influence positive pupil performance from the Ministry of Education District officials, primary school principals and primary school teachers. In particular, the investigation focused on whether the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes are some of the factors that may lead to positive pupil performance in the district schools.

In this chapter, the research design and methodology for answering the research questions, and data collection methods are discussed in order to ensure accuracy, validity and reliability of the results. The chapter gives a description and context of the actual site of research study. This chapter specifically outlines the analysis methods.

3.2 Research design and Methodology

This study used a descriptive survey research design to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from the population on which the survey was to focus (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000:172). The survey research was the most suitable for the study because it explored various perceptions regarding the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance, and how teachers influence positive pupil performance. Using questionnaires and interviews, it was possible to generate frequencies of responses amenable to basic statistical treatment and analysis, and to follow-up unexpected responses and to go deeper into the motivations of the respondents and their reasons for responding as they did. The study attempted to describe the nature of the existing conditions by looking at Ministry of Education District Education Officials', principals and teachers' perceptions on teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes in each school. Through the survey, I aimed to document, analyse and interpret the prevailing attitudes and perceptions related to the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance.

Stratified random sampling was used in this study to divide the population into subgroups: schools with high pupil performance, schools with average performance and schools with low

performance. Once the population was divided, samples were drawn from each subgroup. The same number of teachers and principals was selected from each school. This method was chosen for its efficacy because a smaller number of subjects were used. Dividing the population into subgroups also enabled the researcher to compare subgroup results.

3.3 Data collection methods

More than one method of data collection in this study was employed to solicit data from various sources through the use questionnaires, interviews and analysis of documents. This is termed triangulation (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989). Triangulation can add some depth to the analysis and potentially increase the validity of the data and consequently the analysis made of them. This triangulation was directed to investigating the role played by teachers in pupil performance, teacher behaviours that lead to positive pupil performance, factors leading to high performance in Botha-Bothe district, why some schools in the same district perform better than others, and how low performing schools and school developers can learn from the high performance. Triangulation enabled the study of the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance in the ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district of Lesotho, and the manner in which teachers influence positive pupil performance by particularly focusing on teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes, as some of the factors that may lead to positive pupil performance.

The data collection methods: questionnaires, interviews and document analysis were used in this study. First, the questionnaires were piloted at Falimehang and Masianokeng Primary schools of the Maseru district, which are composed of eight and nineteen teachers respectively. This raised a number of issues, which led to the revision of the questionnaires: The questionnaires did not contain a full range of possible responses as could be reasonably foreseen. In addition, from the pilot, it became evident that the number of items needed reduction and the most relevant items selected in order to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaire.

Second, data collection exercise took two weeks. In the first week questionnaires were distributed, administered and collected from eleven Ministry of Education District Education Officials, ten Primary School Principals and ninety-six teachers of the ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district within a period of a week, while simultaneously analysing documents from the schools and Ministry. The second week was spent preparing and holding group

interviews, first with the eleven Ministry of Education District Education officials and then the ten primary schools' principals.

3.3.1 Questionnaires

I chose to use questionnaires for the fact that questionnaires usually contain questions aimed at getting specific information on a variety of topics. The questionnaire questions were designed both in closed and open form, so that quantification and analysis of the results may be carried out efficiently, and so that the results for each item may be analysed and reported separately.

These were administered to eleven high ranking Ministry of Education District Education Officials based in the Botha-Bothe district; ten primary school principals of the schools under study (Appendix C); and ninety-six primary school teachers (Appendix D) in the ten selected primary schools since they are already based in the District Resource Centre and selected primary schools of the district respectively.

3.3.2 Interviews

Informal group interviews were conducted with eleven high-ranking Ministry of Education District Education Officials because of their availability and willingness as colleagues, status and role in the District Resource Centre and, ten primary school principals because of their status and role in their schools. These groups could gather on appointment in specified place whereas teachers could not and, timing could not permit. Interviews were used in conjunction with questionnaires and documents analysis to validate them. An interview protocol was prepared and used for data collection (Appendix E).

3.3.3 Document analysis

Document analysis was used in this study to address the main research question: what factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, and how do teachers influence positive pupil performance. These documents were useful in providing additional insight or information to the responses from questionnaires and interviews. The relevant documents in this research were those produced by the Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL), Ministry of Education officials, primary schools and about teachers in education such as PSLE examinations pass lists, District PSLE

analysis, and primary schools' logbook. The study also addressed students' rates of success in the selected schools, and noted the high pupil performance experienced by the Botha-Bothe district with the main concern on performance of the schools under study.

3.4 A description of the context of the actual research site(s)

There were several criteria that influenced the choice of schools studied here. To start with, I wanted to study the best performing district ever since 1994. This was Botha-Bothe district whose primary schools are known for their excellent results in the (PSLE). Teachers from ten primary schools whose pupils have sat for PSLE from 1994 to 2001 for not less than five examination years were selected. All schools were selected based on the number of times their pupils sat for examinations; and the average percentage rate divided into highest, middle and lowest percent attainment. Thus, four schools with high performance, two schools with average performance and four schools with low performance were selected. This study involved all principals and teachers in each school and Ministry of Education officials in the district as the major stakeholders in school organisations. The schools' profile is shown below:

Table 2. The ten-school profile 2002

School	Proprietor	District Dissemination Centre	Number of Teachers	Standard (multi/single)	Performance in % since 1994-2001
B.B.Mopeli	LEC	BBC	13	Single	99.2
Hololo	LEC	Khukhune	10	Single	98.5
Liqobong	LEC	Liphakoeng	05	Single	69.2
Monont'sa	ACL	Mechachaneng	09	Single	55.8
Sefako	ACL	Mechachaneng	12	Single	58.4
Jane Com.	Community	Khatibe	10	Single	62.1
Soofia Eng.Medium	Private	BBC	08	Single	100
Thabong SABMS	SABMS	Liphakoeng	18	Single	99.4
Thaka-Banna	ACL	Liphakoeng	05	Multi-standard	87.5
Tlholo	RC	Shishila	05	Multi-standard	87.3

The envisaged participants in this study were the Ministry of Education officials. They are composed of a District Senior Education Officer, four District Education Officers, four District Resource Teachers, one Lesotho College of Education officer, one Lesotho Distance Teacher Centre official, and one School Self-Reliance Feeding Unit Extension officer. In

addition, at the school level ten Principals and ninety-six class teachers from the ten schools were involved. This selection was made because these groups of potential sample participants permitted practicable access and there were no restrictions to the release of data collected.

