E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (EHASS)
ISSN – Online 2720-7722 | Print 2821-8949
Volume 4 Issue 3 – March 2023 pp 259-275
Available online at: https://noyam.org/journals/ehass/
DOI : https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.2023437

Basic Education Sector Service Delivery: Challenges Faced by Managers and Practitioners in Botswana

Annah Koboyatau[1] & Siphiwe Mthiyane [2]
[1] Boitekanelo College, Gaborone, Botswana.
[2] University of Pretoria: Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa.

ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to explore the conceptualisation, practices and experiences of Education managers and practitioners regarding service delivery in the Botswana basic education sector. The study used a qualitative multiple case study, which employed social constructivism to investigate the quality-of-service delivery in the basic education sector in Botswana. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data generated through semi-structured interviews, document reviews and questionnaires. The findings of the study show that all 23 participants did not efficiently and effectively deliver services to customers. It was revealed that this was due to a top-down approach, inadequate resources, insufficient support during training and non-compliance to the implementation of service delivery policy reforms. The contribution of this study comes from the use of Public Service Dominant Theory (PSDT) and Expectancy theory in the basic education sector. This theoretical framework shifts the paradigm towards new ways of looking at things.The findings of the study call for policymakers and policy implementers to be equipped with skills and competencies, so that they would be able to understand their expectations and/or the different roles they play in policy implementation and compliance. The study found that there was a gap between policy and practice and this gap can be closed by policymakers fully interacting with policy implementers in the formulation of policy reforms aimed at improving service delivery. More research is required to identify efficient and effective ways of implementing and complying with service delivery policy reforms.

Keywords: *Basic education sector, Botswana, expectancy theory, implementation challenges, public service dominant theory.*

Correspondence
Annah Koboyatau
Email: akoboyatau@gmail.com

Publication History
Received 12th October, 2022
Accepted 16th January, 2023
Published online 17th March, 2023

INTRODUCTION
Many countries around the world are good at policy development and understand the policy directions they want to take, but are less successful at implementing policy.[1] Botswana is no exception to this rule as evidenced by Vision 2036 which states that Botswana faces major challenges from poor service delivery and slow policy implementation. A budget speech for the 2014/15 financial year, notes that

[1] Jurgen Blum, Nick Manning, and Vivek Srivastava, "Public Sector Management Reform: Toward a Problem-Solving Approach," 2012.

project implementation remains one of the challenges for the Botswana Government. It also notes that the development budget was underspent by about 15-20 percent over the same period.[2]

According to the literature, poor service delivery is directly related to low academic accomplishment in secondary schools.[3] Kuiper discovered that policy implementers in education lacked the necessary training to carry out policies successfully due to a low technical grasp of initiatives for improving education. Inconsistencies in how policy was developed and carried out were also discovered, as well as personnel working in silos. The study showed that, generally, senior education was poorly designed, schools were poorly managed, the regional office did not support schools, the learning environment was poor, and senior school academic results were poor, with most pupils failing to receive a C grade or better.

The perception of a decrease in education service delivery is further exacerbated by the challenges the Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MoESD) faced a decade ago, including tense relations between the teacher and worker unions and between the trade unions and education officials. Conflicts between teachers and the MoESD about working conditions in 2010 resulted in instructors declining to participate in after-school activities at their schools and invigilating and marking scripts, which delayed the release of academic results.[4] The availability of housing, teaching support resources, and teacher complaints of the MoESD's failure to improve conditions are just a few of the other difficulties that Moswela suggests may have contributed to the conflict's escalation.[5]

According to Moswela, when teachers are happy, students are happy as well. Results suffer because pupils are unable to concentrate on learning and teaching when teachers are not satisfied.[6] According to Pansiri and Bulawa, many of the aforementioned issues might be connected to policy changes intended to enhance service delivery.[7] Pansiri and Bulawa claim that these changes sparked an eight-week public service strike in 2011 that had an impact on the education sector. Similarly, Moswela, Motshegwe, and Tshukudu state that teachers withdrew their services from schools for the duration of the eight-week strike and refused to make up for the material that was supposed to have been taught during the strike because the government had insisted that teachers would not be compensated for the period they were on strike.[8]

As a result, service delivery at the MoESD has been declining as evidenced by the public schools' persistently poor academic performance. A continued poor academic performance by public school students in Botswana caused the public to criticize the MoESD for not doing enough to help these students. Political and business leaders need to put their combined energy into addressing the public service challenges affecting the MoESD.[9] The Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan (ETSSP) (2015-2020) asserts that the current Botswana education system does not adequately prepare students for the world of work. It is also reported that there is currently no baseline data for the labour market to support this claim.[10] According to Sayed, students in Botswana are not able to progress to higher levels of education or find well-paying jobs, due to their poor academic results.[11] The author

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[2] K. Mathambo, *2014/15 Budget Speech* (Gaborone: Government Printers, 2014).
[3] J. Kuiper, *Ministry of Education and Skills Development Commissioned Study: Study on Declining Learning Results Report 1* (Gaborone: Government Printers, 2014).
[4] Theophilus Tebetso Tshukudu and Baakile Motshegwa, "Deep Rooted Conflicts and Industrial Relations Interface in Botswana," 2012.
[5] Bernard Moswela, "Students' Academic Achievement: Whose Responsibility and Accountability?," *International Journal of Business and Social Science* 5, no. 10 (2014).
[6] Moswela, "Students' Academic Achievement: Whose Responsibility and Accountability?"
[7] Nkobi Owen Pansiri and Philip Bulawa, "An Analysis of Teachers" Status in Crisis of Public Service Reforms in Botswana," *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences* 1, no. 12 (2013): 233–44.
[8] Moswela, "Students' Academic Achievement: Whose Responsibility and Accountability?"; Tshukudu and Motshegwa, "Deep Rooted Conflicts and Industrial Relations Interface in Botswana."
[9] D Kitaw, *Study on Industrial Policy Dialogue in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (Phase II) <Main Report>* (Kivunja: Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2016).
[10] Ministry of Education, *Education and Training Strategic Sector Plan (ETSSP) 2015- 2020* (Gaborone: Government Printers, 2015).
[11] Yusuf Sayed, *Making Education a Priority in the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Report of the Global Thematic Consultation on Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda* (UNESCO, 2013).

