

This first Issue of Volume 9 first has a rich mix of learning and teaching perspectives that are evidence-based. It offers the readers a collage of scholarship that spans classroom practice, curriculum and design, policy related issues in learning, teaching and assessment, as well as infrom on how the research-teaching nexus does contribute to quality improvement across levels of education.

*The academic writing difficulties of undergraduates: the case of the university of Botswana students* by Setumile Morapedi and Ngozi Ummnakwe examine writing problems encountered by University of Botswana first year undergraduate students doing a compulsory writing course. They observe that while the majority of the learners enjoy writing as an academic exercise that enables them to express their ideas, views, opinions; and desire to have more practice in crafting a thesis statement, sentence constructions and paragraph development, the students are however, grossly deficient in areas of vocabulary, grammar, mechanics, sentence constructions and expressions.

Sophie Moagi and Tumelo Kgolo in *Portfolio as a learning and assessment tool for Bachelor of Psychology (B.Psych) students at the university of Botswana* examine the utility of the portfolio as a learning and assessment tool in the B.Psych program. Guided by evidence collected over time, they argue that the B.Psych. Portfolio has been a worthwhile tool that the Department of Psychology will continue to use to enhance accountability in the training of psychological counsellors. This, they argue, is because the portfolio demonstrates its effectiveness in facilitating student readiness for professional practice in the community.

In their paper entitled *a case report of an innovative approach to harnessing human resources at a nursing school in Botswana*, Motshedisi Sabone, Mabedi Kgositau and Amos Mosele share insights of how human resources limitation drive collaborative teaching at an international level. Their paper shares a compelling example of how shortage of manpower in face-to-face teaching prompted the nursing school to harness human resources outside the country to teach through an on-line mode.

Hadgu Bariagaber discusses the *complementarity and diversity between the UN 1974 Bucharest WPC and UN 1994 Cairo ICPD with reference to their issues and recommendations*. He highlights the complementarity/convergence and divergence in the issues raised and recommendations made by the UN 1974 Bucharest World Population Conference (WPC and the UN 1994 Cairo International Conference of Population and Development (ICPD) in relation to fertility agendas, paving way to interdisciplinary learning that emerges in the narrative.

Salome Maemo Mogotsi, Kgomotso Getrude Garegae and Sesutho Koketso Kesianye analyse *teachers' and students' views pertaining to the teaching and learning of school geometry in Botswana junior secondary schools*. Their paper highlights challenges faced by both teachers and students, specifically shortage of resources and application of pedagogical content knowledge to enhance teaching of geometry.

Kabo Diraditsile and Gontle Gofileone Samakabadi examine the *effect of social media on student engagement and collaboration*. They observe that while there are laudable benefits of using social networking sites, there are also dangers associated with social networking, because social media use while studying is distractive.

Mpho Otukile – Mongwaketse and Manyage Tshidaho in *teacher's understandings of implementing curriculum: a comparative study between Botswana and South African rural primary schools education system* share findings that indicate variations in the challenges and underlying issues of

defining curriculum at points of implementing it. They propose curbing the tensions that exist between covering the curriculum breadth and understanding its depth in order to effectively implement it. They emphasise need to afford learners equal opportunities to facilitate access to higher levels of education.

Paul T. Nleya tackles the topical issue of *transformative role of information communication technology within a Southern Africa context*, and analyses how sustained engagement by institutions and individuals in Nordic and Southern African Universities. He urges for optimal benefit that can arise from a stronger emphasis on IT-focused applications, and opportunities and challenges associated with such innovations.

Maunganidze Omega, G. T. Tsayang and S Koloji-Keaikitse argue for *driving quality instruction through teacher continuous improvement programmes in Zimbabwean primary schools*. They note that the models of continuous improvement programmes directly influence quality instruction.

Donald Rakemane and Batlang C. Serema examine the effectiveness of student management system (SMS). In their study, they note that there is limited usage of SMS in educational settings, and where it is applied, there is limited satisfaction with regard to the design and its implementation.

Mpho Otukile-Mongwaketse examines *teacher centred approaches and their implications for today's inclusive classrooms*. The study challenges the traditional use of authoritarian approaches of teaching as one way of perpetuating exclusionary circumstances within Botswana schools, noting that it excludes learners who have learning disabilities with little chance of accessing the curriculum.

Austin de Drouillard in *a case for a dual education system in Botswana* argues that it is urgent, prudent and timely to assess the whole education system and make it fit for a rapidly integrating, globalising world.

*Collaborative academic writing* by Unity M Nkateng explores how students can benefit from collaborative approaches to academic writing. Her research evidence and arguments inform teachers of academic writing on ways of improving collaborative writing in their courses and teaching.

*Effects of extensive reading strategy on students' achievement in reading comprehension* by Mary A Owodunni show-cases how extensive reading as a teaching and learning strategy is more effective in improving students' achievement in reading comprehension.

In *go isiwa ga ngwetsi event: a tapestry of cultural learning*, Bakadzi Moeti investigate the experiences of brides regarding *go isiwa ga ngwetsi* event, and demonstrates how highly valuable the activity is, because it is a cultural learning process that introduces the bride to her in-laws' family as well as allows her to participate in family (future) activities with ease.