

## EDITORIAL

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Welcome to Volume 25 Issue Number 1 of *Mosenodi: International Journal of Educational Studies*. *Mosenodi* aims to publish peer-reviewed, empirical articles which investigate current issues on education. Articles could be analytical or theoretical and must demonstrate engagement on the issues that are current and relevant to the field. The focus of the journal is diverse and broad, encompassing research at all levels (formal and non-formal, adult and early childhood education, vocational education etc) and in any setting, and includes research reports, briefs, commentaries, research notes, book reviews, conference reports with comparative, interdisciplinary and applied perspectives, interviews on educational practice, among others. Volume 25 Issue Number 1 contains five articles and a book review, all of which address topical matters on education, and which together constitute a stimulating and inspiring read.

[Chebanne](#) focuses on the languages in education policy in Botswana and argues that although it has not been officially published, initiatives and debates that are now topical and geared towards its implementation demonstrate excitement and caution by stakeholders and researchers. The excitement is caused by the fact that this will be one way that the country fulfils its ideals of democratization, of language rights, and of improving pedagogy for learners who do not have the national language, Setswana, as their home language. The caution expressed by some emanate from the realization that suggested timelines will not afford the Government to make appropriate preparations towards the January 2023 date. Associated with these trepidations, it is also the argument made in this paper that while the Government believes the initiative will create an inclusive curriculum that will deliver education for all and the Vision 2036 ideals of knowledge economy, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) quality of life standards, the draft policy as is being discussed at Government levels may not be a smooth riding through implementation processes. The article assesses the situation and points out issues that need to be taken into consideration for the policy to be gainful once signed into

a formal legal document. The article's focus on policy sets the stage for a range of language in education approaches and challenges in Botswana, which some of the articles in this issue address.

[Maphosa and Lesetedi](#) address gaps in the quality and outcomes of education. They focus on universities and the relevance of their programmes, arguing that graduate tracer studies have been conducted to assess relevance. Their article is based on a tracer study of the Master of Arts in Development Studies (MADVS) graduate programme in the Department of Sociology at the University of Botswana. Data was collected through a survey questionnaire and a focus group discussion and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and thematic analysis respectively. The study found that the programme was relevant to employers: graduates had occupational mobility, salary increases and could change to better (paying) jobs. Graduates further pointed out potential areas of improvement in the curriculum that the Department would need to take into consideration.

[Makoko and Otlogetswe](#) aver that dictionary are important repositories of language and provide important details such as meaning, spelling, pronunciation, morphology, usage, and grammar. Their article investigates attitudes of learners in Botswana junior secondary schools towards dictionaries and dictionary formats to determine the challenges they face in using dictionaries. The study uses a survey to elicit information from students and teachers from two schools. The study reveals that a dictionary is an important learning tool for most students. Electronic dictionaries in particular are useful because they are quick and easy to use while book dictionaries are preferred because they are easy to carry. The greatest difficulty encountered by students is failure to understand the definition of words and failure to select the right meaning where a word has multiple meanings. The study also reveals that although teachers do not offer dictionary education to students, they recommend a dictionary when the need arises, such as when students have spelling problems, or when they need to check the definition of a vocabulary item. Dictionaries, especially those in mother tongue are foundational to future learning, since mastery of first language is a requisite for further language acquisition, by avoiding knowledge gaps and increase the speed of learning and comprehension (Brock-Utne, 2007; UNESCO, 2022). More importantly, the quality and/or use of dictionaries, including those in local languages enable grounding school curriculum in local cultural and contextual realities, which is the focus of the next article about foreign language teaching.

[Bojosi, Kaome and Sechele-Nthapelelang](#) opine that societal needs have dictated the change from traditional methods of teaching language, which had a grammar-translation oriented approach with the teacher assuming an authoritarian role and learners memorising grammar rules, to methodologies that are communicative and task-based. They argue that these methodologies call for the incorporation of the target language culture in curricula and syllabi since the aim is to produce not only multilingual but also multicultural learners. The aim of their study is to investigate the extent to which the French syllabus of 2010 incorporates the francophone culture and guides in developing the intercultural competency. Inclusion of cultural elements in the syllabus was analysed in relation to the topics of the syllabus. A questionnaire was administered

to teachers, the results of which were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The results suggest that the cultural component has been neglected in the syllabus and this has implications on teacher practices.

**Hiri-Khudu** argues that the need to have a culturally relevant education system is not unique to Botswana. Over the last two decades, many governments in developing countries have changed their ideological orientation towards indigenous people's education and espoused a more pluralistic, inclusive approach to the cultural diversity within their borders. She argues that the inclusion and participation of San in the education of their children as well as the use of teaching methods like observation and practice has the potential to change the current educational results among the San community. The notions of relevant education and context-specific education are as old as the idea of education itself and great educators such as Dewey (1938), Kolb (1984), and Rousseau who emphasised "education by doing" and "child-centred education" were all concerned about relevance and context. In recent times educational relevance debates have put indigenous education at the core of context-specific education. It is in this regard that Hiri-Khudu makes her argument.

**Sebina** reviews *Learning Lessons*, a book that aims to provide inspiration and direction to young people seeking to pursue consequential careers in the education sector. He avers that the book is a well-thought-out response to the question that is often posed to the author, Professor Jonathan Jansen, who is an eminent South African educator, distinguished academic, illustrious university leader, celebrated institution builder and public intellectual. The question is '*How did you achieve what you did?*' The book offers ten lessons garnered from the author's life and career trajectory and what he gleaned from the experiences of role models and achievers in different fields of human accomplishments. The lessons distil the author experiences through a series of anecdotes and prudently crafted narratives celebrating the brilliance, ingenuity, and resilience of various individuals that the author has interacted with in his life and work. What makes the book interesting is that it draws illustrative examples from all levels of the academic expedition.

## **References**

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