believes that education is not meeting the needs and demands of all youth for them to succeed. Despite all these policy reforms, which were aimed at facilitating quick delivery and service quality, there is a strong perception in government and in the public that service delivery in Botswana is on the decline generally and in the MoESD in particular.[12]

Thus, this small-scale qualitative multiple-case study sought to explore the conceptualizations, experiences and practices of Principal Education Officers (PEOs), School heads and teachers regarding service delivery in the basic education sector in Botswana. In addition, the researcher sought to ascertain what she could draw from the PSDT and Expectancy Theory to enhance service delivery in schools. Consequently, this study is significant as it should add new knowledge to ongoing debates about service delivery in the Botswana basic education sector. From a practice point of view, this study is relevant and timely as the Ministry of Basic Education is undergoing transformation to improve service in line with Botswana Vision 2036 and ETSSP 2015-2020.

The study was guided by the following research questions: What are the challenges experienced by managers and practitioners in the implementation of service delivery in the basic education sector in Botswana? How do managers and practitioners navigate the challenges of service delivery in the basic education sector in Botswana?

The significance of any study is usually expressed in terms of its contribution to improving practice, informing policy, or elevating the knowledge base on the topic being explored.[13] This study should add new knowledge to ongoing debates about service delivery in Botswana, especially in the context of the basic education sector. In addition, the findings are of great benefit to the society, as service delivery is a national priority to the basic education sector managers and practitioners in improving service delivery. The findings of the study will be used by policymakers in the MoESD to inform the formulation of new policies and to also review existing policies. In addition, the study is expected to unearth or uncover critical areas of service delivery in the basic education sector, which previous studies did not deal with, and empirical gaps should be closed. From a practice point of view, this study is relevant and timely as the MoESD is undergoing transformation to improve service delivery.[14] Furthermore, the use of the PSDT and the Expectancy Theory, and the service management model from the business world should shift the paradigm towards new ways of looking at things, contribute to new and useful knowledge on the phenomenon under investigation because they are results-oriented. It will help practitioners and stakeholders understand and appreciate that their context is being attended to.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was underpinned by the PSDT and Vroom's Expectancy Theory as they seemed to complement each other.[15] PSDT has seven propositions and for the purposes of this paper, the researcher used three propositions as they were the ones that were relevant to the topic. Proposition 3 was found to be building long-term relationships, and proposition 6-co-production is at the core of public services delivery and is the basis for both effective performance and innovation in public services. Co-production further states that service users (as in this study would be students and parents) should be considered as the production force, where students are seen to be constructing their own knowledge, and teachers are considered as partners in the production of knowledge and not as transmitters of knowledge. Proposition 7 - experience/knowledge, a significant resource for public

[12] Emmanuel Kopang Botlhale, "The Rights-Asserting Contemporary Public Service Customer in Botswana," *International Journal of Public Administration* 36, no. 8 (2013): 523–31; Kuiper, *Ministry of Education and Skills Development Commissioned Study: Study on Declining Learning Results Report 1*.

[13] Brian Paltridge and Sue Starfield, *Thesis and Dissertation Writing in a Second Language: A Handbook for Supervisors* (Routledge, 2007).

[14] Ministry of Education, *Education and Training Strategic Sector Plan (ETSSP) 2015- 2020.*

[15] Stephen P. Osborne et al., "The SERVICE Framework: A Public-Service-Dominant Approach to Sustainable Public Services," *British Journal of Management* 26, no. 3 (July 2015): 424–38, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12094; Victor Harold Vroom, *Work and Motivation*, (Hoboken, New Jersey; Wiley Publication 1994).

service organisations (PSOs) is using it for delivering service experience.[16] These propositions were used to analyse data together with the Expectancy Theory and thematic analysis.
The PSDT was applied in a new context, which is the basic education sector and using it in a new setting showed its flexibility that it can be applied to other situations. This makes a contribution to theory by customising it to provide original knowledge. Integrating concepts and/or theories from the corporate or business world into the basic education sector shifts the theoretical framing and/or paradigm towards new ways of looking at things. After analysing data with PSDT, the researcher has established that it has the potential of forming the basis for sustainable PSOs. It also provides insights on the potential understanding of service delivery to enable shifts in best practice solutions envisaged for the successful implementation of policy reforms aimed at improving service delivery. PSDT is fit for purpose in the 21st century.[17] However, the researcher does not claim to have verified anything. She confirms that she is aware that the PSDT is subject to further testing.

Expectancy theory was mainly used to show how employees can be motivated. The Expectancy Theory has shown that it has the potential to influence employee motivation and job satisfaction, managerial effectiveness and communication and organisational commitment by identifying what motivates and demotivates the employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative multiple-case study underpinned by social constructivism due to its focus on researching reality from the perspectives of 23 research participants namely PEOs, School heads and teachers. PEOs supervise school heads, school heads supervise teachers, and some teachers are supervisors at the department level. Participants were categorized according to three sets so that they could give information according to context or level of operation. The study of these cases resulted in an invaluable and deep understanding of issues. The research method permitted the researcher to produce data in their own contexts where participants share their lived experiences.[18] This study was delimited to one education district in Botswana and focussed on exploring the challenges faced by education managers and practitioners when they implement policy reforms aimed at improving service delivery in the basic education sector. Yin asserts that multiple case studies are defined and matched to offer a valuable understanding of the topic under exploration.[19]

The data were generated through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and documents review. The researcher sought permission to audio-record the participants during the interviews. In this study, thematic analysis developed by Clarke and Braun was used to analyse data.[20] Thematic analysis is a method for establishing, interpreting, and generating themes within data. The themes in this study were generated using both inductive (from data) and deductive approaches researchers' previous knowledge from literature and understanding of the theoretical frameworks.

