

PERFORMANCE-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL
TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS IN THE KHOMAS EDUCATION REGION OF
NAMIBIA

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF EDUCATION

OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

BY

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APRIL, 2013

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Abstract

Performance-Based Accountability Systems (PBAS) in education seek to improve learning achievements of all learners and to reduce achievement gaps amongst learners from diverse backgrounds through improved classroom instructions. Such a system however does not exist in the Namibian primary education system despite the fact that learning achievements are still low. The purpose of this study was to seek an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of primary school principals, teachers, parents and inspectors in Khomas Education Region regarding holding teachers and principals accountable for learners' performance in an effort to improve learning achievements.

This study utilized qualitative multiple case study research design. Data was collected through observations, document analysis and interviews from twenty six participants who were selected through stratified purposive sampling from five schools which were selected purposively. The findings indicate both positive and negative perceptions by participants regarding teachers and principals being held accountable for the performance of their learners. Majority of the participants believed that learning achievements were likely to improve if teachers and principals were to be held accountable because they would improve the manner in which they prepare for lessons and teach, not only to avoid sanctions but also to get the rewards attached to Performance-Based Accountability Systems. Some participants however felt that even though holding teachers and principals accountable was likely to improve learning achievements, it would be unfair to hold teachers and principals solely accountable for learners' performance since learners' performance is affected by several other factors.

Some participants stated that teachers and principals would feel demoralized and victimized by the penalizing nature of sanctions and this would affect learning achievements negatively. The findings, therefore, suggest that there is need for a Performance-Based Accountability System in Namibia's primary education system to help improve learning achievements and close achievement gaps amongst learners.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to give my deepest appreciation to a number of people who helped me during the research and writing of this thesis.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my supervisors; Dr. J.Mushaandja and Professor R.K. Auala for their guidance, support and encouragement. I want to specially thank my main supervisor Dr. Mushaandja for working closely with me and for his tireless efforts in guiding me through this process.

I would like to sincerely thank the respondents of this study. This study would not have been possible without their participation.

My sincere gratitude also goes to my colleagues at the Faculty of Education, Mrs. Rejoice Khama, Mrs. Mukungu, Mr. Simon Lumbu, Mr. Imene and Ms Frieda Kapolo for their encouragement, guidance and support.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, particularly my husband for his financial support, professional guidance and encouragement throughout the processes of proposal writing, conducting of the study and writing of thesis. Thank you for inspiring me to reach for greater heights.

Dedication

To my husband Dr. Randa, for inspiring, guiding, encouraging and supporting me throughout the period this study was conducted.

To my children, Barrack and Keyshia, you are my strength and motivation, you keep me going.

To my parents, Thomas and Perez for giving me the best education which made it possible for me to realize this dream.

Declarations

I, Christine Awuor Adere, declare hereby that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

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..... [Signature]

Date.....

[Student's name]

Abbreviations and acronyms

AIR	American Institutes Research
BETD	Basic Education Teacher Diploma
DNEA	Directorate of National Examinations and Assessments
HOD	Head Of Department
K-B-E	Knowledge-Based-Economy
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
M o E	Ministry of Education
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
PBA	Performance-Based Accountability
PBAS	Performance -Based Accountability System/Systems
PBAP	Performance-Based Accountability Policy/ Policies
SACMEQ	South African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the study by giving the background of the research problem. It also states the research questions that guided this study and the significance of this study. Limitations and delimitations that were experienced in this study are also presented in this chapter.

1.1.1 Quality of Namibia's primary education

At Namibia's independence in March 1990, education was a main concern and thus was given higher priority. According to Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC, 1993) the chief motivation for the struggle for sovereignty was a promise that independence would bring not only new but more and better schools which would be free of segregation and therefore, education would no longer be a privilege for the few elite but a right of every Namibian citizen. With the new government in place, the then Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) formulated four major education goals namely access, equity, quality and democracy.

More than two decades later, UNICEF (2004) reports that while the access goal has been successfully achieved with over 90% primary school enrollment, quality on the other hand has been compromised. Marope (2005, p. 42) states that "...the current general education system is too weak to effectively support set development goals, including transition to Knowledge-Based-Economy (KBE)". Wikan (2008) concurs that

the quality of Namibia's education remains low and further states that this is apparent in the low reading proficiencies by learners of different grades. Wikan (2008) therefore argues that nationally, less than a quarter of primary school learners achieve the minimum level of mastery in reading literacy.

There is indeed need for an intervention to improve the quality of Namibia's education. Various literature like Marope (2005), UNESCO (2005) and Amukugo, Likando and Mushaandja (2010) suggest ways of improving the quality of Namibia's education; however they mainly emphasize on enhancing educational inputs like teaching spaces, furniture, qualified teachers, books, instructional materials, curriculum and instructional time amongst others. Little is mentioned about holding educators accountable for educational outcomes as a way of improving quality of education.

A study conducted by World Bank (2008) in some Sub Saharan African countries namely Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa concluded that accountability for performance is low in Sub Saharan African countries and as such should be improved since making teachers and principals accountable for the learning outcomes has a great impact on the quality of education.

1.1.2 Accountability in education

Various literature define the term "accountability" differently, it is thus evident that there is no single way of defining accountability. For instance Stetcher and Kirby (2004) define accountability in education as the practice of holding educational systems responsible for the quality of their products. Savage and Moore (2004) define

accountability as being answerable and giving an account, which involves reporting to someone. Leithwood (2005) defines accountability as being subject to giving an account. Leithwood further describes the term “account” to entail giving explanations or justification or reasons for an occurrence. Finally Arcia, Macdonald, Partinos and Porta (2011) define accountability as acceptance of responsibility and being answerable of one’s actions. Despite the various definitions of the term “accountability” the authors come to a consensus that there is some kind of responsibility involved in being accountable. Maile (2002) describes the nature of this responsibility as being moral in nature. In this study the term “accountability” is defined as the act of holding teachers and principals responsible for the performance of learners.

According to Suspitsyna (2010) and Anderson (2005) for several decades issues of quality assurance and accountability have controlled education policy agendas from Europe, to the USA, Asia, Australia and New Zealand, amongst other countries. Suspitsyna (2010) notes that the USA, being an active proponent of accountability in education has been on the forefront of formulating policies and practices that are aimed at controlling and managing educational quality.

World Bank (2008) indicates that presently Sub Saharan African governments are also becoming more concerned with the performance of their education sectors and particularly that of teachers and principals, who are entrusted with the responsibility of educating the learners. Governments are no longer interested in only providing educational inputs such as finances, classrooms, learning facilities and materials, to mention a few, but are now beginning to focus more on educational outcomes.

According to World Bank (2008) Sub Saharan African governments are therefore beginning to demand for more or improved accountability in all the aspects of their educational systems including that of teachers and principals.

1.2 Problem statement

The quality of Namibia's primary education is still low. Marope (2005) and UNICEF (2004) note that only one third of grade six learners are able to read effectively at that level. Wikan (2008) concurs by stating that a study of grade six learners in fourteen African countries by South African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) reveals that Namibian learners scored poorly compared to learners from other countries. For instance, in reading category the Namibian learners were placed third from the bottom while in the mathematics category, they were placed at the very bottom. Furthermore, Wikan (2008) notes that at the national level; only 16.9 % of primary schools learners reach the minimum level of mastery in reading literacy in Namibia. As a result, most of the learners complete or leave school without achieving the basic competencies they should have acquired at primary school.

According to Sasman (2011) a recent assessment of 48 000 grade seven learners in 1086 schools across Namibia conducted by the Directorate of National Examinations and Assessments (DNEA) and the American Institutes Research (AIR) which was completed in October of 2011 revealed that the performance in standardized achievement tests by the grade seven learners in English, Mathematics and Natural science was overwhelmingly poor. Sasman (2011, p. 1) reports that:

The examinations tested basic skills and knowledge in the three subjects. The National average for English was 45% with over 58% of the learners scoring an average of 45% or less and 80% scoring 60% or less. The National average in Mathematics was 42% with over 59% of the learners scoring average or below average scores while 80% scored 54% or less. The National average for science was 51% with 59% of the learners scoring below average scores.

This recently conducted study confirms that primary school learners' performance in English, Mathematics and Natural Science is still below average. Hence despite the fact that the national standards of achievement in primary school education is still below average teachers and principals in Namibia are not adequately held accountable for the low learning achievements even though it is their obligation to educate the learners. Unlike countries such as the USA, UK, Australia and the Netherlands that have Performance-Based Accountability Systems to hold teachers accountable for the performance of learners (Anderson, 2005 and Hofman, Dijkstra & Hofman, 2009), Namibia like many Sub Saharan African countries still does not have such a system (Marope, 2005; World Bank, 2008).

Stetcher and Camm (2010) note that the USA's No Child Left behind (NCLB) policy and consequently Act of 2001 initiated Performance-Based Accountability in public education. Cobb (2002) notes that the USA government recognized that there was a problem in the learners' mathematics and reading proficiencies and therefore came up with the NCLB policy to help improve the situation. One of NCLB policy goals therefore was that all primary school learners should be proficient in basic reading and mathematics by the year 2014.

Currently the Namibian education scenario is similar to that of the USA prior to the implementation of the NCLB policy in 2001 since most of Namibian primary school learners fail to pass mathematics and English (Marope, 2005 and Wikan, 2008). The difference between the two contexts however, is that the USA government has taken a step further; rather than just providing the public schools with educational inputs, the USA government demands for performance from the schools and thus formulated and implemented the NCLB policy which is consequential to both the learners and teachers. The point therefore is that while Namibia and the USA may be facing the same problem which is low mathematics and reading proficiencies amongst their learners', the USA government not only supports the state schools by providing the basic learning requirements to schools but has also come up with Performance-Based Accountability mechanisms of holding teachers and principals accountable for the learning outcomes.

Studies indicate that there has been improved performance by the learners with the implementation of PBAP and PBAS in the education systems of some countries (Anderson, 2005; Hannaway & Hamilton, 2008; Hofman et al. 2009). The Namibian government should therefore not only focus on the provision of educational input to the learners but should also formulate and implement Performance-Based Accountability policies and systems to ensure responsibility is taken for the educational outcomes.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the views of primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region towards being held accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners, to determine ways of holding teachers and principals

accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners' and finally to investigate possible challenges to PBA of primary school in the Khomas Education Region.

Even though lack of Performance-Based Accountability in Namibia's education is a country wide problem, this study was carried out in the Khomas Education Region only. This was because Khomas Education Region is metropolitan and tends to serve learners from diverse cultures and socio-economic backgrounds all over Namibia and beyond. This was important to the study because research for instance by Cobb (2002) and Obara (2008) identify socio-economic background of learners as an important factor that affects learners' performance and also challenges the implementation of PBAS in education systems. The study being conducted in Khomas Education Region provided an opportunity to interview teachers and principals who come into contact with primary school learners from diversified background. The situation would have been different had the study been carried out in most of the other education regions in the country which tend to serve learners of similar cultural background and consequently of similar socio- economic background. The diversified nature of Khomas Education Region made it the most suitable region for the study.

1.3 Research questions

- 1) What are the views of primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region towards being held accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners?
- 2) How can primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region be made accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners?
- 3) What are the possible challenges to Performance-Based Accountability of primary schools in the Khomas Education Region?

1.4 Significance of the study

Performance-Based Accountability Systems in education seek to improve teaching practices amongst teachers and principals (Hannaway and Hamilton, 2008). However this is not the case in Namibia because accountability in education is a field of study yet to be explored and as such has very limited literature. Therefore, this study was important in the sense that it hoped to contribute to the field of knowledge of accountability in education in Namibia. It was also hoped that this study would hence be of importance to researchers who intend to study this area in future in Namibia as they would be able to have a starting point.

This study was also important because it was hoped that it would be able to inform policy makers should they want to establish accountability policies in education. For instance on the perceptions of teachers and principals regarding being held accountable for learner performance and also challenges the policy makers are likely to

face in the process of formulating policies concerned with Performance-Based Accountability in education. In the event that policy makers proceed to establish accountability mechanisms in education, learners will stand to benefit the most from this study since teachers and principals will be held accountable for the learning outcomes and as a result, they may change their teaching practices for the better.

1.5 Limitations of the study

Gay, Mills and Airsan (2009, p.109) define a limitation as “some aspect of the study that the researcher cannot control but believes may negatively affect the results of the study”.