In the first place, the district has been my duty station for about six years and it is not even half a year since my transfer to another district to operate from. Therefore, I assumed that since I had warm relations with the district education officials, principals, and teachers, they would be willing to offer access and whatever information I requested. They are also the chief subjects directly or indirectly influencing pupil performance, major stakeholders directly dealing with schools, parents, Examinations Council of Lesotho, and other agencies related to the school, and there was envisaged cooperation as they possibly understand the importance of the study.

The District Senior Education Officer (DSEO) in charge of the district education matters in the Botha-Bothe district was informed and asked to grant permission to carry out the study with officers in the district education office, principals and teachers in the ten selected schools. Principals were asked to participate in the study. Questionnaires were used to collect data because with them as it is easy to handle and manage large amount of qualitative and quantitative data. The first set of questionnaires was administered to the District Senior Education Officer and District Education Officers (Field Inspectorate), the second set was administered to the principals, and the last set with the teachers. This survey study also used structured group interviews first conducted with the District Education Officials and with principals because of the possible grouping of the sample and its accessibility.

3.5 Data Analysis

Responses were checked, assembled into meaningful units and analysed through the procedures including preparing data from subjects for analysis by checking to see that data are complete, sorting the data by groups; summarising the data from the subjects into meaningful units (descriptive statistics) interpreting the results by deciding whether and how well the information answers the research question (Sowell and Casey, 1982). Qualitative data was categorised and organised according to themes and analysed for consensus, similarities and unpredicted responses. Group interviews were transcribed identifying data categories and organising it according to guiding framework including recurring and notable themes that had not been identified in advance. Pre-identified themes such as the expected teacher behaviour

and role, district performance, the selected school performance and performance of pupils in the schools under study became the object of the study within the documents.

Triangulation as applied in this study, required the researcher to collect, organise and read data, and then compare the data from each of the data collection instruments or techniques with each other, and to analyse and code data. Data analysis attempted to map out more fully the complexity of teacher behaviour and pupil performance, making use of quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The data from the ten principals, ninety-six teachers and district officers will be integrated for the purpose of reporting.

3.6 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to eleven high ranking Ministry of Education District Education Officials ignoring those in the lower ranks, ten primary school principals from the ten schools, and ninety-six primary school teachers. This limited the findings of the study in that not all the district education officials, primary school principals and primary school teachers were represented in the sample population. This means that the results cannot be said to apply to all primary schools in Lesotho. However, the findings have implications for education policy and practice regarding factors that contribute to positive pupil performance in primary schools of Botha-Bothe district of Lesotho, and the manner in which teachers influence positive pupil performance.

The next chapter presents findings from the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This study aimed to investigate the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, particularly the role of teachers in influencing positive pupil performance. The study particularly investigated the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive pupil performance. The study also addressed the nature of pupil performance in the selected schools using the PSLE as a measure of pupil performance in Lesotho over a period of eight years. PSLE is the gauge of the foundation on which all other education and training is built, and it is a measure of attainment of those who complete primary school. It evaluates standards, effective implementation of the curriculum and ensures that schools give feedback to the public, government and the pupils. It is crucial to note the high pupil performance experienced by the Botha-Bothe district with the main concern on performance of the schools under study.

The major questions of the research were as follows:

- a) What factors contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district?
- b) How do teachers influence positive pupil performance?

As indicated in the last chapter, major data collection methods included questionnaires, group interviews and document analysis. Data collected through these methods from 117 respondents including Ministry of Education District Officials, primary school principals and primary school teachers is presented below. The responses are organised into themes informed by the research questions.

4.2 Factors that lead to positive pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE)

Table 3. Responses on the factors that impact on pupil performance

Factors	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. Purposeful leadership of the staff by the head Teacher	100%	90%	66%	85%
B. Consistency among teachers	73%	70%	46%	63%
C. Structured sessions	64%	100%	36%	67%
D. Intellectually challenging teaching	91%	70%	65%	75%
E. Work-centred environment	73%	60%	48%	60%
F. Maximum communication between teachers and students	91%	70%	58%	73%
G. Good Record-keeping	73%	60%	58%	64%
H. Parental involvement	100%	20%	73%	64%
I. Positive climate	91%	90%	37%	73%

From their responses in the questionnaire, the Ministry of Education Officials, principals and teachers mostly identified purposeful leadership by the principal as the major factor. It is significant that 100% of the officials view parental involvement as an important factor, but that 80% of the principals and 27% of the teachers disagree. The staff at the school seem to have adopted a leadership style which excludes parents, and have decided to act contrary to the Teaching Service Regulations, Education Act of 1995 (Rules governing teaching service) and other Education policies. The Act and Ministry of Education policies stipulate various ways in which parents should be involved in school activities such as in Advisory School Committees, parents meetings, field trips, and School Self-Reliance Projects (Government of Lesotho, 1995).

Another significant finding is that only 37% of the teachers viewed positive climate (positive ethos and pleasant atmosphere), and 36% viewed structured sessions as important. Teachers may not have been practically exposed to other schools and classrooms with positive ethos and pleasant atmospheres; they only know of their schools. Therefore one would suggest inter-school visits to be put in place. This state of affairs may also be existent in schools where teachers hesitate to share knowledge and negative working relationships prevail. The

National Curriculum Development Centre provides guidelines on structured sessions for implementation in schools. The principals are aware of this but the teachers might not be implementing the timetables, schemes of work done and the lesson plans, and responsible stakeholders may not be monitoring teachers' work properly.