All the ethical issues were adhered to by obtaining ethical clearance from the University of the Witwatersrand; acquiring permission to do research from MoESD, school gatekeepers and participants; explaining the purpose of the research project to participants verbally and in writing; using pseudonyms to represent the participants. This was done to protect the participants from harm.[21] The ethical steps and Lincoln, Lynham and Guba's framework employed achieved the trustworthiness of the findings.[22]

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[16] Osborne et al., "The SERVICE Framework: A Public-Service-Dominant Approach to Sustainable Public Services."
[17] Osborne et al., "The SERVICE Framework: A Public-Service-Dominant Approach to Sustainable Public Services."
[18] Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research* (London: Sage Publications, 2014); John Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (California: Sage Publications Ltd, 2014).
[19] Robert K Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods (Applied Social Research Methods)* (Sage publications Thousand Oaks, CA, 2014).
[20] Victoria Clarke and Virginia Braun, "Teaching Thematic Analysis: Overcoming Challenges and Developing Strategies for Effective Learning," *The Psychologist* 26, no. 2 (2013).
[21] Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*.
[22] Yvonna S Lincoln, Susan A Lynham, and Egon G Guba, "Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences, Revisited," *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* 4, no. 2 (2011): 97–128.

FINDINGS

The findings are presented under the major theme of implementation challenges. The findings revealed commonalities and differences in the participants' responses according to their job descriptions (i.e., whether they were teachers, school heads or Principal Education officers). This paper discusses the theme implementation challenges under the following sub-themes: a top-down approach, insufficient support during training, resource constraints and tensions between teachers and school leaders. The theme is discussed in relation to the sub-research questions stated. The sub-themes are discussed according to the three sets of participants. The sub-themes to be discussed are the top-down approach, insufficient support, lack of resources to support service delivery and tensions between managers and practitioners.

Top-down Approach

Most of the participants stated that the leadership used a top-down approach, which leads to subordinates not owning policy reforms aimed at improving service delivery. Teachers felt the policy reforms were imposed on them, there was no consultation, and all decisions were made by the leaders and that the top-down approach empowered them partly. The following excerpts show how teachers felt about the top-down approach:

> *Mr. Rorisang: Most of the time as teachers we are normally told to follow the policies. We do not have much to say because most of them are from the top. So, we just follow the leader. They are enforcing the laws upon us.*

> *Mr. Retologang: Leaders need to show commitment and creativity in running the schools and as much as possible they should engage staff members across all levels through delegation so that they also feel part of the organisation. They should avoid imposing things on staff members.*

The sentiments expressed in the excerpts show that teachers are not in favour of the top-down approach used by leaders regarding policy implementation and/or their leadership styles. The teachers' excerpts are confirmed by the school head who said when employees do not comply with policy implementation, she takes corrective action.

> *This is what Ms. Tafila said: "I check how we do regarding compliance and where there is non-compliance or compliance is unsatisfactory, I must act and correct that."*

The finding suggests that employees are not engaged to determine why there is no commitment to policy implementation and compliance. Thus, it is imperative that the leaders engage employees on issues of policy implementation and compliance so that they do not say policies were imposed on them. Teachers' findings showed that school heads instructed them to align their work to policy reforms aimed at improving service delivery, and yet they do not train them on these so that they are well informed about their expectations and to close the gap that exists between policy and practice. Based on the findings, most of the participants did not have knowledge and understanding of some of the policy reforms, which are critical for improving service delivery. This finding has also been found in other studies that most participants felt having good knowledge and understanding of policies was important for improving performance, thus enhancing service delivery. In analyzing the implementation process, it became apparent that there was a gap between policy and practice.

The researcher, therefore, argues that managers and practitioners should be taken on board regarding their roles in implementing and complying with policy reforms aimed at improving service delivery in the basic education sector. These employees should not be taken as spectators in policy development but should be actively involved. Priestley, Biesta and Robinson state that there has been a shift in policy development in some countries, such as Scotland and New Zealand, where teachers

are now seen as active developers of the curriculum policy.[23] Based on the study findings, it is critical that the leadership of the sub-region know that the performance of any organization/school is dependent on policy implementation and compliance. Basic education leaders should ensure they develop implementation plans and strategies, so that the policies reach all the intended stakeholders and that no one is left behind in terms of being trained on policy reforms aimed at improving service delivery.

Insufficient Support during Training

Another notable challenge experienced by PEOs, School heads and teachers was insufficient to support during training**.** Participants were of the view that they received insufficient support during training, and this impacted negatively on the knowledge and skills that they acquired to assist them to do their work effectively and efficiently.

> *Ms. Rapelang: I was trained in inspection for 4 weeks, in the past people used to be trained for 3 months. I had an induction, there is subjectivity in the standards that we use as it is very difficult to assess your own process. If we go the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) way, people are supposed to be accredited for the job they are doing.*

Another PEO shared the same sentiments. This is what he said:

> *Mr. Yaone: I was trained a little bit when I was working as a senior teacher as I was in a way inspecting my supervisees. This helped me a lot as I was learning by doing and apart from that I have never been given a professional course or trained in a professional course as an inspector. Although some have been trained, a few…I was not trained because a small group was chosen and I happened to be one of those who were not chosen and we were promised to be trained but it has never happened, at that time it was 2013. Not being trained as an inspector affects my work, but I have learned to survive. There are certain things I am not trained in, and the thing is I learn fast from others.*

Training and accreditation in an inspection are critical for inspectors so that they could do their inspectoral functions well. As a result, this will improve school effectiveness and lead to improved service delivery.

PEOs felt they must be trained in the areas that they are to inspect schools and school leadership is one of the areas. Some of the inspectors shared that they had never held leadership positions above senior teacher 1 at secondary school. This could pose a challenge to inspectors who have no experience in the area. These findings showed that most of the PEOs were of the view that lack of training affected their work, as they had to rely on those who had been trained to help them and/or observe them.