This study was faced with a number of limitations for instance; the literature review regarding accountability in education in the Namibian context was limited due to few publications in this area of study in the country. The researcher therefore referred largely to studies conducted in other countries such as the USA, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Australia and some sub Saharan African countries like Kenya and South Africa. The researcher acknowledged the differences in contexts, for instance that some of the studies were conducted in developed countries while Namibia is still a developing country. However, only issues relevant to the Namibian education context were applied.

The researcher being an international student at the University of Namibia was unfamiliar with the Namibian school culture, and this could have impacted negatively on the study. To overcome the limitation, the researcher tried to create rapport by mingling

especially with the participants prior to the data collection and to try and familiarize with the Namibian school culture and gain some trust.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

This study focused on primary schools only, because primary education forms foundation for secondary and higher education and as such has a great impact on both secondary and tertiary levels of education (Michaelowa, 2007).

Even though lack of Performance-Based Accountability in Namibia's education may be a country wide problem, this study was carried out in the Khomas Education Region only. This is because Khomas Education Region is metropolitan and hence is culturally diversified with learners coming from all over Namibia and also financial and time constraints would not allow for a nationwide study.

The study also was restricted to Performance-Based Accountability in spite of the fact that there are various forms of accountability in education. The boundaries and scope of this study therefore did not allow for any generalization of the results of the study.

1.7 Chapter summary

This first chapter of the thesis provided an introduction into the study. It commenced by looking at the orientation of the study which served also as the background of the study. Under orientation the quality of Namibia's primary education was discussed and accountability in education was introduced. Statement of the problem was also discussed in this chapter followed by the research questions that guided the study. This chapter further more addressed the reasons for conducting the study and why the study was significant to Namibia's education policy makers and future researchers in this area of study. The limitations that the study was faced with were also discussed in this chapter and finally the delimitations that faced the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate PBA of primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region of Namibia. It was essential to conduct literature review since there was need to make the problem clearer.

In this study, literature review is conducted in two major sections. The first section is the theoretical frame work that informed this study. The second section is the scholarly review on PBA. Even though this study was a qualitative one, the studies that informed it were both qualitative and quantitative in nature and this was because of their specific advantages. For instance, Gay et al. (2009, p.12) state that, “qualitative research seeks to probe deeply into the research setting to obtain in depth understanding about the way things are, and why they are that way, and how participants in the context perceive them”. It was therefore important to identify studies that applied the qualitative approaches to try and understand how participants in those contexts perceived PBA phenomenon. However due to their small sample, qualitative studies have low external validity since their findings cannot be generalized to the larger population. It is for this specific reason that the researcher also looked at studies that used quantitative approaches given that quantitative approaches use large samples which are often randomly selected and as a result increases the external validity of the study findings and consequently generalization of the findings to the larger population (Gay et al., 2009).

2.2 Theoretical framework

This study was informed by Performance-Based Accountability theory also known as result based accountability theory. According to Anderson (2005) and Thomas (2007) Performance-Based Accountability theory emerged from increased political involvement in the performance of the public sector, in this context, public education. The need by the USA, UK and Australian governments to mention a few, to increase their involvement in the public sector to ensure performance arose from such governments spending heavily on the public sectors for instance education and obtaining unsatisfactory outcome. This resulted in diminished public trust and confidence in the public sectors and consequently the demand for better and improved services in the public sectors (Thomas, 2007).

In an effort to improve the services offered by the public sectors such as education, governments of countries for example the USA and UK have put considerable amounts of money and other resources in the implementation of Performance-Based Policies and Systems. Some governments like those of the USA and Australia have established PBAS in their education systems (Hannaway and Hamilton, 2008). Examples of these mechanisms include the No Child Left behind (NCLB) policy in the USA, which according to Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) requires that schools and districts be held responsible for learner performance. Another example is the Australian National Education Performance Monitoring Task Force. Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) therefore note that such governments do not only provided the necessary educational input but have gone a step further to demand for performance

from the teachers and principals. The point therefore is, while governments provide the necessary educational resources, teachers and principals have to perform to satisfaction and this should be apparent in the performance of the learners.

This is quiet applicable to the Namibian situation because according to Amukugo et al. (2010) the education sector receives the largest share of the national budget and a large part of this share provides for the necessary learning resources in the free primary education program. It is therefore evident that the Namibian government spends significant amounts of money to provide for primary education; however the education system lacks PBAP and PBAS to hold teachers and principals accountable for learning outcomes. Ministry of Education (2006) recognizes that Namibia does not have established systems for holding teachers and principals accountable for the learning achievements. The government thus does not proceed beyond just providing educational resources yet Anderson (2005) and Thomas (2007) note that because governments provide educational resources, they are justified to demand for Performance-Based Accountability and as such the Namibian government is also justified to do so.

Sonnentag and Frese (2001, p. 4) define performance as “what the organization hires one to do and do well”. Teachers are hired to educate learners and as such are entrusted with the responsibility of educating the learners (MEC, 1993). They ought to perform this responsibility satisfactorily. Sonnentag and Frese (2001) further outline the two components of performance as action (the behavioral aspect) which refers to what an individual does in the work situation, for instance a teacher teaching basic reading skills to primary school children or counting to pre-primary school children. The other

component of performance is outcome which refers to the effect or results of individual's behavior at work, for example in the learning context outcome can be described as reading proficiency amongst the primary school learners. Sonnentag and Frese (2001) note that while ideally it is expected in many situations that action and outcome aspects of performance relate directly it is not always so. For instance, it is expected that if a teacher delivers excellent reading lessons, the learners' reading skills ought to improve or sharpen, nevertheless this is not always the case as performance depends on other factors other than the individuals. Anderson (2005) and Elmore (2002) however observe that Performance-Based Accountability theory overlooks this action outcome relationship and holds individuals responsible for the outcomes of their actions irrespective of other factors. For instance in education Performance-Based Accountability theory holds that low learning achievements are due to poor performance of teachers and not learners and therefore holds teachers accountable for the learning outcomes of the learners. Anderson (2005) further states that proponents of Performance-Based Accountability argue that given the necessary educational resources, committed and enthusiastic teachers can overcome any challenges likely to be experienced and perform satisfactorily .

Anderson (2005), Leithwood (2005) and Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) also reveal that Performance-Based Accountability theory not only seeks to improve the performance of both teachers and learners but it also seeks to reduce achievement gaps amongst learners. Such achievement gaps are likely to occur in gender difference, learners from different socio-economic and racial background and many more. This is

quiet relevant to the Namibian education context which is not only of low quality but is also recovering from a legacy of apartheid policy which resulted to gaps in the performance of learners who came from once considered privileged background and disadvantaged background (MEC, 1993). In conclusion, PBA theory therefore is all about measuring performance and coupling it with rewards and sanctions to cause the teacher, principals and learners to perform at higher levels.

2.3 Scholarly review

This section is divided in two parts. The first part reviews the different forms of accountability in education and focuses more on PBA because PBA in education was the focal point of this study. The second part reviews what literature has on PBA and is guided by the research questions of this study.

2.3.1 Forms of accountability in education

There are different forms of accountability in education such as professional, bureaucratic, performance-based also called test-based, consequential, result based or outcome based accountability, amongst others (Elmore, 2002; O'Day, 2002; Anderson, 2005; Stetcher and Camm, 2010). According to Anderson (2005), professional accountability demands that professionals such as teachers answer to their professional peers and stakeholders for adherence to the professional standards. O'Day (2002) concurs with Anderson (2005) by noting that professional accountability in education is based on the supposition that teaching is such an intricate activity to be governed by

bureaucratically defined rules and practices only, instead, just like other professions, successful teaching depends on how much professional preparation (specialized knowledge and skills) teachers and principals obtain and their ability to apply such knowledge and proficiencies in the learning situation. O'Day (2002) further states that in established professions, the essential knowledge and proficiencies of the profession is outlined in set standards of practice. Members of the profession therefore have to adhere to the set standards.

In education, mechanisms of professional accountability centers on teacher preparation, recruitment and peer review. At the school level professional accountability depends on individual teachers taking the responsibility for complying with the set standards of practice on both their professional interaction with colleagues, learners and other educational stakeholders.

Bureaucratic accountability on the other hand is based on superior sub-ordinate relationship and depends much on the formal definitions of positions within an organization (O'Day, 2002; Anderson, 2005). In the education context an example of bureaucratic accountability can be the subject teacher being accountable to the head of department who is in turn accountable to the deputy principal and at the top of authority is the school principal. In this kind of relationship the superiors assign tasks to the subordinates. The interest of this study, however, was Performance-Based Accountability which is concerned with results, for example, educational outcomes.

2.3.2 Performance-Based Accountability Systems

Stetcher and Camm (2010) assert that Performance-Based Accountability Systems arise when there is acknowledgment that there exists a problem or deficiency in services or outcomes. For instance when stakeholders recognize that there is indeed gap between resources put in and the outcomes of services there is a possibility that they might demand for some changes through introduction of PBAS. Goertz, Duffy and Le Floch (2001, p. 19) also point out that PBAS in education systems "...are largely designed to ensure that schools and teachers and principals make continuous substantial progress within an appropriate time frame toward the goal of all learners meeting the set levels of proficient and advanced achievement..." A PBAS is therefore a means for motivating and directing change in an organization.

According to Stetcher and Camm (2010) a basic PBAS in education has three major components. The first component is the educational goals which are the outcomes or standards to be achieved in the long term. These goals can be formulated based on the curriculum content which outline the standard of knowledge and proficiencies ought to be gained and developed by the learners. According to World Bank (2008, p.40) "...the basis for measuring student learning is a body of standards that specifies just what a student should know at the end of each stage of learning. The standards should incorporate knowledge, skills and competencies in each subject matter of the curriculum". World Bank (2008) further points out that these standards are usually set by the government in partnership with the teachers and principals and can also be measured against international data bases for educational standards to ensure the

country's educational standards do not fall below the international standards and as a result the country's learners can compete successfully with learners from other countries.

The second component of a PBAS is measures which are formal means of monitoring service delivery or which evaluate the extent to which these set standards are achieved. The measurements can be in form of tests, examinations or assessments which should be aligned with the content standards. Jaafar and Earl (2008) affirm that educational reforms in developed countries in the past three decades have largely utilized student testing as a means of measuring learning outcomes. However, Wilensky, Galvin and Pascoe (2004) recognize that in PBAS, such tests have more serious consequences and are not just regarded as ordinary tests. Wilensky et al. (2004) mention that these tests are called 'high stake tests' due to the possible impact they may have on individual learners and their teachers. For instance, in PBAS such high stake tests can be used to determine learners' academic grouping, grade promotions for learners, graduation eligibility, promotions for teachers, awarding bursaries and funds to learners, etc. Wilensky et al. (2004) therefore conclude that just having regular tests is not enough but in PBAS the results of these tests ought to have consequences directed towards improving education quality.

Wilensky et al. (2004) confirm that when learners' performances on such tests are used as indicators for teacher and school effectiveness and are used to hold teachers and principals accountable for learner performance then the mechanism is specified to be a PBAS.

The third component of PBAS is incentives (rewards and sanctions) to motivate positive changes in behavior that is then expected to improve performance. In trying to find solution for Namibia's low education quality, Marope (2005) suggests that teachers should be held accountable for results through rewards or sanctions depending on their performance. Stetcher and Camm (2010) note that most accountability systems fail to take this incentive component seriously yet it is crucial to motivating behavioral changes in individuals. They therefore recommend that PBAS rewards should be made big enough to matter but ought not to exceed the value of improved performance. The point therefore is that these rewards and sanctions or penalties should be able to induce behavioral changes in the most cost effective way.

Such rewards as Cobb (2002) states can be in the form of monetary rewards but not necessarily, they could also be in the form of promotions, recognition through achievement certification, etc. Sanctions on the other hand as Cobb (2002) suggests can range from penalties like withdrawal of rewards, demotions, removal and withdrawal of teaching licenses of the specific teachers whose learners continuously perform poorly to technical assistance which can include school to school collaborations or exchange programs, inspection by the inspectorates and enhanced resource allocation.

Anderson (2005) advises that PBAS ought to be transparent and as such should have open channels of communication with the parents and other stakeholders. Poulson (1998) found that one way of dealing with transparency in accountability is documentation or keeping records. Poulson (1998) notes that documentation seeks to give freedom of information and improved communication with fellow teachers,

inspectors, learners, parents and other stakeholders. The school should therefore be able to report learners' performance through report cards which could also highlight other school profiles.

