

EDITORIAL

Lonaka Journal of Learning and Teaching (Lonaka JoLT) is a platform for communicating messages of scholarship through researched articles, essays, and personal reflective narratives that have a bearing and or implications on learning and teaching applications in contemporary higher education. *Lonaka JoLT* is designed to provide the academic community teaching at university, and indeed other settings, with perspectives, descriptions, experiences and practices over a range of topical issues in study programme design, learning and teaching contexts or a local situation with profound educational import.

In the 2017 issue of *Lonaka JoLT*, we have a diverse menu of articles on multiple topical areas: social studies, information literacy, the health sciences, psychology, language, teaching and student learning and impact on performance; and programme design and discipline-specific pedagogical considerations.

Oats, Reginald examines the impact of skills development programme (SDP) in alleviating poverty among disadvantaged communities in remote desert areas of the Kgalagadi District in Botswana. He observes that, amidst some challenges, SDP is a vital tool to alleviate poverty among disadvantaged communities as it empowers them with knowledge and skills to produce products capable of sustaining their livelihoods.

Analysing poor performance in advanced level geography (a pre-university level of education in Zimbabwe), Gondo Reniko, Mutopa Sevious, Mangwanda Taurai, and Oluwatoyin D. Kolawole investigate causes of high failure rate in Advanced level Geography in four high schools in Hurungwe district, Zimbabwe using a multi-stage methodology. Their findings point to shortage of resources, overworked teachers, admission of mediocre pupils and recruitment of under qualified teachers were some of the factors contributing to poor pass rates.

Batlang Comma Serema and Angelina Totolo trace the evolution of Library and Information Studies in Botswana. They share views on the major issues, opportunities and challenges for LIS Education and its implications for Botswana.

Noam Angrist, Owen Pansiri and Gabatshwane Tsayang analyzed Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) dataset for Botswana to assess the impact of relative age on performance. They hypothesize that in Botswana older age may be seen to elicit rejection and lead to a long-term inefficient poverty trap. Kemmony C Monaka, Tlanelo Baitse and Kaboyaone Hiri-Khudu discuss pronunciation hurdles encountered by Bakgalagari ethnic group of Botswana when they speak English. The trio examine vowel inventories for English and Shekgalagari and outline fundamental differences in the two systems, pointing out areas that lead to possible errors in pronunciation for Bakgalagari speakers of English.

In pursuit of an effective health care provision in the nursing profession, Pabalelo E. Pule, Itumeleng C. Okitlanye, Kegomoditswe Kgosiesele, Nametso B. Matlhodi and Motshedisi B. Sabone report on nursing students' and the clinical staff perspectives about a collaborative clinical learning environment at a large teaching hospital in Botswana. They observe that efforts

being made toward cultivating and supporting a collaborative learning environment do not wholly nurture a collaborative clinical learning environment. They provide recommendations that could foster improvements in the clinical learning settings. In another debut on language, Setumile Morapedi shows how a language with rich agreement inflection like Early Modern English, has null pro subject (is) allowed in the structural subject position of finite clauses, whereas in a language with poor agreement morphology like Present-day English it is disallowed. She proceeds to show how the nominative Case and agreement features of the (pro) subject are allowed and how the tense features of the verb attract other features from the weak position in Early Modern English.

Esther Ntsayagae, Motshedisi Sabone, Boingotlo Hlabano, Odireleng Ketlhaetse, Bahle Mathekela, Portia Maphalala, Kenanao Mokgothu, and Juliet Mothibedi-Mochanang share their experiences in engaging their students in an activity that would equip students with the skill of developing and administering a mental health promotion programme. In the paper, they share the facets of how their intended outcome of enhancing learning and transfer of learning to the work place upon graduation plays out. In a related paper, Mpho M Pheko examines the reflections and key lessons from the Inaugural Pan-African Psychology Union Congress which was hosted in Durban, South Africa and the Psychological Society of South Africa. She suggests opportunities for stakeholders to work collaboratively to initiate debates, establish the need for indigenisation and decolonisation, come-up with strategies and frameworks by which indigenising and decolonisation of the psychology curriculum could be initiated and achieved.

In examining whether the launching of a military intervention, South Africa was motivated by its national hegemonic interests or by safeguarding democracy and a democratically elected government in Lesotho, Nkosi Makhonya Bukae takes the reader through the notions of conflict and how this gives birth to perceptions, right or wrong that South Africa was exerting hegemonic might on a weaker nation. Bukae closes the paper with implications for the role of education as a means to addressing human rights, peace and conflict resolution in the curriculum.

Taking an opportunity from the collaboration between the University of Botswana and Shanghai Normal University, Gabtshwane Tsayang, Pedzani Perci Monyatsi and Mavis B. Mhlauli interrogate the challenges that Basic Education in Botswana is faced with, and used a benchmarking to Shanghai Normal University visit on a research collaboration to establish why Shanghai schools were excelling in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Their findings reveal a variety of strategies contributing to Shanghai education excellence ranging from the use of teacher research groups, discipline, good classroom management practices, peer assessment and team planning – aspects that they recommend for adoption in local schools in Botswana to boost academic performance.