It is also worth noting that only 46% of the teachers saw consistency among teachers, and work-centred environment (48%) as important factors. Lack of consistency among teachers is probably prevalent in multi standard schools where the schools are characterised by shortage of teachers, alarming pupil-teacher ratios, and lack of resources. The ability to create a work centred classroom environment challenges teachers classroom management ability and skills which goes further to the consideration of whether the teacher is well qualified or not.

4.3 Teacher behaviours that lead to positive pupil performance

Table 4. Responses on teacher behaviours impacting on pupil performance

Teacher behaviours	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. Understanding of school's and pupil needs.	100%	80%	73%	84%
B. Sharing power with pupils.	55%	70%	66%	64%
C. Consistent approach to teaching.	82%	90%	58%	77%
D. Structuring sessions for pupils.	82%	50%	83%	72%
E. Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching.	91%	90%	66%	82%
F. Creating work-centred environment.	82%	70%	40%	64%
G. Communicating maximally with pupils.	82%	60%	77%	73%
H. Devoting most of their time to individual pupil.	55%	40%	57%	51%
I. Using opportunities to talk to the whole class.	91%	80%	71%	81%

J. Teachers' planning and assessment of pupils.	91%	90%	85%	89%
K. Participating in open-door policy.	82%	50%	42%	58%
L. Teachers with positive relationships.	100%	100%	89%	96%

The Ministry of Education District Officials, principals and teachers surveyed in the study were asked to identify teacher behaviours that impact on pupil performance. It is of importance that only 40% of the principals saw devoting most of teachers' time to individual pupil, 40% of the teachers saw creating work-centred environment, and that 42% of the teachers saw participation of teachers in open-door policy as teacher behaviours that lead to positive pupil performance.

From their standpoint, principals seem to be implying that the time teachers spend with pupils is enough if not too much already, and this is contrary to the teachers stipulated pupil contact hours per day and per week, that is, eight hours per day and forty hours per week (Government of Lesotho, 1995). Attention is to be drawn to the fact that pupils would require teacher's attention more often individually as far as this concerns their work. Once created, a positive work-centred environment result in pupils enjoying their work, low noise level, work related movements, which are not excessive. This would require a high level of classroom management and skills from the teacher; therefore, it implies teachers' need for training and experience, and the consideration of qualification and experience of teachers by the deployment authorities such as the Advisory School Committee, Management Committee of the schools and the Teaching Service Department. It also implies the establishment of the informal open-door policy by the schools in order to involve parents in school activities.

4.4 Reasons for high pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations

Table 5. Responses on the reasons for high pupil performance

Reasons	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. Resources.	73%	80%	66%	73%
B. Teacher behaviours.	82%	90%	57%	76%
C. Positive school context.	64%	80%	59%	68%
D. Effective teaching and learning processes.	94%	100%	92%	95%

When asked to comment on the possible reasons for some schools performing better than others in the Primary School Leaving Examinations, the District Education officials, principals and teachers mostly identified effective teaching and learning processes.

It is surprising that only 57% of the teachers viewed teacher behaviours as a reason for high pupil performance. Teachers do not like it when their personal and professional activities are associated with pupil performance. This includes the behaviour expected of them when not teaching and when away from the school.

A lower percentage of teachers compared to that of officials and principals think that the reasons for high pupil performance mentioned in table 5 above are important. Whereas teachers themselves interact with materials and pupils in effective teaching and learning processes they are of the idea that they are not to blame if pupils do not perform well. Instead they think many other factors are involved even though they are responsible for the implementation of the curriculum. Most teacher respondents strongly believed that their training is outdated in order for them to cope efficiently with the modern changes, and with the present generation. As a result teachers think that the management of teaching and learning processes and the interaction involved are important reasons for high pupil performance.

4.5 Reasons for low pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations

Table 6. Responses on the reasons for low pupil performance

Reasons	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. Teacher behaviour.	100%	80%	30%	70%
B. Lack of professionalism.	91%	80%	34%	68%
C. The declining status, morale and motivation of teachers.	100%	90%	32%	74%
D. Shortages of teachers.	100%	80%	38%	73%
E. Resources.	100%	50%	31%	60%
F. The contextual factors; socio-economic context and mismanagement and corruption.	64%	30%	32%	73%
G. Cultural context where parents, staff and pupils may hold values that differ or are at variance with those of school organisation.	64%	30%	29%	41%
H. Poor external and internal relations.	91%	70%	36%	66%

It is also worth noting that 30% of the principals saw each of contextual factors and cultural context in more or less the same way, as did the teachers. This is in spite of the contexts in which their schools are and the cultural aspects of the communities from which pupils come, and thus, which may impact negatively on the schools, for example, poverty, HIV/AIDS and others.

The results indicate that fewer teachers than principals and officials in the study associated any of the factors with pupil performance. Less than 31% of the teachers have attributed low pupil performance to the reasons given above, while most officials and principals have done so. The difference between the officials' responses and those of the principals and teachers say that officials blame teachers and schools for low pupil pass rate, while the schools put the blame elsewhere. For all the officials, teacher behaviour; declining status, morale and

motivation of teachers; shortage of teachers; and resources are factors responsible for low pupil performance. In this case both the principals and teachers are charged with the responsibility to arrange for the availability of resources and teachers, and changing their status, morale, motivation and behaviour.

The Officers and the principals claim that there is a decline in the status of teachers, low morale and lack of motivation. This impacts negatively on the teaching and learning processes resulting in low pupil performance because they are not satisfied, so they cannot carry out their duties properly. The respondents argue that in understaffed schools performance is low because the teaching staff was overloaded and sometimes children are not looked after when teachers are occupied with other classes. There is also a failure to adapt appropriate mechanism in this regard. Factors within the school and outside the school may affect both pupils and teachers since they do not only live within the school but also have to interact with their communities.