Gariepy, Spencer and Couture (2009) are in agreement with Anderson (2005) that making test scores or examination results and even inspection reports public helps improve transparency in education which in turn helps to improve school performance. Gariepy et al. (2009) give an example of an evaluation study of a network of schools conducted in England. The study reveals that two thirds of the schools had improved partly because the schools' performance results were made public. Gariepy et al. (2009) therefore conclude that the call for more transparency in education is worthwhile.

2.3.3 Examples of Performance-Based Accountability mechanisms

According to Stetcher and Camm (2010) the USA's No Child Left behind (NCLB) policy kicked off an era of PBA in the public education. The NCLB policy is therefore one of the championing PBA mechanisms in education in the World. Anderson (2005) lists another PBAS in education as the Australian National Education Performance Monitoring Task Force also created to ensure quality education amongst Australian learners. Anderson (2005) further acknowledges that England, like other European countries, has a national curriculum accompanied by assessments measures for rating schools and consequences based on the learning outcomes. This study, however, tends to borrow and relate more to the USA's Performance-Based Accountability

mechanism NCLB because just like the USA, the Namibian education is faced with low proficiencies especially in English and Mathematics (Marope, 2005; Wikan, 2008).

Suspitsyna (2010) and Stetcher & Camm (2010) note that the NCLB policy was created to monitor the quality of both primary and secondary school performance. NCLB policy therefore holds schools and those who work in them accountable for the performance of their learners. Suspitsyna (2010) confirms that one of the goals of NCLB policy is to improve reading and mathematics proficiencies and to reduce academic achievement gaps between learners from the different socio-economic backgrounds and also minority learners in the USA. This relates greatly to the Namibian education quality context since as Marope (2005, p.37) puts it, "...the best indicator of quality of an education system is the learners learning achievements. In the case of Namibia, diverse measures point towards a decidedly ineffective system". The quality of Namibia's education is generally low but as study by UNICEF (2004) already discussed reveals, the larger problem lies in reading and mathematics proficiencies. Hence, this is a similar problem the USA acknowledged several years prior to putting the NCLB policy into practice.

Marope (2005) outlines some explanations given for the poor performance by Namibian learners and what stands out from the rest is poor accountability for results which deals with addressing the outcome issue rather than the rest which deal with improved provision of educational inputs. The Namibian education system can therefore relate to the USA's education situation prior to the formulation and implementation of

the NCLB and try to assess how to deal with the learning outcomes rather than just providing the educational resources.

According to Suspitsyna (2010) at the heart of NCLB policy is a constant measurement of school performance through high stake testing and the results of these tests are used to make major decisions concerning the learners and teachers. For example in Kenya, a Sub Saharan African country, the standard eight learners are exposed to a national standardized high stake examination called KCPE (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education). Lewin, Wasanga, Wanderi and Somerset (2011) assert that KCPE is a high stake examination with deep consequences both to teachers and learners. Lewin et al. (2011) indicate that for the teachers there is pressure to improve learners' performance since the learners performance determines the secondary school in which they would be selected and placed and often parents want their children to be selected to join excelling secondary schools. Teachers in primary schools which perform poorly in the KCPE examinations often have to answer to parents and the community at large for the dismal performance as a result teachers try to avoid this uncomfortable situation by working hard to improve their learners' achievements. For excelling schools, teachers are often rewarded by the parents and the community and also tend to get promotions to leadership positions.

Lewin et al. (2011) state that the KCPE examinations are also high stake for learners since they have to compete for selection and placement in secondary schools depending on their performance in the examinations. For instance, they indicate that the most competitive schools which are also highly selective are national schools which

recruit best performing learners nationwide and forms only one percent of all the secondary schools in the country. For primary school learners, these schools are the most coveted. Provincial secondary schools are in the middle, and are moderately selective and recruits average to above average performing learners and at the bottom are the district schools which are virtually non selective and have the lowest entry requirements. They tend to serve the local learners mostly within a walking distance from the school and are the least coveted by primary school learners thus the district schools tend to recruit poor performing learners in the KCPE examinations. In conclusion, a country like Kenya gives high stake national examinations to determine the selection and placement of learners in secondary schools and the learners have to work hard to merit placement in secondary schools.

Most of the states in the USA also give high stake examinations. Goertz et al. (2001) reveal that a total of 48 States in the USA use high stake state assessments as a major indicator of school performance. That means that learners in all primary schools in these 48 states are exposed to external examinations at some point. These state wide assessments test mainly mathematics and English. Even though some states proceed to test writing, science and social sciences, the main subjects tested in the NCLB policy are English and mathematics hence the others are additional depending on the needs of each state.

Apart from the subjects tested in these high stake examinations is the issue of period or intervals of assessments. Goertz et al. (2001) indicate that most of the 48 states assess learners at least in every three year interval. For this reason high stake

assessments take place in grade three, grade six, grade nine and grade twelve though Goertz et al. (2001) mention that in some states it may slightly differ depending on the intervals used to assess the learners. The point therefore is that, in most states of the USA, there are standardized external or state wide assessments as early as grade three. The implication of this, according to Marope (2005), is that it provides opportunities for early diagnosis and timely recommendations which is beneficial to the learners since they can be assisted in their areas of weaknesses on time. Marope therefore finds fault in the Namibian education system which apart from relying heavily on teacher set continuous assessment tests and examinations, does not expose its primary school learners to any national or fully standardized external examinations at any stage in the primary education phase since the first fully external examination is offered at grade ten. The system thus ends up missing on the earliest opportunities to diagnose learning problems and difficulties.

Marope (2005) notes further that the continuous assessment marks awarded by the teachers tend to be inconsistently higher than examination marks and this according to Marope (2005) could be due to the fact that many teachers are uncertain about the continuous assessment procedures and as a result end up awarding learners a lot of marks which they may not deserve. The result of this is that, as Marope (2005, p. 37) puts it, "...the learners end up being promoted through the grades without acquisition of key grade equivalent competencies". If the Namibian education system was to implement a basic PBAS then there would be need for introduction of standardized external high stake assessments which would have to attach consequences on the

performance of the learners, teachers and principals in an effort to improve the quality of education in the country.

2.3.4 Controversies of Performance-Based Accountability in education

While some studies, as will be discussed, have proven positive changes in the teachers and principals teaching practices and learner performance with introduction of PBAS, PBA has not been totally embraced by everyone and therefore there are some people opposing PBA in education. Supitsyna (2010) confirms that several years after the NCLB policy was put into effect, the discourse on accountability remains a hotly contested issue in education. For instance, Elmore (2002) argues that schools which experience extreme performance problems are often confronted with challenges and obstacles for which the teachers have not had prior preparation to handle. Such challenges include extreme poverty, cultural and language diversity, unstable family and community patterns. Elmore (2002) therefore alludes that for teachers to work effectively under these conditions to the extent that they can be held accountable for learner performance as PBAS requires then teachers ought to be professionally prepared to handle such obstacles and if they are not professionally prepared, PBA opponents feel that the PBAS demands would be unreasonable. Elmore (2002) acknowledges further that the PBAS demands in such cases are unreasonable because accountability being a reciprocal process demands that if teachers and principals have to make any performance improvement then they should be provided with the capacity to meet the

expectation, whereas in extreme poverty stricken countries, teachers and principals lack even the most basic facilities for teaching and learning processes.

Also opposing PBAS in education, Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) and Penfield & Lee (2010) argue that the high stake examinations or test scores used as measures of quality control by PBAS are inadequate since they can only tell a part of an anecdote and not the whole of it. They argue that no examinations or tests can examine everything learners ought to learn such as social skills, creativity and problem solving skills, amongst others. The argument hence is that by PBAS using examinations to measure learners' performance, important non-academic outcomes are ignored or overlooked.

Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) also question the incentive component of the PBAS by arguing that while the rewards to the teachers and principals and administrators due to learner performance are meant to motivate them, they also create some problems such as altered behaviors in the teachers and principals behavior such that the teachers and principals end up paying too much attention to the subjects that are examined or measured and thus ignoring other important areas of learning that are not examined. Elmore (2002) thus concurs with Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) by observing that opponents of PBAS argue that by focusing on measurable learner performance, the rationale of schooling is not only constricted but the work of teachers and principals is also demeaned and trivialized.

While opponents may have several valid reasons for not supporting PBAS in education, Gariepy et al.(2009) point out that the answer to excessive or ineffective PBAS can and should never be zero accountability. Gariepy et al. (2009) argue that just

like engineers are held accountable when bridges, tunnels, or buildings collapse due to poor designing, doctors held accountable when patients die out of their negligence, teachers as professionals also have to be held accountable when learners fail to perform, when teachers carry out mediocre lessons or even fail to attend their classes.

In advocating for PBAS Supitsyna (2010) affirms that there is indeed need for PBAS in education to ensure improvement in learner performance. Supitsyna (2010) notes that the absence of PBAS heralds overwhelming consequences to a great extent. Such consequences may include increased below average performance by learners, wide achievement gaps between learners from the different socio-economic groups. Unfortunately the Namibian education is still suffering from such consequences due to lack of PBAS in the education system. Supitsyna (2010) therefore concludes that when it comes to quality education, accountability inevitably becomes both a means and end of policy making in education.

According to Leithwood (2005) the main objective for introduction of PBAS in education systems is the recognition that the learners' achievement levels are low and that by introducing more rigorous forms of external accountability, the standards of achievements will improve. The rationale of PBAS in education hence is to make the teachers and principals do something new or different from their usual practice. The teachers and principals' practices are therefore directed to focus on systematic and continuous improvement of the quality of learning experiences of learners. Through a PBAS, teachers and principals are also made to subject themselves to the discipline of measuring their success or failures through the learners' academic performance. Jaafar

and Earl (2008) concur with Leithwood (2005) by pointing out that PBAP are intended to draw attention to academic performance so that teachers and principals can improve their teaching and therefore improve learning achievements amongst the learners and also so that schools administration can identify ways of capacity building to support school plans for improvement.

Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) concur with Leithwood (2005) and report the findings of a Research and Development (RAND) survey on Performance-Based Accountability conducted in the USA in 2005 which revealed that teachers and principals in California, Pennsylvania and Georgia have responded positively to PBAP instituted in the education system. They indicate that teachers have been focusing more of their effort and time on achievement than they had done before by working harder to improve their own teaching practices in the subjects that they teach. As a result the study acknowledges that there has been an improvement on the quality of education which is noticeable through the improved performance by learners in the three states.

A study by Poulson (1998) in eight schools in different parts of England also confirms that making teachers accountable for learner performance has shown positive results because teachers now realize that they are subject to scrutiny. In response to the question of accountability, a participant in the Poulson (1998, p.422) study had the following response; "...the whole issue of accountability to parents, governors has affected us in positive ways... it has forced us to define our practice". It is therefore imperative to note that this change of teaching practices for the better and commitment to the teaching profession can have positive results on the quality of the learning

outcomes and therefore apart from just providing educational inputs, Performance-Based Accountability policy should be established in Namibia's education system to ensure that teachers and principals are held accountable for the learners' performance.

2.3.5 Accountability to whom and for what?

Reporting to the public, which includes learners, parents, the school community and other educational stakeholders, is the most common form of enforcing accountability (Goertz et al. 2001; World Bank, 2008 and Sahlberg, 2008). Goertz et al. (2001) further give examples of what schools can report on, which include reporting on learner performance, learner school attendance, dropout, promotion and graduation rates and financial issues like expenditures amongst others.

World Bank (2008) states two ways in which reporting can be done. The first way of reporting is whereby the school and teachers are indirectly held accountable to citizens. According to World Bank (2008) teachers should be held accountable to the principals who are accountable to the regional officials, who are accountable to the Ministers of Education, who are accountable to parliament, and in a democracy, the parliament is accountable to all its citizens. World Bank (2008) however notes that this longer route of accounting is problematic when practiced in a weak democracy where the ordinary citizen plays less or no role in decision making. Nevertheless the report acknowledges that the long route helps to build in an overall supervision and responsibility in the education system since there is some sort of order.

The other accountability route, on the other hand, is more direct. According to World Bank (2008) and Sahlberg (2008) the teachers and principals as service providers are directly accountable to the clients who are the parents and the school community. It has more advantages since those who stand to gain (that is, parents and learners) from improved education have a greater voice and thus are more influential.