Most of the school heads said because they were not trained in leadership and management, they ran schools like their previous school heads. They said that they used the experience they got from working with them; they asked for help from other school heads; that the knowledge they had was too abstract and that they needed to be continuously trained on the subjects they teach and policies. This is what one of them said:

> *Ms. Oteng: We are not trained in leadership and management issues, and it is difficult to run the school without the necessary training. Yes, we use experience from observing what those who ran the school before we did, we ask for help from other school heads if I have an issue with something.*

[23] Mark Priestley, Gert Biesta and Sarah Robinson, "Teacher Agency: What Is It and Why Does It Matter?," in *Flip the System* (Routledge, 2015), 134–48.

The school's effectiveness could be affected by a lack of training as the school heads are not equipped with the skills to run the schools effectively. It also suggests that each school head was running their school according to what they perceived to be the best practice from their experience and observations. They did not run them according to what they were trained to do and what the education policies and standards dictate.

One of the school heads shared similar sentiments regarding training on curriculum. This is what he said:

> *Mr. Tshipi: The support is minimal because we expect that there should be subject specialists in the region in terms of PEOs 11, who will be able to assist us regarding curriculum challenges. But when we get to the region, we find that someone is babysitting maybe 3 or 4 subjects. Sometimes they are not even subject specialists themselves, they are just there because we are told the staff is thin on the ground and I do not know what that means. There is a gap between the schools and the regional offices and that needs to be addressed. They do not know much about what is going on in the schools. When you are there being challenged you see them most of the time. So, when things are running smoothly, we do not see them.*

The learning outcomes could be negatively impacted if the subject specialists are not enough and even taking care of the subjects, they were not trained. This means that the MoESD should prioritise employing enough subject specialists so that subjects are not taken care of by people who do not have content knowledge.

The teachers too felt that training was important because it could help them to understand the policy reforms aimed at improving service delivery better and so improve service delivery. Teachers stated that they taught subjects they had not been trained to teach and felt that it affected their confidence. Some said they were not trained in policies such as Breakthrough to Setswana. Like findings from other sets of participants, training was not given the priority it deserved and thus affected service delivery. This is what one of them said:

> *Ms. Sebokolodi: I did my degree in humanities and when I came to teach, I taught Moral Education. At the University of Botswana (UB) you only meet students for six weeks and then we must go and teach them, so you find that you really struggle to find the confidence while on the ground they take it you have trained, and you know everything. You get to a school, and we know you teach in a multi-cultural environment where students/pupils come from diverse cultures and different socio-economic backgrounds, and we are not equipped with the skills to teach students who come from very poor backgrounds as opposed to students who come from a middle class. You must struggle and use discretion and you struggle to strike a balance.*

The teacher's excerpt above shows there is a misalignment of skills. It also reveals that the teacher does not have content knowledge on moral education and that they are not trained to deal with a diverse class. Teaching practice and/or experience should also be extended six so that people who do Post-Graduate Diplomas in Education (PGDE) can develop the confidence to teach learners well. This finding suggests that the MoESD did not support the training of its employees as evidenced by ETSSP stating that it is now the MoESD's priority to develop a sustainable system of teacher training, with a view to producing teacher trainers and in-service teachers who will have the competencies to deliver curriculum, improve the profession of teaching and be able to deal with the challenges of the 21st century.[24] This finding shows that the ministry has not been prioritising training for employees and this finding is not surprising, because the schools were reported to be not performing well.

[24] Ministry of Education, *Education and Training Strategic Sector Plan (ETSSP) 2015- 2020.*

Lack of Resources to Support Service Delivery

The lack of resources was mentioned by research participants as a challenge faced by education managers and practitioners when implementing policies aimed at improving service delivery. Participants were of the view that both the lack of human and financial resources prevented them from vising schools to inspect them. The following quotations from the participants illustrate how the lack of resources affected the implementation of service delivery.

> *Mr. Agisanang: We have a challenge of resources, for example, transportation and finance. This prevents us from visiting schools as planned.*

Most of the PEOs stated that they could not implement their inspection plans due to a lack of finances and transport, this calls for the sub-regional leadership to prioritize the allocation of resources to PEOs so that they could do their job well, thus improving service delivery. One teacher was of the view that classes were too large for classrooms.

> *Ms. Segolame: Lack of resources is one of the challenges, for example, the classes are too large for the classrooms that we have and therefore this makes it difficult for me to apply some things that I learnt from university.*

This finding shows that the teacher is not able to give learners individual attention. This leads to epistemological access being constrained, thus declining learning outcomes. Congruent to others Ms. Mosweu saw resources as crucial in the running of the schools and seeing to it that there was the delivery of the curriculum. This is what she said:

> *Ms. Mosweu: There is a lack of finance, we do not have money for almost all the things we need, and we are only given money to run the daily things such as the delivery of the curriculum but there is no money to do extra stuff, and this affects our performance. Some students come from disadvantaged backgrounds and getting parents to be involved is a problem and it is hard to get people to assist us with finances.*

Literature corroborates what participants said about the impact of the lack of resources, which they felt affected their work because they were not able to visit schools as planned. The lack of key resources also prevented inspectors from performing inspectoral services and preparing meaningful reports. School heads and teachers affirmed that lack of resources affected their performance and learners' academic achievement. A study conducted by Obinga, Waita and Mbungi, revealed that the availability of physical resources such as textbooks, furniture, classrooms, libraries, and laboratories highly impacts the internal efficiency of public secondary schools.[25] Likewise, the ETSSP report states primary schools in Botswana have a shortage of classrooms in urban areas and major villages leading to congestion and high teacher-pupil ratios, which, it is assumed, affects learners' academic achievement. The report also states that is also lack of ICT facilities, which hampers the delivery of IT-based education.[26]

Tensions between Managers and Practitioners

Participants were of the view that policy reforms were failing because employees did not want to embrace the change initiatives but wanted to keep the status quo. The following quotations demonstrate how the participants thought staff resisted change. This is what one of the participants said:

[25] Pascal Onani Obinga, Kaloki Joseph Waita, and Nyaga Martin Mbugi, "Relationship between Physical Resources and Internal Efficiency of Public Secondary Schools in Tana River County, Kenya," *European Journal of Education Studies*, (2017).