4.6 Teacher behaviours that contribute to positive pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations

Table 7. Responses on teacher behaviours that impact on pupil performance

Teacher roles	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. The classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom.	91%	72%	72%	78%
B. The way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other.	91%	75%	75%	80%
C. The behaviour of the teacher when not teaching.	45%	82%	82%	70%
D. The behaviour expected of the teacher when away from the school.	55%	66%	66%	62%

There are two extremes with regard to officials' responses to the teacher behaviours: First, a high percentage of the officials view the classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom, and teacher and pupils interaction as important. In this case the

officials believe that the teachers are in control of their subjects in classrooms and the interaction involved, so they would be blamed in case of pupil failure.

The officials tend to disagree that the behaviour of the teacher when not teaching and when away from school affects pupil performance. Eighty-two percent (82%) of both the principals and teachers agree that this affects pupil performance. This implies that a teacher remains a teacher even when not performing his/her duties.

4.7 Contextual factors that contribute to positive pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations

Table 8. Responses on contextual factors that impact on pupil performance

Contextual factors	Officials	Principals	Teachers	Average
A. Socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school.	55%	50%	51%	52%
B. The areas from which pupils' come.	73%	80%	72%	75%
C. Features of family adversity.	73%	70%	67%	70%
D. Homes that are deprived or disadvantaged.	73%	80%	68%	74%
E. Family background.	100%	70%	90%	87%
F. Family structure.	75%	60%	60%	65%

It is significant that 55% of officials, 50% principals and 52% teachers attribute pupil performance to socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school. However, high percentages of officials, principals and teachers believed that other contextual factors, rather than socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school lead to positive pupil performance.

4.8 Summary of findings

This study aimed to investigate the factors that contribute to positive pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district, and how teachers influence positive pupil performance. The study particularly investigated the nature of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive pupil performance.

From data collected through questionnaires, group interviews and document analysis, it was concluded that: First, when asked to identify factors that impact on pupil performance, the respondents generally agreed on a number of factors. However, a significant number of teachers did not attribute high pupil performance to structured sessions, a positive school climate, and consistency among teachers or to a work-centred environment. The results suggest that a variety of factors are seen as contributing to positive pupil performance in primary schools of Botha-Bothe.

Second, the majority of all respondents identified similar teacher behaviours as impacting on pupil performance. However, lower percentages of teachers identified creation of work-centred environment and participating in an open-door policy as significant. Nevertheless, the respondents identified the majority of teacher behaviours to positively impact on pupil performance.

Third, all the respondents generally agreed that resources, teacher behaviours, positive school context and effective teaching impact positively on pupil performance. However, fewer teachers identified teacher behaviours and positive school context as important.

Fourth, when asked to identify reasons for low pupil performance, significantly low numbers of teachers selected any of the factors as significant. Further interviews, were they used with this group, would have probed responses for this, as well as identified the factors to which teachers attribute low pupil performance.

Fifth, all the three groups of respondents identified similar teacher behaviours as impacting on pupil performance, with fewer officials identifying the behaviour of a teacher while not teaching as significant.

Last, a high percentage of all respondents agreed on the role played by different contextual factors on pupil performance. However, only about half of them thought that a learner's socio-economic status and poverty in the community significantly impacted on positive pupil performance.

The next chapter discusses the implications of these findings on policy and practice in the schools and district, and makes recommendations for improving performance in all schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In the last chapter data collected through questionnaires, group interviews and document analysis from 117 respondents including Ministry of Education District Officials, primary school principals and primary school teachers were presented. The responses were organised into themes informed by the research question, which was to present the perceptions of the respondents, regarding the factors that lead to positive pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in ten primary schools of Botha-Bothe district in Lesotho, and how teachers influence positive pupil performance. In particular, the role of teacher behaviours, contextual factors, school culture, school resources, and teaching and learning processes as some of the factors that may lead to positive pupil performance was explored.

This chapter analyses the findings presented qualitatively and quantitatively in the last chapter and identifies implications for policy and practice aimed at improving school performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations, and makes recommendations for improving performance in all schools. It draws conclusions from the Ministry of Education Officials, principals and teachers responses informed by theoretical frameworks pioneered by Creemers (1996), Schreens and Creemers (1989), and (Harber and Muthukrishna, 2000) elaborated upon in the second chapter.

5.2 Analysis of findings

First, data from questionnaires were analysed using both quantitative and qualitative analysis. These were complemented by data from group interviews and document analysis. The data were organised in themes and categories suggested by the research questions.

From this analysis, it was found that: Firstly, the majority of the respondents in this study agreed on the various factors impacting on pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations. These include purposeful leadership, structured sessions, intellectually challenging teaching, consistency among teachers, work-centred environment, maximum communication between teachers and students, good record-keeping, parental involvement,

and positive climate. However, a significant number of teachers did not think that a positive school climate is an important factor in pupil performance. This is contrary to research literature, (for example, Mortimore, *et al.*, 1988) which suggests that an effective school has a positive ethos. Overall, the atmosphere is more pleasant in schools with positive school climate (Effective schools). Thus, in Botha-Bothe schools, further research is needed to examine the extent to which the school climate plays a role in pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations.

Secondly, fewer teachers than officials and principals in this study identified the creation of work-centred school environment as significant for improving pupil performance. Clearly, since school success is judged mostly by academic performance, it would follow that a work-centred environment would be conducive to effective learning and teaching (Scott, 2000). In Botha-Bothe schools, further research is needed to examine the extent to which the school climate plays a role in pupil performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations. To address this, continuing staff development is necessary to ensure, not only, so that teachers become aware of the significance of this factor, but also that they actively create such an environment in the schools and in their classrooms.

Thirdly, most officers, principals and teachers identified the declining status, morale and motivation of teachers as the reason for low pupil performance. They were of the opinion that restructuring schools improve learning, as in the re-allocation of teachers to meet the school design specifications and restructuring the use of time, but that static teacher education; inexperienced teachers and low teacher salaries have great impact on student test scores, and are the determinants of low student performance. Low pupil performance is attributed to lack of commitment and dedication of the staff to their work.