World Bank (2008) further points out that for effective reporting to take place the public ought to have meaningful information accessible to them. According to Goertz et al. (2001) the public needs such information to demand for improvement from the schools or even pick alternative schools for their children. The information should hence be provided in a proper layout that can be easily understood and, if required, World Bank (2008) recommends that the public should be trained to ensure that the information provided by the school is understood failure to which the information provided may end up being meaningless to the public. Secondly World Bank (2008) indicates that information on the standards which the school ought to meet should be made public and accessible to the parents because for the parents to hold the schools or teachers accountable, they have to know the standards to which they are to hold them accountable. Finally World Bank (2008) and Goertz et al. (2001) note that there should be in place a recognized means for the public to express or voice their opinions and receiving the feedback on their complaints

In Namibia, however, while learners continue to perform below averagely in most subjects, teachers and principals are not exposed to any demands of accountability for the dismal performance of their learners (Dentlinger, 2005; Marope, 2005; Ministry

of Information and Broadcasting, 2006). Dentlinger (2005) indicates that Performance-Based Accountability in Namibia's education remains the weakest of all forms of accountability. According to the report, teachers exploit the system since they are not held accountable for learners' performance. The point is, even though learners are continuously performing poorly, teachers and principals are not adequately held accountable for the learners' poor performance, and yet taking such action could probably contribute to improved quality of education, which is one of the four major goals of the Namibian education (MEC, 1993). The government ought to put more emphasis on educational outcomes, for example, as already discussed, by making teachers and principals responsible for the performance of the learners.

The first research question of this study investigated the views of teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region towards being held accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners. A number of studies for example by Anderson (2005), Mintrop and Trujillo (2007), Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) and Jackson (2008) addressed the issue of teachers and principals and education stakeholders' perceptions of PBA and what stood out was the fact that PBA in education is still a controversial issue which has been in the past hotly contested. It was therefore apparent that people have different views on PBA in education.

Poulson (1998) argues that the different ways in which teachers perceive PBA stems from their understanding of accountability in education. For instance, Poulson (1998) mentions that some teachers consider accountability in education as 'self regulation' and hence they feel not only responsible for themselves as teachers and

principals in ensuring they meet professional standards but also responsible to their colleagues, parents, pupils and other educational stakeholders. Poulson (1998) proceeds to identify the other group of teachers as those who consider accountability in education as something which is externally forced on them through a number of mechanisms like testing and inspection, amongst others. Poulson (1998) therefore argues that teachers' understanding of accountability in education largely influences their perceptions of PBA in education. A number of themes therefore emerged from the review of literature regarding teachers and principals perceptions' of PBA in education.

2.3.6 Performance-Based Accountability and learning achievements

According to research by (Cobb, 2002; Elmore, 2002; Anderson, 2005; Hannaway and Hamilton, 2008; Jackson, 2008; Obara, 2008; Gariepy et al., 2009) it was apparent that there is a consensus that countries that have already implemented PBA in their education systems have achieved improved learner performance. However, while there could be a general consensus that PBA in education has led to improved learner performance in standardized tests, there are different views regarding the actual learning that takes place (Cobb, 2002; Kornhaber, 2006; Hannaway and Hamilton 2008; Jackson, 2008). The point is that learners may score highly due to the implemented PBAS but that does not necessarily mean that they have mastered the content knowledge of the tested subjects. Cobb (2002) points out that learners are also required to develop skills, behaviors and habits of the mind that are not part of the cognitive domain and as such evaluation of learner performance should be more widely conceived rather than

just measuring performance basing on single measures of assessments such as standardized or high stake examinations. Therefore in Cobb's opinion, multiple measures of assessments should be used to evaluate performance since validity (meaningfulness, or usefulness) of the inferences drawn from the test scores are enhanced.

2.3.6.1 Performance-Based Accountability and behavioral responses

In order to meet the demands of PBAS and as such obtain rewards or avoid sanctions, literature like (Cobb, 2002; Hanushek and Raymond, 2005; Kornhaber, 2006; Hannaway and Hamilton, 2008; Jackson, 2008) note that there has been an observable behavioral change in the way teachers conduct classroom instruction. According to Cobb (2002, p.9) "... incentives and disincentives have the potential to influence the behaviors of teachers and principals but such changes do not necessarily translate to increased student learning". The perception therefore is that PBA in education transforms behavior amongst the teachers and principals. For instance Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) observe that teachers have acknowledged spending more instructional time on grades, subjects and areas that are tested as opposed to those that are not tested. The perception therefore is that teachers spend a lot of time instructing learners on how to pass the standardized tests by focusing more on the tested areas or subjects. Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) refer to this practice as teaching to the test.

Cheating in the examinations has been another observable behavior resulting from the implementation of PBAS whether by teachers or learners (Koretz 2002,

Hanushek and Raymond, 2005; Hannaway and Hamilton, 2008). Teachers are therefore of the opinion that there has been increased cheating in the examinations in order to be able to reach the set standards and to receive the rewards or avoid sanctions. For example, Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) point out that a study conducted in Chicago revealed that there was a considerable increase in outright cheating especially in low achieving schools or classrooms since the introduction of high stake testing. Teachers in two of the studied schools believe that teachers in their schools help learners to score higher by changing the learners responses, filling in the blank spaces left by the learners or even giving learners extra time when taking the high stake examinations as opposed to when they take the local examinations. Teachers therefore felt that in trying to meet standards set by the PBAS, they have been under pressure and as such some teachers had resorted to undesirable means of succeeding like cheating. Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) thus note that the stronger the incentives of PBAS, the stronger the motives to cheat in the examinations by learners, teachers and principals.

2.3.6.2 Performance-Based Accountability and teacher morale and job satisfaction

According to Poulson (1998), the teachers' perceptions of Performance-Based Accountability in education affect their attitudes, their teaching practices and morale. Poulson (1998) notes that teachers' morale will depend on whether they view accountability as something that comes from within and thus a responsibility (internal accountability) or something which is externally imposed on them (external accountability). Elmore and Furhman (2001) point out that internal accountability

precedes external accountability because an individual's response to pressures of external accountability depends on the individual's perceptions of the responsibilities that come with the teaching profession. For instance, how the teacher understands what constitutes good instructional practice and who is responsible for learners' learning and how they (teachers) account for the learning achievements of learners. In Elmore and Furhman's (2001) opinion if the teachers feel responsible for the learners' learning on their own without the external pressures then they are bound to react positively to demands of external accountability and thus positive morale, otherwise if they do not feel at all responsible then they may react negatively to any imposed external accountability demands and thus negative morale. For this reason teacher morale could possibly shift from either positive to negative or negative to positive with the implementation of PBAS in education systems.

Mintrop and Trujillo (2007, p. 9) argue that effective school performance needs a motivated staff. They therefore note that:

No change process can get off the ground and be sustained without teachers' high involvement, and it is no secret that in many... low performing schools, meeting the external expectations of continuous growth requires a high energy level and time commitment, one that goes beyond the contractual hours is required.

Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) and Mintrop and Trujillo (2007) therefore observe that the extra energy and time commitment level required has affected the teachers' morale in both negative and positive ways. Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) reveal that a study

conducted by RAND in three states in the USA found that many teachers in those states felt more demoralized especially with implementation of PBAS. According to the findings of the study 47% of teachers in Georgia felt their morale had changed for worse as opposed to 15% who felt their morale had changed for better. The same implied for both California and Pennsylvania with 56% vs. 7% and 73% vs. 6% respectively.

Jackson (2008) concurs with Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) by stating that PBA policies have generally had negative impact on teacher morale. As Mintrop and Trujillo (2007) and Jackson (2008) note, teachers feel that they have to work extra hard in preparing for their lessons and as a result they end up using most of their official working hours preparing for lessons. Jackson (2008, p. 64) quotes a principal's response on how much time teachers spend with the implementation of PBAS in a school in Northern Carolina as follows "...I see teachers working on Saturdays, I don't tell them to; they do it because they need to get everything ready and I see them burning themselves out". Therefore it is apparent this use of personal time to prepare for official duties has had negative impact on teacher morale.

Jackson (2008) also mentions few reasons other than the extra hours that have led to the feeling of demoralization amongst the teachers. For instance, teachers reported that they felt guilty and mortified especially if their learners failed to pass the high stake examinations. Other reasons according to Jackson (2008) included fear of sanctions if they failed to meet the PBAS demands, pressure to improve the learners' test scores and unfairness of some sanctions.

It is imperative to note that despite the fact that studies reveal that majority of teachers have become more demoralized by the implementation of PBAS in education, some teachers on the contrary feel that they have become more encouraged and thus motivated by the implementation of PBAS in education systems. Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) observe that satisfaction is the key factor in the few cases where teachers' morale had improved. As noted earlier, it is clear that PBAS in education has raised performance amongst the learners and to some teachers this has been translated into achievement and as such the source of improved morale and motivation. Sonnentag and Fresse (2001) acknowledge that accomplishing tasks and performing at high level can be a source of satisfaction and feeling of pride and mastery in individuals. Furthermore as is the case with PBAS, excellent performance by both the learners and teachers and principals is well rewarded and therefore, teachers according to Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) have reported that such rewards have improved their morale because they feel that their hard work is being recognized and appreciated with rewards, but most of all, the teachers reported that they are more intrinsically motivated since they feel it is their responsibility as teachers to carry out their responsibilities proficiently.

2.3.6.3 Performance-Based Accountability and learning resources and capacity

Cobb (2002) and Obara (2008) point out that one of the embedded suppositions of PBAS is that by focusing on outcomes there will be an automatic improvement amongst learners because schools that are categorized as underperforming will want to

react to avoid sanctions put in place by the PBAS for example by teachers putting more efforts in their work. Obara (2008) disputes this and asserts that in reality there exist several other factors that teachers and principals have no control over but which often impact negatively on learner achievement. Cobb (2002) also disputes the PBAS assumption and reveals that it is not always the case rather in reality schools that are most in need of improvement often lack the capacity to change. Capacity, according to Cobb (2002), goes beyond the necessary learning material, resources or monetary assistance but also the ability of a school community to adopt implement and sustain new practices, habits and programs.

According to Jackson (2008) teachers feel that there is need for schools to have sufficient technical resources to support classroom instruction. A study conducted by Obara (2008) also reveals the same sentiments from the teachers. An outstanding example given by the teachers was classroom size which affects the teacher learner ratio and as a result how teachers and learners relate during classroom instruction. Teachers felt that some of their classes were over populated than others and as such have an impact on the amount of learning that takes place in the classroom. Teachers thus concluded that there exist high disparities in both financial and technical resources amongst schools and this negatively impacts on poor schools and therefore disadvantage teachers' efforts to raise learner achievement and therefore they felt it was unfair to be made accountable on the same level as teachers from well-equipped schools. Cobb (2002) is in agreement with the teachers' views and argues that it is extremely

unrealistic to expect low resourced schools to solve problems such as raising learning achievements without the resources or capacity to do so.

Cobb (2002), Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) and Obara (2008) come to a conclusion that before teachers are held accountable for any learning outcomes, teachers must be provided with all the necessary proficiencies and resources they need to meet the targeted outcomes. For instance teachers should be well prepared for the responsibilities they will be faced with by the teacher preparation programs, and also while in service they should be granted continuous professional development opportunities and most of all they should be provided with the sufficient technical resources and time.

2.3.6.4 Performance-Based Accountability and learners' background

Obara (2008) asserts that a number of factors such as the learners' socio-economic status are overlooked by most PBAS in education yet it is an important factor that teachers believe ought to be taken into account. According to Obara (2008) a study conducted in an elementary school in Georgia State in USA shows that teachers believe that learners' socio-economic status plays a big role in their learning achievements. For instance, a sentiment by a respondent was that with the PBAS in place, teachers were being judged without taking into consideration the kind of learners' each teacher taught. In this teacher's opinion, some learners come from poor and non supportive environments and others are well placed economically and also have supportive environment that is conducive for learning. According to the teacher, teachers who teach

learners from better socio-economic backgrounds who have a lot of support at home are better placed than teachers whose learners come from poor background with no support and therefore the slightest achievement by the poor learners for instance 20% improvement could mean much more than 40% improvement by the privileged learners. The point therefore is that teachers feel it is unfair to be judged on the same standards especially if they do not teach learners from the same background or with the same abilities.