[26] Ministry of Education, *Education and Training Strategic Sector Plan (ETSSP) 2015- 2020.*

> *Ms. Rapelang: We experience resistance from teachers when bringing something new; school heads and teachers are given personal development plans (PDPs) which will not necessarily address their pains, that is individual and school pains; school development plan must be there, but people do not want to work; people are not doing the right things; resistance comes from perceptions, for example, levels of operations (LOO) mixed up things. School heads' salaries were increased, and education officers' salaries were not increased or elevated. So, school heads are saying we are not their supervisors and cannot take instructions from us because they earn more than us.*

What this finding suggests is that school heads do not take instructions from PEOs, which makes supervision and/or support from the sub-region to schools difficult. PEOs were also saying, why should they supervise people who were earning more than them? This issue needs continuous interaction between the two parties to see how supervision can be improved for the sake of the learner who is on the receiving end of the conflict.

Ideas from other participants add the following points that were related to resistance: teachers undermining leadership because they feel they are more educated than them; experienced fear of the unknown; confusion from the introduction of things and, some policies were oppressive. One teacher had this to say:

> *Mr. Tontobane: We see people resisting change and having a negative attitude on implementing service delivery because it talks more about working, planning, and implementing your plans and evaluating the plans.*

The sentiments expressed above reveal that learners might be deprived of service by employees who want to implement policy reform aimed at improving service delivery. Consequently, learning outcomes are negatively affected. This could be attributed to fear of the unknown, lack of training, or empowering employees to effectively implement plans, drive accountability, and have a commitment to policy implementation and compliance. These findings concur with Campbell who states that teachers are often accused of conservatism and resistance to change.[27] The author further states that many education policymakers can list numerous examples of well-intentioned reforms that were opposed by the teaching profession and their union representatives in the past. The researchers are of the view that to address staff's resistance to change, MoESD should offer support in terms of the timeous provision of resources and build capacity for leaders and teachers so that they are able to implement reforms successfully.

DISCUSSION

Top-down Approach

Most of the participants stated that the leadership used a top-down approach, which leads to subordinates not owning policy reforms. Literature shows that both top-down and bottom-up approaches have advantages and disadvantages. As stated, findings show that the participants are not supportive of the top-down approach as they said it empowers them partly. Mthethwa (and Madsen suggest that a centrist, or supportive (more creative), approach would be better for organizations to adopt.[28] The researcher concurs with the use of a centrist approach suggested by Mthethwa and Ramboll, as it supports a balance of both approaches, where both leaders, who are accountable for the success and failure of policies and people from different backgrounds, are involved in decision-

[27] L.M. Campbell, *Facilitating Change in Schools* in D. Dickson (Ed.), Creating the future: Perspectives on educational change, (Seattle, 2012).

[28] R. M. Mthethwa, "Critical Dimensions for Policy Implementation," *African Journal of Public Affairs,* (2012): 45; Jesper Toft Madsen, "How to Implement Change: Top-down or Bottom-Up? ," 2016, https://ramboll.com/media/articles/management-consulting/how-to-implement-change.

making. The PSDT proposition that is relevant to this sub-theme is proposition six, co-production which is the source of both effective performance and innovation in public service. Co-production is concerned with the implementation of public policy and the design and delivery of services which corroborates what most of the participants were saying that their role was to implement policy reforms aimed at improving service delivery.

Insufficient Support during Training

Employees are important assets of any organisation. The active role they play towards an organisation's achievement of goals cannot be taken too lightly. Consequently, the training of employees through effective training is critical if organisations are to enhance job performance.[29] However, the participants were of the view that they received insufficient support during training, and this impacted negatively on the knowledge and skills that they acquired to assist them to do their work effectively and efficiently. Training is described as a methodical development of content knowledge, skills, competencies, and behaviour required by the workforce to increase productivity.[30] This concurs with the Expectancy Theory which states that motivation only does not determine employees' performance, but is also dependent on aspects such as personality, skills, knowledge, experience, and abilities.[31] These factors resonate well with Crawford and Mills assertion that organisational leaders must develop strategies that maximise knowledge, skills, and abilities and obtain the best performance possible.[32]

The literature review and the theoretical framework, show that lack of training impacts performance negatively. This, therefore, calls for effective training during pre-service and in-service training by the MoESD. Getting cues ETSSP it is critical for MoESD to come up with a sustainable teacher training system as a matter of urgency, that will help produce teacher trainers and in-service teachers who will have the required skills and competencies to deliver the curriculum, enhance the profession of teaching and be able to address the challenges of the 21st century.[33] This leads one to wonder if this lack of training of employees in the basic education sector could be attributed to the low academic results in the sub-region. Maybe or maybe not, however, the 2018 academic results for the two researched Senior Secondary Schools (namely Moologa & Ipapatso) were 34% and 26% respectively.