It is high time for the government through the Ministry of Education to fulfil the long awaited promise mentioned in the Educational Policy Guidelines (1981) that community/local cooperation will be solicited to help in putting up suitable teachers' living quarters and other essential educational facilities.

Fourthly, that half of the teachers in the study did not think that the learners' socio-economic status and poverty in the community impact on pupil performance is both worrying and reassuring. It is reassuring if it means that teachers do not have different expectations for

learners' performance depending on their social background that could result in their performing poorly. It is worrying if they are just ignorant of the impact of these factors on pupils' schooling and performance. Thus, further research to examine the impact of these factors is necessary. In addition, continuing discussion with schools and teachers should be held to ensure that this is always on the schools' and teaching agenda. The respondents viewed family background to affect schooling outcomes in that higher parental schooling is associated with higher schooling attainment for children and that the education of parents directly influences performance of their children. Pupils acquire the human capital in their home environment through factors such as parents' ability to get involved in reading at home and help children with their homework (Anderson, Case and Lam, 2001). Therefore, parents' educational levels determine performance of their children.

This would suggest that teachers be considerate of pupils' family backgrounds so as to be able to handle pupils according to their differences. Teachers and learners are experiencing problems with regard to parents who have not undergone schooling because they are unable to play their role effectively and efficiently. This also reflect on the teaching profession in that adult education should be strengthened and restructured to accommodate learning by parents as it is with the Free Primary Education where adults are included in the mainstream through the education system policy. In this way even teachers are to be equipped with adult teaching in the mainstream.

Fifthly, a remarkably low number of principals in the study think that parental involvement is an important factor impacting on pupil performance in Primary School Leaving Examinations. This is inspite of literature which suggests that schools with an informal open-door policy, which encouraged parents to get involved in reading at home, helping in the classroom and on educational visits, tended to be more effective (Mortimore, *et al.*, 1988). Pupil performance depends mostly on parents' involvement and their relations with teachers or school. Thus, Macbeth in Preedy (1993:194) suggests initiation of a minimum programme of parent-teacher liaison within a school. This may be achieved through parents' consultation with teachers; organisation of class meetings; establishment of parents' association; and putting in full force the School Governing Body. Therefore, the school has to seek parents' collaboration with teachers and emphasise their responsibilities of parenthood, their legal duty to provide education and the knowledge that active interest and co-operation will help the child to benefit from schooling. The Education Act of 1995 stipulates that four parents whose

children attend a particular school should represent other parents in the Advisory School Committee. Based on these, more visits to schools by officials to ensure that policy is correctly interpreted and implemented are necessary.

In addition, officials, principals and teachers identified effective teaching and learning processes. All of the respondents believed that knowledge and understanding about the content of teaching, knowledge and understanding about how pupils learn, and knowledge and understanding about how to manage the process of learning and teaching constitute the process of effective teaching and learning. Teacher knowledge, experiences and perceptions largely contribute in improving student performance in the examinations (Dalin, 1998). But the lowest percentage of teachers felt that teacher behaviours impacts on pupil performance. This is opposite to Hargreaves and Hopkins (1993) assertion that teaching is an important aspect of school effectiveness, and that the major contributor to school effectiveness is teaching, and that the more structured and reflective the approach to teaching, the more likely it is that students' academic performance will improve. Thus, schools need to develop policies for supporting teaching and learning, which focus on ways of tackling the processes of teaching and learning for more rapid improvement, and include aspects of teacher effectiveness focused on the importance of changing teacher behaviours.

In terms of The Educational policy Guidelines, (1981) on The Training, conditions of Service and the Role of Teachers the effective implementation of educational policies depends on the commitment, understanding and skills of the teaching force. Therefore, it is necessary to improve and expand on the present level of training for teachers and principals.

Almost all the officials, principals and teachers were of the opinion that the way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other is a vital role that impact on pupil performance. Pupils spent most of their time at school; teachers need to take advantage of this time to effectively interact with them. This is in line with The Teaching Service Regulations 2002 (2002) that a teacher shall, in addition to the performance of his duties during school hours, take part when required by the Principal in any matter affecting the general work and welfare of the school including such sporting and extra-mural activities as may be conducted for the benefit of the pupils. A teacher may be required to carry out reasonable duties during school vacation or during weekends.

It is necessary that the Teaching Service Department of the Ministry of Education nominate teachers and principals annually for further training and refresher courses. Provision should also be made for the District Education Officials to hold workshops and seminars for schools with the purpose of ensuring high pupil performance in schools. Policies such as that which provides for pupils' meals in schools should cover the whole school circle in order to meet pupils' need for food and address poverty.

Additional recommendations based on the findings of this study include:

- ❖ More visits to schools by officials to ensure that policy is correctly interpreted and influenced,
- ❖ Professional development of teachers and principals on latest teaching innovations is undertaken,
- ❖ More research on the factors that impact on pupil performance that uses qualitative methodologies and includes more schools and respondents.

5.3 Conclusions

This study has addressed the factors that impact on high pupil performance in primary schools of Botha-Bothe district of Lesotho through particular investigation into the perceptions of the District Education Officers (Field services), primary school principals, and teachers, regarding teacher behaviours that affect curriculum delivery, network of relationships and school organisation, and ultimately high performance in the Botha-Bothe district. The study found that leadership by the principal, teachers with positive relationships, effective teaching and learning processes, and teacher behaviours such as the classroom behaviour and teacher-pupil interaction are some of the factors that are seen as impacting on high pupil performance. While poor performance may be attributed to the absence of the above factors, further research is still required into factors that influence poor performance.

In addition, the findings of the study raise a number of limitations associated with the methodology. First, that a significantly low number of teachers identified any of the suggested factors as contributing to low pupil performance may mean two things. The first is that the respondents may not have understood the question and could not respond appropriately. The second may be that the design of the questionnaire did not include the factors that they would identify as significant. This implies that further interviews would need to be conducted with this group in order to identify such factors. This may suggest that a questionnaire was not the

best method to use. Further research that involves the use of in-depth interviews, school visits (prolonged) and other methods that would enable probing into the realities of these schools and the factors that impact on performance would have been more useful.