While teachers may feel that poverty plays a key factor on learning achievements amongst learners from poor background, Gariepy et al. (2009) dispute that opinion by arguing that poverty is not and should never be an excuse for failure rather, individual's ambitions should be highly placed and that the effort to meet these aspirations should be pursued unrelentingly. Anderson (2005) is in agreement with Gariepy et al. (2009) and states that literature is full of teachers who despite of extreme challenges and obstacles are able to improve performance and make learners to excel. Anderson (2005) notes that overcoming obstacles and challenges to succeed in education is possible through zealousness and therefore schools that want to accomplish the goal of ensuring all their learners excel irrespective of their backgrounds are most likely to have strong and stable teachers who look beyond the challenges. Anderson (2005), therefore, notes that strength comes from factors such as greater mastery of content and visionary instructional leadership while stability shows in teachers' commitment to the learners and a great sense of internal accountability.

2.3.6.5 Performance-Based Accountability and teacher attrition

According to Jackson (2008), Murnane & Papay (2010) and Hout & Elliot (2011) teacher attrition is the rate at which teachers transfer from schools especially those categorized as poor performing or quit the teaching profession. Teacher attrition has been directly linked to the implementation of PBAS in some education systems. Pedulla et al. as cited by Jackson (2008) reveal in their study, that more than half of their responding teachers felt they would consider transfers from poor performing schools to better performing ones to avoid being sanctioned regularly in the below average performing schools in which they were teaching.

As already discussed, studies reveal that implementation of PBAS in education, for instance in the USA, has had both positive and negative impacts on teacher morale. Teacher morale is an important aspect when it comes to motivation and job satisfaction. Hout and Elliot (2011) explain how the incentives in a PBAS are likely to cause motivation or demoralization of teachers. They point out that although the incentives component of PBAS is often planned in such a manner that every individual is given the same target, for some, often the target is easy to reach while for others it may prove to be rather difficult. Hence, they conclude that the effect of incentives is likely to differ in such a way that those who find the targets easy to reach may be encouraged by the incentive while at the same time discouraging the performance those who find the targets to be unreachable. When such teachers get discouraged by their performances, they get demoralized. According to Obara (2008) and Hout and Elliot (2011) a demoralized teacher has low self esteem and this can have an effect on how satisfying a

teacher finds the teaching profession. They thus indicate that teachers who find teaching to be dissatisfying are likely to quit the teaching profession.

The study by Jackson (2008) found that one of the reasons for considering transfers from low performing schools to better performing schools is less pressure to raise student test scores. The study found that more than half of the respondents felt that being in low performing schools disadvantaged them because they have to work extra hard to raise the learners test scores since they are judged on the same criteria as better performing schools and the result of that is extra pressure to perform. In the respondents opinion, teaching in better performing schools would mean less pressure to perform since they believe that such schools have better prepared learners who are likely to get supportive environment at home, have better learning resources which enhances classroom instruction and leads to better learning achievements, have learners with fewer discipline issues and finally, the teachers in better performing school have better administrative support. Hence, in the respondents' view, teachers in better performing schools are not any better than teachers in poor performing schools rather the difference lies in the learners and the working conditions of teachers.

The study by Jackson (2008) also reveals that some of the teachers felt that if the PBAS was not unfair given that it judges all the teachers equally regardless of the challenges some experience then they would not consider the transfers because they believe their learners also make progress only that it may not be as much as is expected of them. The same study also found that none of the respondents surveyed from excelling schools would wish to transfer to poor performing schools.

Jackson (2008) asserts that in extreme cases of dissatisfaction in the teaching profession as a result of implementation of PBAS, some teachers have opted to quit teaching all together. Jackson cites a study conducted in Texas by Hoffman et al. (2001) which reveals that 85% of teachers surveyed believe that some teachers leave the teaching profession mainly because of the demands of PBAS implemented in the education system. According to the respondents a major reason for leaving the teaching profession was extreme pressure felt by teachers to raise test scores and the fear of being sanctioned as a result of not reaching the set standards.

While some of the teachers feel that the pressure to perform is extreme and as such view PBAS in education negatively, some teachers in fact believe that teachers who cannot cope with the pressure ought to leave. For instance, a respondent in a study conducted by Obara (2008) believes that being put under the microscope is indeed a good thing and should be viewed positively by the teachers given that the demands of the PBAS in education would identify lazy and hard working teachers, in reference to being able to cope up with pressure to perform. The respondent therefore feels that teachers who cannot cope under pressure should leave the profession because apart from being bad examples to incoming teachers, they also affect learning achievements negatively. In addition, by them leaving, the education system would be left with hard working teachers who cannot crush under pressure.

Jackson (2008) therefore concludes that the rate of teachers transferring from poor performing schools to better ones, or leaving the profession affects poorly performing schools more than the better performing schools, not to mention that most

poor performing schools have majority of their learners coming from poor and unsupportive background. Jackson (2008) therefore questions if the objective of narrowing the achievement gaps between the different socio-economic groups can actually be accomplished at this rate.

2.3.6.6 Performance-Based Accountability and learner behavior/attitude and placement

Learners learning experiences have changed with the implementation of PBAS in education systems and research shows that these changes, as perceived by teachers, have had both positive and negative impacts on the learners' attitudes and behaviors (Jackson, 2008; Hannaway & Hamilton, 2008; Murnane & Papay, 2010).

A study conducted by Jackson (2008) in Northern Carolina elementary schools reveals that teachers feel that PBAS have had both negative and positive consequences on the learners' behaviors and attitudes. In their responses, 28% of the surveyed teachers responded that learners are more prepared for learning, 15% believe that learners are more confident, however 61% of the responding teachers feel that learners are more anxious and 24% responded that learners are less confident with the implementation of high stake testing. According to Jackson (2008), the respondents identified the effects of high stake examinations implementation amongst different groups of learning abilities. For instance, the respondents agree that the demands of PBAS have had no effect on the high ability learners since they are confident and thus not threatened by sanctions such as grade retention should they fail to pass the high stake examinations. However, the respondents also agreed that the implementation of high stake examinations has

motivated learners with average abilities and those just below proficiency levels because the expectations set by the curriculum is just within the reach of this average ability group, although most of the motivation comes from the threat of grade retention if the learners do not pass the high stake examinations. The responding teachers however observe that the most negatively affected group is low ability learners who become frustrated in the process of learning and preparing for the high stake examinations. This frustration in grasping the curriculum then translates in misbehavior and indiscipline.

Jackson (2008) therefore asserts that while positive effects of implementation of PBAS in Northern Carolina cites high achievement amongst some learners, negative consequences on the other hand reveal that learners are showing more signs of stress, discipline problems, increased absenteeism, psychological disorders which are a direct result of negative motivation and testing anxiety. Jackson (2008) therefore notes that such negative consequences tend to affect how learners perform in the high stake examinations and as a result, should they fail the examinations then they could be at a risk of receiving unfavorable placements such as grade retention which is believed to be a reason of school dropout. Jackson therefore argues that while the intention of PBAS is to improve learning achievements, care should be taken because of its potential negative consequences such as low learning achievements due to low motivation by learners and grade retentions which may end up increasing school drop outs.

2.3.7 Holding principals and teachers accountable for learning outcomes

The second research question of the study required the identification of ways in which teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region could be made more accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners. According to Schater (n.d) an important reason why teachers ought to be held accountable for learning achievements is because the act of holding teachers accountable for the learning outcomes can help focus effort on actual teaching performance and thus provide constructive knowledge base to develop teacher quality. Elmore and Fuhrman (2001) are in agreement with Schater (n.d) by acknowledging that holding teachers accountable for achievement of the set learning goals makes teachers to be more focused on their work and also increases energy devoted to instruction. They conclude that it is hard to picture a successful education system without PBAS in place. There are various ways in which teachers can be held accountable for learners' learning achievements and they are discussed in the following sections.

2.3.7.1 Public reporting

Goertz et al. (2001) point out that public reporting of learners' learning achievements is the most basic form of accountability. Cobb (2002) however adds that due to its simple nature, often it is not of high stake or consequential to the teachers and learners but it is still an important form of accountability in education. Gariepy et al. (2009) note that public reporting calls for more transparency in education, and as such keeps the public informed on school progress.

Cobb (2002) points out that schools ought to report to the public both cognitive and non-cognitive measures of learners' performance. Cobb (2002) thus notes that schools are required to give an account of their programs and performance, individual learners' performance through report cards. Cobb (2002) asserts that at minimum, the report cards should report on student performance on local or national examinations. Public reporting of non-cognitive measures include all the other factors that affect the learning process such as learner school attendance, drop out and graduation rates, learner discipline, teacher quality, fiscal resources available to the school etc. Goertz et al. (2001) advise that the public can use the information availed to them to demand for better performance or even choose alternative schools for their children.

Cobb (2002) warns though that if public reporting has to be used effectively as the only way of holding teachers accountable for the learning achievements then reporting should be more rigorous so that only full disclosure of information by schools is encouraged. Cobb (2002) argues that public reporting as is currently practiced in most education systems tends to be very selective and as such reports on certain aspects and leave out those which are not in the school's favor. Gariepy et al. (2009) concur with Cobb (2002) by stating that one directional reporting is shallow and not useful to the public hence for reporting to be transparent and rich in useful information, schools should not only report on achievements but failures too even if they may portray negative picture of the school because that is the only way that the public may get to know the actual picture and find ways to intervene.

In conclusion, Hanushek and Raymond (2005) acknowledge that any form of accountability in education is better than no accountability at all because they believe that accountability in education tends to lead to larger achievement growth than would have occurred without any accountability. However they warn that the use of reporting as a primary or the only accountability mechanism has minimal impact on learners' performance because the impact of accountability on learning achievements is obtained by attaching consequences such as rewards and sanctions to the performance of both teachers and learners.

2.3.7.2 School inspection

Wilcox (2000) defines school inspection as the practice of evaluating the quality and /or performance of schools by agents who are not directly involved with the schools but are specially appointed to assess the schools who are known as the inspectors of schools. Wilcox (2000) affirms that the practice of inspecting schools is almost a worldwide educational practice. Wilcox (2000) also observes that lately many countries having been faced with increasing demands for accountability and transparency in education have re-examined their inspection systems. For instance, Word Bank (2008) indicates that several countries in Sub Saharan Africa have inspectorates within their education systems. The school inspectors therefore have to make regular visits to the schools under their care to observe what goes on in the schools and classrooms and report what was observed to the MoE.

The rationale of inspection is, firstly, that teachers get to know that they are constantly under observation and subject to evaluation for which there is potential consequences like sanctions. Secondly, the process of inspection is likely to bring to the attention of the MoE whatever challenges the teachers are faced with and as such try to provide or find solutions to the challenges with the aim of improving the education standards. In this case inspection is thus viewed as having potential consequence of improvement of the schools that are inspected (World Bank, 2008; Wilcox, 2000).

According to Wilcox (2000) and World Bank (2008) the effectiveness of inspection as a mechanism of accountability in education is questionable since it is faced by a number of challenges for instance, on credibility of the inspection reports. This is a challenge as Wilcox (2000) notes since there is tendency to generalize inspection findings even if sampling was not done adequately. Wilcox (2000) further notes that there exists a problem of transparency between teachers and the inspectors and therefore the reports from inspection often lack credibility. According to Wilcox (2000) inspection of schools is not only the oldest but one of the widely used mechanisms of accountability and should be able to serve the purpose it is designed for. Measures therefore have to be taken to ensure credibility of the reports from inspection so that schools can be assisted to raise or reach the targeted standards in education.

2.3.7.3 Incentives in Performance-Based Accountability Systems

A PBAS is created when there is acknowledgement of the existence of a problem in achieving the desired outcomes and is designed to alter service providers' behavior.

At the center of PBAS are incentives to drive the changes linked to performance or reaching the set goals (Stetcher and Camm, 2010). In education, the NCLB policy of the USA education system is considered to be in the fore front of championing Performance-Based Accountability of teachers, principals and learners. The following section will therefore address the incentives aspect of PBAS in trying to ensure that teachers and principals are held accountable for the learners' learning achievements.

Studies by Supovitz, (2010) and Elmore (2002) have shown that incentives have impacts on teachers' instructional practices. For instance, Supovitz (2010) indicates that extrinsic rewards and sanctions linked with high stake testing serve to motivate teachers across the education systems of many countries thus the assumption here is that it is lack of will rather than lack of capacity that stands in the way of system wide improvement. A study by Jackson (2008) in the Northern Carolina state revealed that even though many teachers were not motivated with the introduction of high stake examinations, 66.8% of the teachers felt that teachers should be sanctioned or rewarded for learners' achievement in the standardized or the high stake examinations as they believe that such incentives are a motivation and help un motivated teachers to change their instructional practices which they believe help improve learners' performance.