School leaders should focus on their work, fully support their staff by empowering them through training and ensure there is a commitment to work and effective communication within the organisations. They should bring change to their organisations and build relationships that were strained to regain trust. They should also try to build capacity for employees, especially when people are newly promoted to senior positions. They should also ensure that they continuously develop employees at their levels of operation so that they will be able to perform their duties well. This concurs with Eacott and Asunga, when they state that school leaders can no longer afford to be simply good managers but to be leaders of schools as learning organisations.[34]

Experience/knowledge, states that a significant resource for PSOs is knowledge and using it for delivering service experience and when employees put the knowledge they have acquired into practice. This proposition corroborates what the participants said about equipping employees with knowledge and skills so that they would put what they have learnt into practice and therefore improve service delivery. With this understanding, it is critical that MoESD recruits school leaders who are lifelong learners so that they would be able to work well with 21st-century teachers and learners who

[29] Aidah Nassazi, "Effects of Training on Employee Performance.: Evidence from Uganda," 2013.
[30] Syed Mubasher Hussain Naqvi and Muhammad Atif Khan, "Employees Training and Organizational Performance: Mediation by Employees Performance," *Institute of Interdisciplinary Business Research* 5, no. 4 (2013): 490–503.
[31] Vroom, *Work and Motivation*.
[32] Janet Bell Crawford and Albert J Mills, "The Formative Context of Organizational Hierarchies and Discourse: Implications for Organizational Change and Gender Relations," *Gender, Work & Organization* 18 (2011): e88–109.
[33] Ministry of Education, *Education and Training Strategic Sector Plan (ETSSP) 2015- 2020.*
[34] Scott Eacott and Gladys Nyanchama Asuga, "School Leadership Preparation and Development in Africa: A Critical Insight," *Educational Management Administration & Leadership* 42, no. 6 (2014): 919–34.

come from diverse backgrounds. MoESD should also build capacity for existing employees through in-service training, coaching, and mentoring on both technical (hard) and creative (soft) skills. Getting cues from Hamdi, et al., leaders should have T-shaped skills.[35] The vertical line brings depth factors (expert) while the horizontal line brings wideness (generalist). Leaders with T-shaped skills, because of their expert knowledge, can solve technical problems and with their general knowledge, they know how to collaborate with all stakeholders because of their general skills. These leaders are also able to innovate and are agile. The expectancy category of Expectancy theory reveals that leaders must ensure that their supervisees have the necessary abilities and traits before they expect the desired results from them and that employees should not struggle for results when they do not have the necessary skills, competencies, and resources to perform the job.[36]

The question is: Does in-service training effectively develop employees to be able to improve performance? The researchers are of the opinion that if in-service training is done effectively empowers employees with knowledge, skills, and capabilities for them to perform their jobs effectively. This claim is supported by findings from a study conducted by Naderi et al., which show that training for well-educated employees and those younger or newly employed are more productive as opposed to those of long-serving mature people with a wealth of experience.[37] MoESD should also prioritize in-service training of leaders and teachers as most of the skills and competencies that leaders and teachers have might no longer be needed as we are working in the fourth industrial revolution. In-service training and/or coaching and mentoring should be well-funded and coordinated.

Lack of Resources to Support Service Delivery

Do physical resources really help employees to do their job well and for students to perform well academically? Participants were of the view that both the lack of human and financial resources affected their job performance. Fleisch argues that physical and educational resources and materials are crucial when conducting classroom instruction, however, Fleisch points out that they are "moderating variables", which implies they are not the only ones that determine instructional practices, but there are other factors that come into play.[38] This is in line with evidence that was found from studies of efforts to turnaround low performing schools, which assert that having resources does not guarantee that they will be utilised effectively.[39]

Hatch posits that getting the best use of resources and achieving the desired results is dependent on how well they are used, on the abilities of the people using them and the relationships they have with other stakeholders in teaching and learning unless teachers and students try to have good working relationships, abilities and the determination to use those resources to involve with thought-provoking content in different and advanced ways. With this understanding, it is critical that leaders build long-term relationships with teachers, learners, and other significant stakeholders if resources are to make an impact on learning outcomes. Leadership needs to allocate resources equitably and monitor their utilisation.Fleisch and Hatch state that schools can have adequate resources and still not perform well.[40] The researchers agree with the authors because some researched schools had enough resources and had assistance from stakeholders who donated equipment and in some instances funds and still their academic performance was low. For Public Service Organisations (PSOs) to be sustainable, they must build long-term relationships across service systems and this

[35] Shabnam Hamdi et al., "Impact of T-Shaped Skill and Top Management Support on Innovation Speed; the Moderating Role of Technology Uncertainty," *Cogent Business & Management* 3, no. 1 (December 31, 2016): 1153768, https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2016.1153768.

[36] H. T. Oanh, "Employee's Motivation: How to Improve Employees' Motivation in Order to Increase Work Performance," *Bachelor Degree. Helsinki: Helsinki Metroplia University Of Applied Sciences*, 2016.

[37] N. Naderi, "Employee Empowerment from On-Jobs Training, Case Study: Isfaham Oil Purge," 2008.

[38] Brahm Fleisch, *The Education Triple Cocktail: System-Wide Instructional Reform in South Africa* (UCT Press/Juta and Company (Pty) Ltd, 2018), 38.

[39] Thomas Hatch, "Innovation at the Core: What It Really Takes to Improve Classroom Practice," *Phi Delta Kappan* 95, no. 3 (November 1, 2013): 34–38, https://doi.org/10.1177/003172171309500308.

[40] Fleisch, *The Education Triple Cocktail: System-Wide Instructional Reform in South Africa*; Hatch, "Innovation at the Core: What It Really Takes to Improve Classroom Practice," November 1, 2013.

resonates with what Hatch (2013) suggests: that a good relationship between teachers and students is vital.[41] Osborne et al., further state that central to such a relationship is building trust. [42]

According to Johnson trust is assumed to bring members together and encourage teamwork and effective communication.[43] The author further states that high-trust organisations make quality decisions, are more effective and efficient and are more productive. The literature by Fleisch, Hatch and Johnson supports what Obinga, Waita and Mbungi state that having adequate resources will improve performance may not be necessarily true.[44] As shown by literature and the PSDT proposition 3, The researchers agree that trust is an essential part of an organisation and are of the view that, if leaders could learn to trust the people they work with, subordinates will reciprocate the trust. This will lead to better working relationships, improved morale and enhanced productivity among employees. However, the proposition refutes what some participants stated about relationships in their institutions. Some participants talked about leaders not having good relationships among themselves and with their supervisees and leaders not supporting and trusting each other.