Also, a small sample of ten schools out of sixty was used and the time spent collecting data was not enough to generalise to all schools in Botha-Bothe. Also the time was not enough to really understand the factors impacting on pupil performance and what is really going on in all schools studied.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Individual school performance from 1994-2001 in Botha-Bothe

Analysis of PSLE results by % pass during 1994 – 2001 in the Botha-Bothe district of Lesotho.

Pass Percentage per annum

Reg. No.	School	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Mean	Position
131.005	Bokoro	100	72.7	85.4	100	96.4	100	100	100	94.3	46
121.018	B.B. Camp	89.6	93	94.7	100	95.4	98.9	100	100	96.4	50
121.019	B.B. Mopeli	100	100	100	98.3	100	96.9	100	100	99.2	57
131.008	Cartwright	88.9	52.2	100	86.7	100	80	100	100	88.4	34
121.002	Hololo	100	100	100	100	100	100	90.6	97	98.5	56
131.012	Jane	100	94.1	66.7	57.5	70.8	91.3	100	72.7	81.6	19
131.015	Khaketla	85.7	68.6	79.4	52.5	47.5	60	96.7	100	73.8	7
121.009	Khatibe	94.2	88.9	90.4	74.7	76.8	82.2	91	94.4	86.6	27
141.010	Khukhune	93.7	79.5	76.4	91.5	76.8	85.7	93.5	90	85.8	24
141.013	Lebesa	100	70	77.3	72.4	69	100	78.3	65.5	79	14
111.003	'Moteng Community	-	-	-	60	64.3	70.5	81.3	95	74.2	8
141.005	Lekula	92	84.4	88.5	100	83.3	73	96.6	94.4	89	37
131.014	Lepatoa	87.9	71.4	95.8	72.4	86.2	76.6	63	61.8	76.8	12
121.021	Likhutlong	84.2	66.7	62.5	71.4	77.4	100	95.8	94.4	81.5	18
121.003	Linokong	94.1	70.7	98.3	93.2	94.6	47.9	91.7	100	86.3	25
121.010	Liphakoeng	91.2	94.7	92.9	84.4	100	74	100	100	92.1	42
121.011	Liqobong	22.7	-	-	-	86.6	50	92.3	94.7	69.2	5
121.016	Mafika-Lisiu	90	48.8	95	100	63.2	57.6	72.7	75	75.2	10
131.017	Mahlekefane RC	90.9	100	64.3	94.7	73.9	84.6	73.7	100	85.2	21
121.012	Makhunoane	90	34.5	68.2	83.3	87	85.2	97.2	88.9	79.2	16
121.020	'Makong	92.9	98.6	94.7	92.2	71.1	85.7	98.6	100	91.7	41
121.004	Manamela	97.2	88.2	97.1	97.7	100	100	97.8	100	97.2	51
131.004	Mariestella	92.4	67.6	95.4	79.3	89.2	88.3	100	91.2	87.9	33
131.007	Maryvale	64.3	76.5	80	58.8	100	85.1	97.7	95.5	82.2	20
121.013	Mechachaneng	85.2	99	65.4	67.9	100	74	90.9	100	85.3	23
121.007	'Makuini	87.2	83.7	83	93.8	94.1	73.3	100	96.2	88.9	36
121.006	'Malefiloane	85.7	70.3	84.6	96.8	96	100	100	100	91.6	40
131.002	'Moteng RC	100	45.5	100	91.4	100	97	94.3	80	88.5	35
141.012	'Muella ACL	85.7	53.2	94.4	78.9	87	96	96.9	90	85.2	22
131.003	'Mutlanyana	100	45.5	85.7	100	100	100	88.9	81	87.6	32
141.009	Mononts'a	71.4	41.7	60.7	72.2	35.7	58.6	90.9	15.8	55.8	2
121.022	Motete	55	94.1	81.3	83.2	65	58.3	97.5	82.3	77.1	13
121.014	Ngoajane	94.3	31.4	82.6	77.8	91.4	55	73	100	75.6	11
161.002	Nqabene	100	97.5	88.6	97.6	69.6	100	100	100	94.2	45
131.013	Paramente	100	67.2	91.9	100	100	100	100	100	94.9	48
121.015	Phoku	100	100	97.2	93.3	100	96.7	100	100	98.4	55
121.001	Qalo	98.7	84.2	97	100	93.5	98.7	95.7	100	96	49
121.008	Qholaqhoe	84.8	94.9	88.6	92.7	64.1	89.7	92.1	84.8	86.5	26
141.003	Sefako	61.3	34.6	36.8	63	65.5	42.8	77.5	85.7	58.4	3
141.001	Sekubu	96.4	87.1	77.9	89.2	40	95.8	80.3	69.5	79.5	17
151.001	Serutle	97	58.5	95.5	80.6	100	73.1	97.8	92.8	86.9	28
111.004	Jane Community	-	-	-	43.5	40	68.7	58.3	100	62.1	4
131.16	Shishila	85.2	26.9	52.8	64.2	73.3	83.8	93.8	85.7	70.7	6
161.003	Soofia Eng. Medium	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	60
131.009	St. Alphonse	98	100	97.8	100	96.4	91.6	100	100	98	54
131.011	St. Charles	43.9	33.3	61.7	89.6	100	89.2	95.5	86.7	75	9