However, it is not always that incentives lead to improvement of learning achievements through change of instructional practices by teachers; some studies have shown no changes on teachers' teaching practices or even negative impacts of incentives on teachers. For instance Elmore (2002, p.21) argues that:

...no externally administered incentive whether be it reward or sanction will automatically result in the creation of an effective improvement process inside schools and school systems. Nor will any incentive necessarily have a predictable effect across schools. The effect of incentives is contingent on capacity of individuals... to receive the message the incentive carries, to translate it into concrete and effective course of action and execute that action.

Hout and Elliot (2011) also note that even though in many situations incentives work in a straight forward manner by producing the desired change in individuals to reach the set target, there are also situations in which the incentives do the direct opposite of what was intended, such as failing to produce the desired effect and for example driving teachers away from their jobs. The point therefore is that incentives do not automatically lead to improvements but can only be effective if the message carried by the incentives is well translated into actions such as, change of instructional practices for the better by the teachers, or learning habits by the learners.

Moore, as cited by Stetcher and Camm (2010) therefore warns that a successful incentives structure should answer the following vital questions otherwise it may not impact on teachers teaching practices. The incentive structure should for instance ask; if the changes of teachers teaching practices lead to achievement of the set goals of a PBAS, will they benefit? And should they fail to change their teaching practices and as a result fail to meet the set goals, will they be penalized? The point Moore argues is that if there is no personal benefit attached to the change of behavior (teaching practices) then the risk of undesirable consequences increase since the teachers may not see any personal connection to the success as a direct result of the change in the teaching

practices and may as a result avoid the changes since they will be comfortable with their status quo.

2.3.7.3.1 Incentives structure

A well planned incentives structure should include both rewards and sanctions. Some of these incentives may include the possible effect on a service provider, in this case the teachers' reputation of reporting their performance. Secondly, incentives can be in form of specific resources that are availed to teachers or schools based on their level of performance. Thirdly, incentives can be in form of specific promotions and training opportunities and bonuses that are awarded to individual teachers. Finally, an incentive could be in the form of sanctions on individual teachers or schools that fail to realize certain behavioral changes such as teaching practices that the PBAS seek to achieve (Stetcher and Camm, 2010).

2.3.8 Possible challenges to Performance-Based Accountability Systems

The third research question required the identification of some challenges likely to face a PBAS in the Khomas Education Region. Several studies for example, Stetcher and Camm (2010), Cobb (2002) and Elmore (2002) have clearly outlined some obstacles PBAS in education systems face or are likely to be faced with. Some of these challenges are discussed as follows.

2.3.8.1 Resources and capacity problem

Cobb (2002), Elmore (2002) and Leithwood (2005) observe that one major problem likely to face any PBAS in education systems is both lack of resources and capacity. Cobb (2002) asserts that the major assumption of a PBAS is that the focus on results will automatically lead to improvement. Cobb (2002) however argues that the reality is that schools that perform poorly are often the ones in most need of improvement and which often lack the resources and capacity to do so. Resources in this case have to do with monetary and tangible things like physical learning structures and instructional materials. Capacity on the other hand has to do with the leadership, ability of a school community to adapt to, implement and sustain changes such as new teaching practices, learning habits and programs.

Elmore (2002) stresses that regardless of how well designed PBAS are they are only as effective as the capacity of the schools to respond. Elmore (2002) further depicts that PBAS cannot mobilize resources that schools lack therefore the first step ought to be the provision of the necessary teaching and learning resources to schools which need them, often the ones that perform poorly. Elmore (2002) thus notes that other than availability of the necessary resources, teachers' responses to PBAS vary depending on how well they manage themselves to improve their instructional practices. The argument created here by Elmore (2002) is that PBAS do not cause teachers to improve automatically, instead they create advantageous conditions for teachers to work in by focusing their work and teaching practices in particular ways that are likely to lead to improved performance by the learners.

2.3.8.2 Goal displacement

Julnes (2006) defines goal displacement as the inclination of individuals to intentionally alter their actions in areas that are being measured so as to improve the ratings of their performance. Julnes (2006) warns that concentrating on the wrong practices can lead to destroying a program rather than producing desirable outcomes. For instance, implementation of PBAS in education systems like in the USA has been associated with behavioral changes and changes in instructional practices by the teachers (Cobb, 2002; Hanushek & Raymond, 2005; Kornhaber, 2006; Jacob, 2007; Hannaway & Hamilton, 2008; Jackson, 2008).

To demonstrate goal displacement in education, Julnes (2006) gives an example of the PBAS goal to improve learners' achievement through test scores. While the goal may be to improve test scores, it is expected that the test scores improve through improved learning experiences by the learners as a result of better instructional practices by the teachers (Cobb, 2002; Hannaway and Hamilton, 2008). However, Hanushek and Raymond (2005) and Julnes (2006) observe that this is just an ideal situation that is expected of the teachers which is not always the case. Instead, as they note, teachers have come up with certain practices to improve their performance ratings such as teaching to the test. This is the practice of teachers teaching narrowly, focusing on grades likely to be tested through high stake examinations or concentrating on subject areas likely to be tested by the high stake examinations thus ignoring other areas. Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) and Julnes (2006) note that some teachers go to the extent of cheating, this is the practice of teachers aiding learners directly to score highly.

for example by assisting them to answer the examinations or even filling in the blank spaces left by the learners after the exam sessions. According to Julnes (2006) and Jacob (2007) such practices by teachers end up distorting the goals of PBAS in education.

Goal displacement therefore occurs if teachers ignore the other aspects of desired learning experience and focus only on teaching learners tested topics or in other cases how to pass the standardized tests. The result of teaching to the test or cheating is that not only are important learning activities disregarded and thus learners taken advantage of but also the validity of testing as a measure of teacher effectiveness is distorted. Julnes (2006) therefore concludes that PBAS are likely to face real obstacles if high stake testing as a measure of teacher effectiveness is distorted by goal displacement as has been described. This is because high stake testing then loses validity since what is being measured is no longer the overall effectiveness of the teacher in a classroom environment but rather the ability of the teachers to teach learners how to take tests and score highly. In the same way, Julnes (2006) indicates that for the learners, the learning that has taken place is no longer what is being measured instead what is being measured by these displaced goals is the ability of learners to answer the high stake examinations. Whereas PBAS goals may be to improve learners' scores through improved learning experiences the challenge it is likely to be faced with is learners improving test scores while no actual or limited learning takes place.

2.3.8.3 Equity issues

Issues of equity are likely to cause major setbacks in PBAS in education systems. Goertz et al. (2001) note that equity issues are largely affected by learners' backgrounds and schools serving high concentrations of poor learners. It is imperative for PBAS to address the challenges likely to be brought by equity issues because according to Anderson (2005) one of the PBAS goals is to close or reduce the achievement gaps between disadvantaged and privileged learners.

Goertz et al. (2001) point out that by PBAS not controlling the differences in socio-economic characteristics, unfair comparisons are permitted. However they note that PBAS are all inclusive irrespective of learner backgrounds and schools serving high concentrations of poor learners because it promotes access to the general education curriculum and provides incentives to educate all learners to higher standards. Hence if PBAS controls the socio- economic factors amongst learners and schools the message portrayed would instead be that poor or disadvantaged learners are subject to low a expectation which is never the case because they are expected to have same if not greater ambitions than the privileged learners.

Goertz et al. (2001) assert that for PBAS to address equity concerns such as closing the achievement gaps between learners of different backgrounds, the PBAS ought to ensure that all learners have comparable learning opportunities. Goertz et al. (2001) note that this is one of the most challenging issues most PBAS in most countries education systems, including the USA's NCLB are faced with. This is because the PBAS has to ensure that the learners are taught by teachers who have a great content

knowledge and pedagogical skills to teach the curriculum to diverse learners. The challenge therefore is not only in the provision of highly qualified and competent teachers and other learning resources and inputs for all the learners under the PBAS, but a greater challenge lies in the inability of the PBAS to address the differences in the home environment and the support learners get when they get back home. This is because learners from higher socio- economic background tend to get more support and direction as academics is concerned as opposed to those from lower socio- economic backgrounds (Obara, 2008).

2.3.9 Chapter summary

This chapter provided and discussed the theoretical framework that informed the study. The components of a basic PBAS in education were also discussed at length in this chapter. Also discussed in details were the issues concerning PBA in education which included the controversies arising from individuals who oppose PBA in education and those who argue in favor of PBA education systems in order to improve the quality of learning achievements. Finally, different studies were reviewed in order to identify gaps in knowledge in this study on how teachers and principals perceive PBA in education, how teachers and principals can be held accountable for their learners' performance and possible challenges to PBAS in education.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to gain profound understanding of Performance-Based Accountability of primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region of Namibia. The study therefore sought to comprehend the perceptions of the primary school teachers and principals in the region regarding being held accountable for the performance of their learners. The study further investigated ways in which primary school teachers and principals could be made more accountable for the performance of their learners. Finally the study looked into challenges likely to affect Performance-Based Accountability of the teachers and principals. Thus in this chapter, the researcher discusses the study's research design, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and finally ethical concerns of the study.

3.2 Research design

Since the rationale of this study was to gain a deep understanding of PBA of primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region, the nature of the research questions that guided the study called for the researcher to dig deep and as such collect rich data and for this reason a multiple case study qualitative research design was used to conduct the study. Gay et al. (2009, p.12) describe qualitative study as research that:

...Seeks to probe deeply into the research setting to obtain in-depth understanding about the way things are, why they are the way they are and how the participants in the context perceive them. To achieve the detailed understandings they seek, qualitative researchers must undertake sustained, in-depth, in-context research that allows them to uncover subtle, less, overt, personal understandings.

Furthermore, unlike quantitative research which manipulates and controls contexts in which the studies are conducted, participants in this study were studied in their natural and non-contrived environment. There was therefore an extensive interaction with majority of the participants in the schools to obtain data. This interaction was of utmost importance since it presented an opportunity for the participants to express themselves without being bound in any way. Robson (2009) indicates that this wide interaction by the researcher and the participants allows the researcher to obtain various responses with varied meanings and as such a phenomenon has varied meanings and ought not to be generalized as is the case of quantitative study.

While there are various approaches to qualitative research design, this study employed the multiple case study approach. Even though the focus of this study was to understand a single phenomenon i.e. Performance-Based Accountability, parallel data was collected from assorted participants in different sites to make comparisons and also build the theory of Performance-Based Accountability in education. For this reason, a multiple case study of five primary schools in the Khomas Education Region was conducted to understand Performance-Based Accountability from the participants' perspectives. Robson, (2009) warns against the misconception that the reason behind the different cases is for the purpose of generalization of the study results to its population.

Yin as cited by Robson (2009) expounds that carrying out multiple case studies is like conducting multiple experiments, which follow duplication logic and as such any generalization of results from the study is made to the theory and not populations. Robson thus concludes that multiple case studies strengthen the study outcome by replicating a pattern which may predict the same or contrasting results but for predictable reasons. This therefore increases the confidence in the robustness of the theory guiding the study.

3.3 Population

The population of the study consisted of primary school teachers, principals, parents and school inspectors in the Khomas Education Region. The results of the study however were not generalized to the population since the study was qualitative in nature.

3.4 Sample and sampling procedures

Gay et al. (2009) describe sampling as the procedure of identifying and choosing a number of individuals (sample) from a larger group with similar characteristics (population). Gay et al. (2009) further describe qualitative samples as often being smaller and not representative compared to quantitative sample. This is because the two research approaches differ in aims and needs. For instance, the qualitative researchers require in depth data from participants' points of view regarding a phenomenon and thus only need few but information rich participants. Secondly, as Robson (2002) points out, qualitative samples are not meant to represent the population as is the case with

quantitative samples thus the findings of qualitative studies are never generalized to the population since they lack external validity. For this reason, the qualitative samples are smaller than the quantitative samples.

In this study, five primary schools were purposefully selected to participate in the study. Gay et al. (2009) defines purposive sampling as a sampling procedure in which the researcher intentionally identifies criteria for choosing the samples. There was a criteria outlined for the selection of the five primary schools that were studied. The first criterion was that the schools from which the teachers and principals would be drawn had to be primary schools within the Khomas Education Region of Namibia. The second criterion was of teachers and principals from those primary schools that kept records on learner performance and also had in the past held forums to report to stakeholders like parents on learning achievements. Thirdly, as Anderson (2005) notes that accountability systems based on performance demand that schools are keen on learners achievement and report to the public on learning achievements, consequently, the third and the most important criterion was based on school performance. Thus, three of the sampled schools had to have been excelling on grade seven examinations for the past five years, whereas the other two had to be schools that have not been excelling in the same grade seven examinations. Regional education officials were requested to assist with the selection of the five primary schools based on these criteria.