Tensions between Managers and Practitioners

Employees in any organisation are resistant to any perceived change initiative and are reluctant to speak openly and honestly about problems.[45] Williamson and Blackburn advise that no transformation can achieve the desired results if people being requested to do it do not understand its importance.[46] With this understanding, it is critical that leaders involve employees and other significant stakeholders to solicit ideas from them about the change that the organisation wants to implement to avoid tensions among managers and practitioners. At times it is not possible to involve every employee. However, MoESD can use people who are influential in the organisation such as Union Stewarts/Marshalls and any other employee who is respected by other employees to communicate the intentions of the change. MoESD should also communicate with frontline managers about the change it intends to bring so that they will be able to cascade it to the lower levels of the organisation for buy-in. Transforming mindsets is certainly not easy and people who are to make change happen must be willing to think and see change as pleasant, helpful, and capable of managing it effectively as change generally brings a lot of tension.[47] Borrowing from De Vries et al. ideas, it is important that MoESD comes up with a change management model/framework that will help them to remain focused and offer support in the form of mindset in-service training, coaching and mentoring. MoESD should also develop a change management process that will detail activities that will move a change to implementation. This process too should be developed together with the employees so that they understand the intentions of the change and their roles regarding the change. The involvement of employees will help employees to embrace the change and reduce tensions. This is supported by Van Damme's assertions that when employees are not formally engaged in the discussion or at least show respect for their professional wisdom and experience, they will resist the change, which will cause tensions between managers and practitioners.[48]

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[41] Osborne et al., "The SERVICE Framework: A Public-Service-Dominant Approach to Sustainable Public Services"; Thomas Hatch, "Innovation at the Core: What It Really Takes to Improve Classroom Practice," *Phi Delta Kappan* 95, no. 3 (2013): 34–38.

[42] Osborne et al., "The SERVICE Framework: A Public-Service-Dominant Approach to Sustainable Public Services"; Hatch, "Innovation at the Core: What It Really Takes to Improve Classroom Practice," November 1, 2013.

[43] C. E. Johnson, "Meeting the Ethical Challenges of Leadership. 6th EdThousand Oaks" (SAGE, 2018).

[44] Fleisch, *The Education Triple Cocktail: System-Wide Instructional Reform in South Africa*; Hatch, "Innovation at the Core: What It Really Takes to Improve Classroom Practice," November 1, 2013; Johnson, "Meeting the Ethical Challenges of Leadership. 6th EdThousand Oaks"; Obinga, Waita, and Mbugi, "Relationship between Physical Resources and Internal Efficiency of Public Secondary Schools in Tana River County, Kenya."

[45] Campbell, *Facilitating Change in Schools*.

[46] Ronald Williamson and Barbara R Blackburn, "Dealing with Resistance to Change.," *Principal Leadership* 10, no. 7 (2010): 73–75.

[47] Manfred Kets de Vries, Laura Guillén Ramo, and Konstantin Korotov, "Organizational Culture, Leadership, Change and Stress," *International Handbook of Work and Health Psychology*, 2009, 411–26.

[48] Dirk Van Damme, "Are Teachers Really Resistant to Change? - OECD Education and Skills Today," 2014, https://oecdedutoday.com/are-teachers-really-resistant-to-change/.

Vroom's Expectancy theory states that employees have an expectancy of being consulted and being treated as change agents when it relates to their work. The researcher agrees with this theory that employees must be consulted or allowed to participate in any change initiatives; this can lead to policy reforms aimed at improving service delivery and achieving their desired impact. This resonates well with what participants stated: that they would like to be involved in the process of change and not for things to be imposed on them.

The findings show that leaders were of the view that teachers were resistant to change, while teachers felt that policy reforms aimed at improving service delivery were imposed on them and that this caused tensions between them and school leaders. Teachers felt their professional agency was being restricted, therefore they tried to negotiate their space, which led to confrontations between them and school administrators. Louws et al. assert that a teacher's perceived agency will be reduced in a school organization where many rules and agreements are being formalized and which are mostly run through top-down control.[49] Teachers' possibilities for acting with an agency will expand in a school organization where they are given many opportunities for shared decision-making. This might happen through the amicable discussion of roles and duties when opportunities for teacher decision-making grow. However, tensions can develop when instructors and leaders face opposing professional judgments or conflicting aims. Every domain has a certain level of power, autonomy, and legitimacy, as well as certain tasks and objectives. In order to ease tensions and necessitate ongoing (re)negotiations of obligations, both teachers and school leaders should try to exert their influence. In conclusion, this view emphasizes the negotiation over how duties and responsibilities are distributed throughout the organization, where the parameters of these obligations are a significant point of discussion.

Proposed Service Delivery Model

In addition to improving service delivery in the basic education sector, the following model is recommended. When the researcher developed this proposed model, she took into consideration what was thought would make an impact on service delivery in the basic education sector from the findings of the study, the PSDT and the service delivery model. The service management model (ISS Group) - Andersen and Ankerstjeme state that there are four main elements for an effective service delivery system namely service culture, employee engagement, service quality and customer experience.[50] This model does not include the leader as one of the main elements but is mentioned as a component of service culture. The proposed model puts the leader as the key to influencing the implementation of all four main elements and the achievement of desirable outcomes such as building sustainable PSOs and delivering quality service. The old model also does not mention customer engagement but talks about customer experience. Getting cues from Le Roux and Van Rensburg, customer experience is what makes a customer decide whether they will come back for service or whether they will start looking for other competitors.[51] The proposed model talks about engaging all stakeholders to build long-term relationships and create value together. It also brings up the issue of sustainable public sector organisations, which is considered more important. In view of the foregoing, the researcher proposes that service delivery should be a system as the PSDT suggests, and for the model to achieve the desired results, public organisations require a 21st-century leader who has the following attributes: innovative, knowledgeable, engaging, should have a strong work ethic, should build long-term relationships and be able to motivate employees. This type of leader will develop sustainable public service organisations that will deliver quality service.