141.002	St. Cyprians	67.5	72.1	88	98.6	100	100	100	98.5	91	38
131.006	St. Paul RC	96.9	95	99.3	100	100	92.4	100	97.9	97.7	53
141.006	St. Paul ACL	100	100	100	100	85	100	100	95.8	97.6	52
131.001	St. Peters	100	-	73.3	86.6	96.6	90	94.3	100	91.5	39
161.001	Thabong SABMS	100	100	100	100	97.6	97.5	100	100	99.4	58
141.004	Thaka-Banna	100	-	83.3	69.2	100	92.8	93.8	73.3	87.5	31
131.019	Tlholo	100	100	87.5	80	100	82.2	51.4	97.1	87.3	30
141.007	Ts'a-le-moleka	82.6	100	67.5	70	88.9	88.4	100	100	87.2	29
121.005	Tsime	100	-	85.1	97.7	97.6	88.3	97.1	97.8	94.8	47
121.026	Mpatloane	-	-	-	-	87.5	85.2	100	100	93.2	44
111.006	Botha-Bothe Community	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	-	20	1
111.007	Makhoakhoa Community	-	-	-	-	-	-	87.5	70.8	79.2	15
111.008	Lekopa Community	-	-	-	-	-	-	96.2	90	93.1	43
111.002	Likileng Eng. Medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	100	59
TOTAL	60	89.5	77.5	85.1	87.5	85.9	84.8	93.6	92.4	87	

Appendix B:

Ministry of education District education officials' questionnaire

In the interest of confidentiality you are not required to supply your name to this questionnaire. However a few personal and professional details will be most useful. Please give a frank answer to each question. Add extra paper if you run out of space.

Please tick the appropriate answer or write the answer in the space provided.

- MALE
- FEMALE

AGE RANGE...

POSITION ...

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THIS POSITION...

NUMBER OF YEARS IN BOTHA-BOTHE DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICE....

Question 1.

Which of the following are the factors that impact on pupil performance in Primary schools of Botha-Bothe district (Tick whichever is applicable.)?

- A. Purposeful leadership of the staff by the head Teacher
- B. Consistency among teachers
- C. Structured sessions
- D. Intellectually challenging teaching
- E. Work-centred environment
- F. Maximum communication between teachers and students
- G. Good Record-keeping
- H. Parental involvement
- I. Positive climate

Question 2

Do you agree or disagree with the statement that teacher behaviours that impact on pupil performance Botha-Bothe district are: (Key: A = Agree, D = Disagree)

- A. Understanding of school's and pupil needs.
- B. Sharing of power with pupils.
- C. Consistent approach to teaching.
- D. Structuring sessions for pupils.

- E. Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching.
- F. Creation of work-centered environment.
- G. Communicating maximally with pupils.
- H. Devoting most of their time to individual pupil.
- I. Using opportunities to talk to the whole class.
- J. Teachers' planning and assessment of pupils.
- K. Participating in open-door policy.
- L. Teachers with positive relationships.

Question 3

Why is it that some schools in the Botha-Bothe district are more effective than others in pupil performance? (Please circle).

- A. Resources.
- B. Teacher behaviours.
- C. Positive school context.
- D. Effective teaching and learning processes.
- E. Other (Please specify).

Question 4

Which of these are some of the reasons why some schools perform worse than others in PSLE in the Botha-Bothe district? (Please circle)

- A. Teacher behaviour.
- B. Lack of professionalism.
- C. The declining status, morale and motivation of teachers.
- D. Shortages of teachers.
- E. Resources.
- F. The contextual factors; socio-economic context and mismanagement and corruption of education systems.
- G. Cultural context where parents, staff and pupils may hold values that differ or are at variance with those of school organisation.
- H. Poor external and internal relations.
- I. All of the above.
- J. Other (Please specify)

Question 5

Which of the following roles of the teacher impact on pupil performance in Botha-Bothe primary schools? (Please tick).

- A. The classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom.
- B. The way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other.
- C. The behaviour of the teacher when not teaching.
- D. The behaviour expected of the teacher when away from the school.
- E. None of the above.

Question 6

Do the following (contextual) factors impact on the achievement of pupils in Botha-Bothe district primary schools? (Key: Yes = Y, No = N).

- A. Socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school.
- B. The areas from which pupils' come.
- C. Features of family adversity.
- D. Homes that are deprived or disadvantaged.
- E. Family background.
- F. Family structure.
- G. Other (Please specify).

Appendix C:

Primary school principals' questionnaire

In the interest of confidentiality you are not required to supply your name to this questionnaire. However a few personal and professional details will be most useful. Please give a frank answer to each question. Add extra paper if you run out of space.

Please tick the appropriate answer or write the answer in the space provided.

- MALE
- FEMALE

AGE RANGE

QUALIFICATION

SCHOOL

NUMBER OF YEARS AS PRINCIPAL

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THIS SCHOOL

Question 1.

Which of the following are the factors that impact on pupil performance in your school? (Tick whichever is applicable.):

- A. Purposeful leadership of the staff by the head Teacher.
- B. Consistency among teachers.
- C. Structured sessions.
- D. Intellectually challenging teaching.
- E. Work-centred environment.
- F. Maximum communication between teachers and students.
- G. Good Record-keeping.
- H. Parental involvement.
- I. Positive climate.

Question 2

Do you agree or disagree with the statement that teacher behaviours that impact on pupil performance in your school are: (Key: A = Agree, D = Disagree)

- A. Understanding of school's and pupil needs.
- B. Active involvement in school.

- C. Sharing of power with pupils.
- D. Active involvement in the school.
- E. Sharing power with pupils.
- F. Total control over pupils.
- G. The involvement of the pupils.
- H. Consistent approach to teaching.
- I. Structured sessions for pupils.
- J. Organised pupils' work.
- K. Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching.
- L. Creation of work-centered environment.
- M. Limited focus within sessions.
- N. Communicates maximally with pupils.
- O. Devotes most of their time to individual pupil.
- P. Uses opportunities to talk to the whole class.
- Q. Teachers' planning and assessment of pupils.
- R. Participates in open-door policy.
- S. Teachers with positive relationships.

Question 3

Why is it that some schools in the Botha-Bothe district are more effective than others in pupil performance? (Please circle).

- A. Resources.
- B. Teacher behaviours.
- C. Positive school context.
- D. Effective teaching and learning processes.
- E. Other (Please specify).