Once the five schools from which the teachers and principals (sample) who were the major respondents of this study were identified, a stratified purposeful sampling was employed to select participants from the five schools. Robson (2002) describes stratified

purposive sampling as the process of dividing the population into several groups based on members of the group sharing particular characteristics. After which purposive sampling is done within the groups, in essence the selected sample ought to meet certain outlined criteria. The population was therefore divided into various groups (strata). The groups identified were principals, teachers, parents, and school inspectors. The five principals of the five sampled schools automatically formed the sample because as Heim (2006) notes that as school principals, they bear the responsibility to ensure demands of accountability are met and therefore play an important role in the implementation of any formulated accountability policies.

The second group whose members were also sampled automatically was the parents. Since a qualitative study is only interested in the information richness and no quantitative data, the board chairpersons of each of the five primary schools were automatically selected because as Heim (2006) asserts, they as school board chairpersons represent the interests of parents and the community and therefore would be best placed to respond to accountability issues concerning parents.

The third group was that of school inspectors. Two senior Khomas Education Region school inspectors were sampled based on experience (the ones with the most years of experience as Khomas Education Region school inspectors).

The fourth group but also the most important group was the teachers since they are the ones who have to respond to demands of accountability in education in that they are tasked with the responsibility of educating the learners. The teachers sample was drawn from experienced teachers in various subject categories. Experience in this case

meant teachers with at least five years teaching experience. Thus from each school, one teacher from each of the four subject categories (English, Mathematics, sciences and social studies) was selected based on the following criteria; experienced teachers who spend extra instructional time especially for below average performers in their subjects (Hannaway and Hamilton, 2008). The second criterion was that of teachers whose learners' performance gap was not extremely wide. The third criterion was that of teachers who had updated records on their learners' performance.

While this study initially sampled a total of thirty two respondents, the findings were based on the responses of seventeen teachers, three parents, four principals and two school inspectors. The initial total of the sample drawn in the proposal was affected by the fact that some respondents could not or were not able to participate in the study and since participation in the study is out of free will, they could not be coerced to participate. Therefore, one principal, two parents and four teachers declined to participate, reducing the number of participants to twenty six from the initial total of thirty three respondents.

3.5 Research instruments

The data was collected through interviews, observations and document analysis. The three different instruments were used to enable triangulation of the data collected. Gay et al. (2009) define triangulation as the process of using several data collecting strategies and sources so that the data obtained from the different strategies or sources can be cross checked. According to Gay et al. (2009) triangulation gives qualitative study data strength rather than relying on one instrument, or information source, two or more sources and instruments are used to complement the weaknesses of the others. For instance, interviews can be used to help understand what was observed or document analysis to provide a behind the scene information which may not be observable.

Interview guides were the prime instruments used to collect data in this study and they were used to collect information on what were not directly observable, for example, information on participants' views, thoughts, feelings and many more. Interview guides for the different categories of respondents were prepared in advance. Semi structured interview guide was used because it has predetermined questions yet flexible at the same time to allow additional questions or probing in the interview process (Robson, 2002). The interview questions were open ended to allow the respondents to respond to the questions without being restricted and this also allowed them to give details. Respondents of the same category responded to similar interview questions. For instance, there were some questions directed to the inspectors for which neither parents nor teachers could respond to, thus each category had their own set of questions. To avoid interview biasness and ensure consistency in the data collected, respondents of the

particular group were asked similar questions. This was also done to enhance comparability of data during data analysis, thus triangulation of data.

Interviews of principals and teachers were conducted to determine their views on being held accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners, and also to find their views on how they can be held more accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners and finally any challenges they foresaw as implementation of accountability policy was concerned. Interviews of school inspectors were conducted to determine how teachers and principals can be made more accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners and also to identify any challenges likely to be encountered by accountability policy in the Khomas Education Region. Parents on the other hand were interviewed to determine how primary school teachers and principals can be made more accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners.

Poulson (1998) notes that documentation, is a way of dealing with accountability issues since documentation creates transparency and improved communication between the school and stakeholders. Document analysis was thus used to obtain secondary data on reporting performance and learner performance. Documents reviewed included learners score records, letters to parents, circulars, time tables, and policy documents.

The third instrument used to collect data in this study was non-participant observation. Robson (2002) indicates that people's actions and behaviors are key aspects in almost all inquiries therefore the most natural technique to obtain data in such settings is to watch (observe) and record these actions, after which they are described, analyzed and interpreted. Fundamentally, there are two types of observation. Participatory

observation which allows the researcher to be actively involved in the participants' activities and therefore the researcher makes observations while taking active part in whatever is being studied. This study however used the second type of observation which is non-participant. In this type of observation, the role adopted by the researcher is a passive one, and hence does not take part in what is being observed (Robson, 2002). An observation schedule that had details of what was to be observed for example the school buildings and learning facilities, any learning activities after the regular teaching hours was prepared. Notes on participants' behavior and actions were then taken without being directly involved in whatever is being observed. Use of non-participant observation was imperative because unlike interviews which required the participants to respond to questions about their feelings, attitudes and opinions, observations enabled data to be obtained through watching and listening to what the participants were doing and saying. This was important since people do not always respond truthfully to interview questions. According to Robson (2002, p.310)

...interview and questionnaires responses are notorious for discrepancies between what people say and what they do, will do or have done...however observation on the other hand allows for the researcher to watch and listen to things as they are. Observation therefore complements data obtained by other techniques, such as data collected through interviews, or questionnaires.

3.6 Pilot study and its findings

A pilot study was carried out prior to the actual study. Robson (2002) and Gay et al. (2009) note that in a qualitative inquiry, the purpose of a pilot study is to test the inclusiveness of the research questions, adequacy of the research instruments, and evaluation of data collection and analysis techniques. A pilot study thus enables the researcher to identify and rectify any ambiguity and possible setbacks likely to be encountered by the actual study.

The pilot sample also come from Khomas Education Region but was not part of the actual study sample from the five primary schools. Two primary schools were selected based on criteria stated above. Two principals, two teachers, two school board chairpersons and an experienced inspector were purposefully selected using the criteria stated earlier on.

While the little data collected from the pilot study was consistent with data collected in the main study, there was need to make adjustments in the interview guides. The researcher realized that the interview sessions for teachers and principals and the inspectors of schools went beyond an hour yet only forty five minutes was programmed for the interview, for that reason the lengthy interview guides were shortened by reducing the number of questions. This was made possible by the fact that the pilot study also revealed that some questions in the guide were vague and did not yield the responses the researcher expected, so the questions were rephrased with the assistance of the participants and some questions were completely removed to help reduce the total number of questions and essentially helping with the initial problem of time.

Another finding by the pilot study was that from the participants' responses, different questions yielded similar responses, yet the researcher expected different responses from the different questions. The researcher therefore rephrased some of the questions.

The pilot study also helped the researcher to recognize that some participants did not comprehend some terms used in the interview questions hence the researcher found alternative synonyms to use in some places and understood that there would be need to explain some terms to the participants in the actual study rather than assume that the participants were acquainted with all the terms used in the study.

3.7 Data collection procedures

The researcher sought permission from the director of education of Khomas Education Region to collect data by writing a letter requesting permission to conduct the study in the Khomas Education Region.

After permission to conduct the study was granted, the researcher consulted with the Khomas Education Regional office to be assisted with the selection of primary schools that met the criteria outlined earlier on and with the selection of the school inspectors. The researcher then made preliminary visits to the schools to familiarize with the sites, and to personally request the principals to participate in the study. The researcher also asked for the principals' assistance in contacting school board chairpersons, and selecting teachers who met the above stated criteria.

Once all the other participants had been selected, the researcher requested their permission to participate in the study in person, made appointments for the interviews, and tried to create rapport by spending some time with the participants. Before the actual data collection the researcher sought informed consent from the participants. Ethical issues involved in the study were also explained. The interviews were conducted at the convenience of the participants.

During the interview sessions, the researcher asked questions and allowed the participants to respond without interrupting them or judging their views. The researcher also took notes during the interviews. Even though the researcher had intended to record the voices of any willing participants, none of the participant agreed to be recorded. The researcher also probed the participants by using phrases such as (Do you mean? How do you feel about that? Can you please elaborate/, please give examples and many more) to elicit detailed responses and also for clarity of the responses. This was done to enable the researcher to capture all data during the interview. The interview time was approximately one hour per participant although some were shorter and others ran over the approximated time. The observation notes were made in the field for accuracy and comprehensiveness.

With permission granted by some participants, the researcher was also able to analyze school documents and records. The analysis of these documents provided information on school policies, class size, learner achievement records and letters to parents to report on learning achievements. The preliminary data analysis started in the

field and continued afterwards. The researcher went back to the participants for clarity of some data.

3.8 Data analysis

The analysis of data was an ongoing process that begun in the field and continued after the data was collected. Inductive data analysis which enabled the researcher to categorize data in the emerging themes and categories (Gay et al. 2009) was used to analyze the data. The data analysis was conducted according to the three research questions of the study.

To obtain the emerging themes, the researcher read through raw data several times to understand the responses from the participants. Meaningful data from the passages were identified and coded. Robson (2002) points out that coding is the process of identifying and selecting texts or phrases which are meaningful and highlighting them, so that similar ideas are highlighted with for example same color of label or highlighters. The idea behind coding basically was to enable the researcher to quickly retrieve and categorize texts that were associated with a similar thematic idea so that they could be examined collectively and comparisons or similarities be made. Therefore after reading severally through the raw data, the texts were highlighted in different colors and the texts with similar colors were categorized together under the themes that emerged. The researcher then made meanings of the data collected by interpreting the themes.

Demographics and profiles of the participating teachers and principals were presented in tables. Field notes from observation were analyzed descriptively (reporting directly what was seen or heard on site) and reflectively.

3.8.1 Trustworthiness of the study

According to Shenton (2004) and Gay et al. (2009) in qualitative research requirements of validity and reliability are under discussion since there are controversies surrounding applicability of the traditional measures of validity and reliability on qualitative studies due to the nature of methods employed in qualitative research. Therefore instead of using the terms reliability and validity in qualitative study, there are propositions that the term trustworthiness should be used when addressing issues of credibility, comparability and transferability of qualitative research findings.

To establish trustworthiness in this study, in other words the credibility of the study, the researcher employed triangulation; (comparing data obtained using different instruments and comparing data from different respondents). The researcher also confirmed the findings with participants for accuracy.

3.9 Ethical issues

Gay et al. (2009) and Robson (2002) define ethics in research as moral principles that have been laid down and that are widely accepted. Ethics thus provide rules, behavioral expectations about the best way to treat participants both in experimental and social research studies. Robson (2002) warns that data should never be collected at the

expense of human beings and researchers ought to observe ethical issues when collecting data. Ethical standards therefore form basis upon which researchers have to evaluate their conduct in the process of collecting data. This study observed ethical issues in the process of data collection.

The researcher sought and obtained permission to get into the schools from the director of Education in of the Khomas Education Region. The researcher obtained informed consent from all the participants who read and signed informed consent forms that were earlier on prepared by the researcher. The researcher enlightened the participants on the nature of the study so that they could only participate in the study out of free will and could pull out of the study if they felt uncomfortable or wished to do so. The nature of the study conducted did not expose the participants to any form of physical or psychological harm since this is the most basic and important ethical issue of a study (Gay et al. 2009). All the participants in this study were treated with utmost respect for the period that the study lasted. The researcher assured the participants of anonymity and confidentiality during and after the study, and therefore used pseudonyms rather than their real names. The response of the participants was handled discretely and was not discussed with other participants or anyone else. Finally, for the purposes of verification to avoid misinterpretation and gratitude, the participants were informed on the findings of the study

3.10 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the research design and methods that were utilized in the process of collecting and analyzing data for the study. The nature of the research problem and research questions sought for in depth understanding of PBA in education from the participants' perspective and as such a multiple case study approach of the qualitative research design was employed. The data was collected by using interviews, non-participant observation and document analysis. Data was analyzed through reading, coding; which was done by identifying and highlighting similar responses under the same theme, comparisons and interpretation of the data. Ethical issues that were addressed in this study were also discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the analysis of data collected in five primary schools in the Khomas Education Region began while in the field and continued after all the data was collected. Also described in the previous chapter, data was collected by means of interviews, observations and document analysis. An inductive analysis frame work, described in the methodology section was used to analyze the data.