[49] Monika Louws et al., "Exploring School Leaders' Dilemmas in Response to Tensions Related to Teacher Professional Agency," *Professional Development in Education* 46, no. 4 (2020): 691–710.
[50] Morten Kamp Andersen and P Ankerstjerne, "Service Management 3.0–the next Generation of Service," *ISS White Paper*, 2014, 1–31.
[51] Albertus Le Roux and Renier J Van Rensburg, "Student Perceptions of Customer Experience in a Higher Education Environment," *Acta Commercii* 14, no. 1 (2014): 1–9.

According to the proposed model, the 21st-century leader can be understood by examining the key variables shown in the boxes that surround the 21st-century leader: innovative, knowledgeable, engaging, strong work ethic, relationships and motivating. At the top box, the service delivery system refers to involving all structures and/or stakeholders, not only the stakeholders are inside the organization (internal), but also stakeholders that are outside the organisation (external). All these stakeholders should be fully engaged, relationships should be created and maintained, and they should be motivated to work together to deliver quality service to the service users.

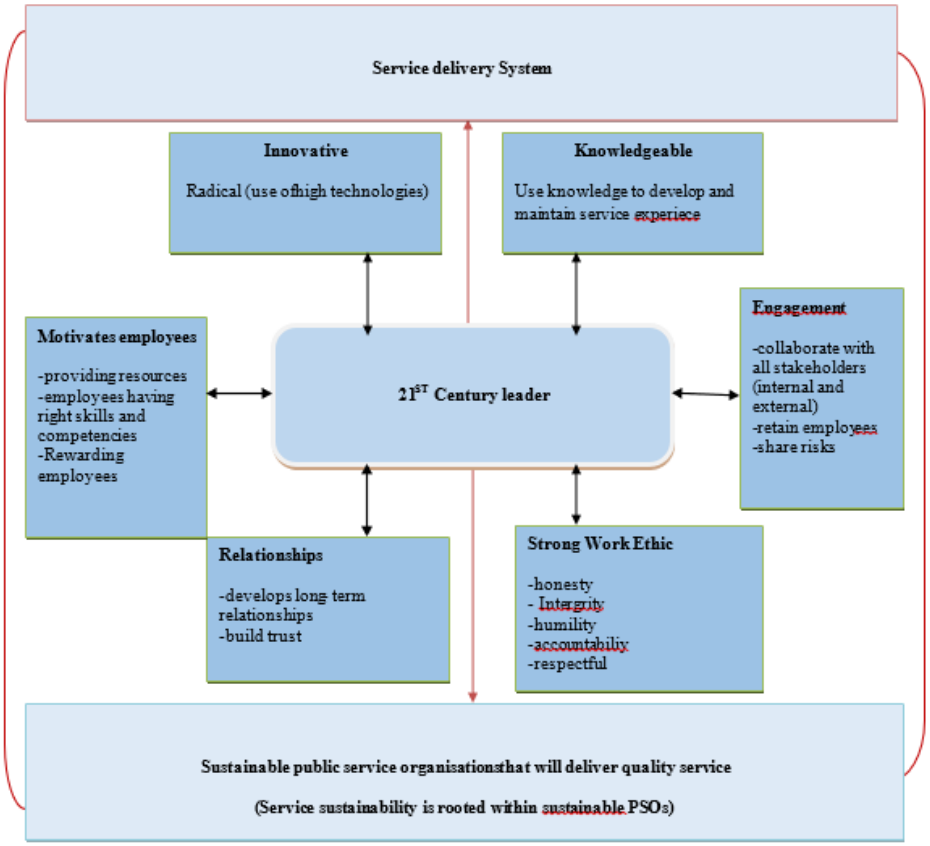

Figure 1: The Proposed Model

The arrows connecting the leader to the attributes suggest a reciprocal influence among them. The attributes make the leader who he/she is and then exhibit them in his/her leadership to influence the followers. The linkage that comes from the leader to the top box (service delivery system) suggests that a leader who exhibits the above-mentioned attributes is capable of forming a service delivery system. Another linkage that comes from the leader to the bottom box shows that a leader can form sustainable PSOs that will deliver quality service. The linkages on the sides show that if there is a service delivery system, there will be sustainable PSOs and vice versa.

Implications for Further Research

The participants showed aspects of the education system that were generally stressed, and everybody was experiencing pressure. Even though the system is doing well in terms of access, the quality of education had decreased, and this seemed to be posing a threat to students' performance. Participants felt the ratio of students per teacher was higher than what the Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE) recommends. However, it should be noted that participants also provided examples of a system that was working. It is therefore vital to investigate why the quality of education was negatively impacted by increased access.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to explore the conceptualisation, practices and experiences of education managers and practitioners regarding service delivery in the Botswana basic education sector. The findings of the study showed that participants did not effectively deliver services to customers due to the challenges they experienced. The findings also show that the success of the service delivery system depends on the active interaction of all stakeholders, that is, the external and internal stakeholders within the public service organisations. For service provision to be sustainable, the leadership should be committed to creating ways in which service users are fully involved in the service delivered to them. They should adopt an all-inclusive systems approach to improve interaction with employees at all levels within the organisations and among service providers and service users. What these findings reveal is that there are gray areas or red flags that need to be addressed if the MoESD is to truly succeed in the delivery of services to service users.

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ABOUT AUTHOR

Dr. Annah Koboyatau is the Head of Department – Research at the Boitekanelo College, Gaborne, Bostwana. She holds a PhD in Educational Leadership Management. Her research focuses on Educational Leadership and Management (Ethical Leadership, Servant Leadership, Emotional Intelligence leadership, and Instructional Leadership), Curriculum Issues, School Improvement, Coaching and Mentoring, service delivery and Adult Education.

Dr. Siphiwe Mthiyane is currently the Head of Department (Education Management and Policy Studies), University of Pretoria: Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa. He hold a PhD in Educational Leadership, Management and Policy Studies from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. His research focuses on School leadership development; learner leadership; ethical school leadership and servant leadership.