Question 4

Which of these are some of the reasons why some schools perform worse than others in PSLE in the Botha-Bothe district? (Please circle)

- A. Teacher behaviour.
- B. Lack of professionalism.
- C. The declining status, morale and motivation of teachers.
- D. Shortages of teachers.

- E. Resources.
- F. The contextual factors; socio-economic context and mismanagement and corruption of education systems.
- G. Cultural context where parents, staff and pupils may hold values that differ or are at variance with those of school organisation.
- H. Poor external and internal relations.
- I. All of the above.
- J. Other (Please specify).

Question 5

Which of the following roles of the teacher affect pupil performance in your school? (Please tick).

- A. The classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom.
- B. The way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other.
- C. The behaviour of the teacher when not teaching.
- D. The behaviour expected of the teacher when away from the school.
- E. None of the above.

Question 6

Do the following (contextual) factors relate to the achievement of pupils in your school?

(Key: Yes = Y, No = N).

- A. Socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school.
- B. The areas from which pupils' come.
- C. Features of family adversity.
- D. Homes that are deprived or disadvantaged.
- E. Family background.
- F. Family structure.
- G. Other (Please specify).

Appendix D:

Primary school teacher's questionnaire

In the interest of confidentiality you are not required to supply your name to this questionnaire. However a few personal and professional details will be most useful. Please give a frank answer to each question. Add extra paper if you run out of space.

Please tick the appropriate answer or write the answer in the space provided.

- MALE
- FEMALE

AGE RANGE

QUALIFICATION

SCHOOL

NUMBER OF YEARS AS TEACHER

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THIS SCHOOL

Question 1.

Which of the following are the factors that impact on pupil performance in your class? (Tick whichever is applicable.):

- A. Purposeful leadership of the staff by the head Teacher.
- B. Consistency among teachers.
- C. Structured sessions.
- D. Intellectually challenging teaching.
- E. Work-centred environment.
- F. Maximum communication between teachers and students.
- G. Record-keeping.
- H. Parental involvement.
- I. Positive climate.

Question 2

Do you agree or disagree with the statement that teacher behaviours that impact on pupil performance in your class are: (Key: A = Agree, D = Disagree)

- A. Understanding of school's and pupil needs.
- B. Sharing of power with pupils.

- C. Active involvement in the school.
- D. Sharing power with pupils.
- E. Total control over pupils.
- F. The involvement of the pupils.
- G. Consistent approach to teaching.
- H. Structured sessions for pupils.
- I. Organised pupils' work.
- J. Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching.
- K. Creation of work-centered environment.
- L. Limited focus within sessions.
- M. Communicated maximally with pupils.
- N. Devotes most of their time to individual pupil.
- O. Uses opportunities to talk to the whole class.
- P. Teachers' planning and assessment of pupils.
- Q. Participates in open-door policy.
- R. Teachers with positive relationships.

Question 3

Why is it that some schools in the Botha-Bothe district are more effective than others in pupil performance? (Please circle).

- A. Resources.
- B. Teacher behaviours.
- C. Positive school context.
- D. Effective teaching and learning processes.
- E. Other (Please specify).

Question 4

Which of these are some of the reasons why some schools perform worse than others in PSLE in the Botha-Bothe district? (Please circle)

- A. Teacher behaviour.
- B. Lack of professionalism.
- C. The declining status, morale and motivation of teachers.
- D. Shortages of teachers.
- E. Resources.

- F. The contextual factors; socio-economic context and mismanagement and corruption of education systems.
- G. Cultural context where parents, staff and pupils may hold values that differ or are at variance with those of school organisation.
- H. Poor external and internal relations.
- I. All of the above.
- J. Other (Please specify).

Question 5

Which of the following roles of the teacher do not affect pupil performance in your school? (Please tick).

- A. The classroom behaviour of a teacher while actually teaching in the classroom.
- B. The way in which the teacher and pupils interact with each other.
- C. The behaviour of the teacher when not teaching.
- D. The behaviour expected of the teacher when away from the school.
- E. None of the above.

Question 6

Do the following (contextual) factors relate to the achievement of pupils in my school? (Key: Yes = Y, No = N).

- A. Socio-economic status and poverty degree of the communities served by the school.
- B. The areas from which pupils' come.
- C. Features of family adversity.
- D. Homes that are deprived or disadvantaged.
- E. Family background.
- F. Family structure.
- G. Other (Please specify).

Appendix E:

Interview schedule

Ministry of Education Officials' interviews

1. What are the factors that impact on pupil performance in Primary schools of Botha-Bothe district?
2. What do you think are the teacher behaviours that affect curriculum delivery, network of relationships and school organisation in the Botha-Bothe district?
3. What do you think are the teacher behaviours that positively impact on pupil performance?
4. Why, in your opinion, is it that some schools in the Botha-Bothe district experience high pupil performance while others do not?
5. What do you think contributed to the high pupil performance of the Botha-Bothe district primary schools over eight years since 1994?
6. What factors do you think lead to high pupil performance at Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) in Botha-Bothe district?
7. What roles of the teacher do you think determine pupils' achievement?
8. What do you see as contextual aspects that influence pupils' performance in Botha-Bothe district?
9. What can other districts and schools learn from the high performing schools in the Botha-Bothe district?

Primary school principals' interviews

In your opinion/view:

1. What are the factors that impact on pupil performance in your school?
2. What are teacher behaviours that affect curriculum delivery network of relationships and school organisation in your school?
3. What are your behaviours that positively impact on pupil performance in your school?
4. Why is it that some schools in your district experience high pupil performance while others do not?
5. What contributes to the pupil performance of your school over eight years since 1994?
6. Why do some primary schools in the Botha-Bothe district perform better than others or worse than others?
7. What are your schoolteachers' roles that determine pupils' achievement?
8. What contextual aspects influence your school pupils' performance?
9. What can other teachers and schools learn from your school factors that impact positively on pupil performance?

Appendix F:

Document Analysis schedule.

PSLE examinations pass lists

District PSLE analysis reports

Government documents