To enhance data analysis the research findings were organized primarily according to the three research questions of this study. This was because the interview questions were categorized under the research questions and some questions targeted specific category of respondents such as teachers, inspectors or parents while some drew responses from all the participants.

Participants were given pseudonyms; thus different names other than their real names were used. The participating schools were also identified alphabetically based on their academic performance for the past five years. The best performing school was named school A, followed by School B, School C is average performing followed by school D and the worst performing school was named school E. This chapter reports the findings on Performance-Based Accountability of primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region of Namibia

4.1.1 Demographics and profiles of schools and participants

4.1.1.1 School A

Primary school A, a former school for whites only in the pre-independent Namibia is situated in Windhoek, the capital city of Namibia. The school is located in one of the affluent serene residential areas in the city. School A is over one hundred years old.

School A has not only been identified as a school that has been excelling in grade seven examinations with above average performance in all subjects but was recently recognized as one of the best performing primary schools academically in the country. Several certificates of School A's achievement in various subjects over the years were publicly displayed on the reception and administration office walls. This caught the researchers' attention the instant the researcher walked into the administration office of the school. The researcher noticed that the school had been recognized nationally for above average achievement in majority of the subjects, including Mathematics and English. School A had also been acknowledged internationally by conquesta Olympiad, an international academic organization founded in South Africa, for its excellent performances in various subjects. Therefore apart from the above average performance in the grade seven examinations, the school has been awarded gold (70-75%) diamond (76-84%) and platinum (85-100%) which is the best award from conquest recognition in the various subjects from the year 2005 up to date.

From the observations made, the school covers a wide area of land and as such the compound is spacious. The school was well equipped with learning facilities and buildings. Even though the school is over a century old, the buildings are in perfect condition and not dilapidated. The buildings and facilities observed included resource center which was equipped with computers and internet, school library, four storey classroom buildings, computer and science laboratories, staffroom, administrative building (which had offices for the principal, deputy principal and the secretaries), sickbay, a school bus, a large play ground, football pitch, netball pitch, a basketball and a tennis court and a gymnasium hall. The school also has a pre-primary school section.

The school had a learner population of seven hundred and twenty learners and thirty five teachers. The researcher also noticed that the school had learners, teachers, and administrators from different races, a few whites, several coloreds but majority of the staff and learners were black. This was a possible indicator that the learners come from diverse cultural backgrounds.

There was notable seriousness amongst learners and teachers in the school. The researcher noticed that when the classes were ongoing learners were in the classrooms and not loitering in the compound. Some of the teachers who were not in the classrooms looked busy in the resource center. Very few teachers were in the staffroom and they also seemed to be occupied for example some were busy marking learners' exercise books.

When the one o'clock bell rang, the researcher noticed that several learners, teachers and the principal stayed behind while some left for their homes. The researcher

saw learners forming several small groups under tree shades and some in classrooms and seemed to be taking instruction from teachers.

As for the learners who left for their homes at one o'clock, the researcher noticed that none of them took the school bus as it remained parked in the yard. The researcher observed that most learners were picked from school by their parents or guardians in vehicles, a handful however took taxis across the road from their school. This was important because it was a possible indication of the socio-economic background from which the learners in this school come from.

From this school the researcher was able to interview all the individuals sampled to participate in the study. This included the principal, four teachers and the school board chairperson who has held the position for three years.

Table 1

Demographics and profiles of teachers and principal of primary school A

Age (yrs)	Male respondents	Female respondents	Academic qualification	Teaching experience	Position held in the school
25-29		1	Degree	5years	Teacher
30-34		1	Diploma	7years	Teacher
35-39	1		Diploma	10years	HOD
40-44	1		Diploma	17years	HOD
45&over	1		Diploma	23years	principal

School A had both male and female participants who were experienced teachers basing on the years of teaching experience. Majority of the participants were holders of Diploma in education however the youngest participant had a degree in education.

4.1.1.2 School B

School B is a private primary school located within the Central Business District of Windhoek city. School B was established twelve years ago.

School B has been recognized for its excellent performance for the past five years which happen to be five of the six occasions that the grade seven learners have taken examinations since the schools' establishment. School B also publicly displayed certificates of achievements in the administration offices. Grade seven learners have in the last five years performed above averagely on all the subjects, with the least performance often in Mathematics and English. Also a member of conquesta Olympiad for the last seven years, school B has managed to receive platinum awards for subjects like social studies and science, gold and diamond awards for the other subjects.

Situated in the city center, school B is constructed on a small piece of land. The buildings, mainly two to three storeys are built close to each other and therefore school B is not spacious. The buildings and learning facilities that were identified include a library which was stocked with books, computer laboratory equipped with computers and internet. The school had an administrative block with offices for the school director, principal, deputy principal, secretary and the reception area. The researcher also saw a staffroom, several classrooms and halls which were furnished with chairs, desks,

swimming pool, a gymnasium hall and a kitchen. The school's basket ball court also serves as a playground for the learners. The school has a pre-primary section.

School B had twenty one teachers, five hundred and twenty five learners and administrative and support staff. The researcher noticed that the school had learners, teachers, and administrators from different races, a few whites, several coloreds but majority of the staff and learners were black. This was a possible indicator that the learners came from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The researcher observed that even though the school was enclosed to avert distraction from outside activities, there was a lot of noise and loud music from the nearby shops and from the vehicles which moved on the roads next to the school.

Despite the chaotic situation outside the school compound, there seemed to be seriousness amongst learners and teachers in the school. The researcher noticed that when the classes were ongoing learners were in the classrooms and not loitering in the compound and the teachers seemed to be busy as well.

The researcher noticed that none of the learners left the school compound at one o'clock instead learners took their meals within the compound and settled back to their classrooms. There were learning activities going on after one o'clock. Learners and teachers left the school for their homes after four o'clock.

The researcher noticed that majority of the learners were picked from school in vehicles by parents or guardians. A few others picked taxis by the roadside adjacent to the school. This was important because it was a possible indication of the socio-economic background from which the learners in this school come from.

From school B, the researcher was able to interview the principal, four teachers and the school board chairperson who has held the position for four years.

Table 2

Demographics and profiles of teachers and principal of primary school B

Age (yrs)	Male respondents	Female respondents	Academic qualification	Teaching experience	Position held in the school
25-29		1	Degree	6 years	Teacher
30-34	2		Degrees	9 &10 yrs	Teacher and HOD
35-39					
40-44	1		Degree	21 years	HOD
45&over		1	Degree	26 years	principal

School B had both male and female participants. School B the participants' were also experienced teachers. Unlike school A all the participants were holders of degrees in education.

4.1.1.3 School C

School C is located in one of the middle class townships on the outskirts of Windhoek city. The school was established twenty two years ago.

School C has been performing averagely on most subjects in the grade seven examinations however the performance in Mathematics and English is still below average. The researcher noticed few certificates of achievement on public display on the walls of the administration building. There was no evidence of the school taking part in any international examinations for example by Conquesta Olympiad like schools A and B.

School C is built on a large piece of land hence the buildings in the compound are adequately spaced. The classrooms looked old and most of their windowpanes were either missing or shattered. The school had an administration building which housed the offices for the principal, deputy principal and the secretary. The researcher noticed that there was no staffroom or common room for the teachers instead teachers had their working desks inside classrooms. The school also has a library. Most of the books looked old, some were torn and others worn out. The school also had a few computers and no internet. Finally the researcher noticed a soccer field, netball pitch, a basket ball court and a school bus.

School C had twenty eight teachers, six hundred and eighty learners and administrative and support staff. The researcher noticed that the school had learners, teachers, and administrators from different races, several coloreds but majority of the staff and learners were black. This was a possible indicator that the learners came from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The researcher observed little learning activities going on beyond the official school hours. There were three classrooms that had very few learners with teachers

giving instruction and a few teachers remained in the school compound but did not attend to the learners.

As for the learners who left at one o'clock, the researcher noticed that a few learners were picked from school in vehicles by their parents or guardians; some took taxis while others used the school bus. The researcher also observed that a number of learners walked home in groups. This was important because it was a possible indication of the socio-economic background from which the learners in this school come from. From this school the researcher was able to interview the principal and three teachers.

Table 3

Demographics and profiles of teachers and principal of primary school C

Age (yrs)	Male respondents	Female respondents	Academic qualification	Teaching experience	Position held in the school
25-29					
30-34	1		Diploma	10 years	teacher
35-39		1	Diploma	17 years	teacher
40-44	1		Diploma	18 years	HOD
45& over	1		Diploma	24 years	Principal

School C had both male and female participants. The participants were holder of Diplomas in education and had several year of teaching experience.

4.1.1.4 School D

School D is located in one of the poorest townships of Windhoek city. The school was established fourteen years ago.

School D's performance for the past five years has been below average with the poorest performance in English and Mathematics. There were no certificates of academic achievement on public display.

The researcher noticed that the school's neighborhood was full of activities from the community members. For instance there was a taxi rank across the school and thus there was a lot of noise emitted by the taxis. There were small food shops along the road which helped the community members obtain what would otherwise be found in the supermarkets in the city. Adjacent to the school, the researcher also observed groups of construction and manual workers buying cooked food mainly roast meat. These activities resulted to loud noise which could be clearly heard within the school compound. The activities were also observable from inside the school compound since it was not enclosed.

School D had a population of six hundred and thirty learners and eighteen teachers. Majority of the learners were black and a few colored. No white learners were observed in the school compound. This was a possible indicator that the learners came from diverse cultural.

All the learners left the school compound at one o'clock and there were no learning activities taking place in School D beyond the official school hours. The school

principal and a few teachers stayed behind and seemed to be occupied with some work, for example, the researcher saw some teachers marking books.

The researcher noticed that most learners left the school compound and walked in various directions in groups. A few learners took taxis from school. To the researcher, this was possible indication that the learners came from different socio-economic backgrounds.

From this school the researcher was able to interview the principal, three teachers and the school board chairperson who has held the position for the last two years.

Table4

Demographics and profiles of teachers and principal of primary school D

Age (yrs)	Male respondents	Female respondents	Academic qualification	teaching experience	Position held in the school
25-29					
30-34	1	1	Diplomas	10 & 12yrs	teachers
35-39		1	Diploma	15 years	HOD
40-44	1		Diploma	21 years	principal

Participants' in school D were both male and female and were holders of diplomas in education. The participants had over ten years of teaching experience.

4.1.1.5 School E

School E was established eleven years ago and is situated in one of the poorest townships in Windhoek city. The school is located in a noisy environment packed with activities from the community members. For instance there were several small businesses going on outside the school compound. Taxis and other vehicles on the road nearby the school emitted loud noise. The school compound was not enclosed and therefore the classrooms were exposed to activities that were going on in the neighborhood.

School E has been performing poorly with below average performance in most subjects for the past five years. The researcher also noticed that there were no certificates of achievement displayed publicly.

School E is very spacious since it has few buildings on a large piece of land. The buildings observed included classrooms which had desks, tables and chairs for learners. An administration building that housed the principal's office, the secretary's office and the reception area, a staffroom and a bookstore. There were no facilities like a library, laboratories, computers for learners, internet, soccer field, school bus, and a pre-primary section.

School E had a population of four hundred and twenty learners and seventeen teachers. Most of the learners were black and very few were colored. No white learners were spotted in the compound. This was a possible indicator that the learners came from almost similar cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

The researcher observed a carefree demeanor amongst the learners during their stay in the school. For example most learners did not respond to the bells promptly, some walked all over the compound in between lessons. Most learners were not well groomed, for example most male learners walked with their shirts not tucked in. Unattended class rooms were noisy and learners took interest on activities taking place outside the school compound. The researcher also observed that teachers did not seem to be concerned with the learners demeanor mentioned above. For example, the researcher saw teachers pass by a noisy classroom which was unattended by a teacher without taking any initiative to stop the noise making.

The researcher noticed that all the learners left the school compound at one o'clock. All the teachers also left the compound shortly after the learners and there were no any learning activities taking place beyond the official school hours.

Majority of the learners left the school compound in large groups and walked in different directions to their homes. A few however took taxis to their homes. The researcher did not see any learners being picked up by private means from school. The above are possible indication of the socio-economic background that most of the learners in school E come from.

From this school, the researcher was only able to interview two teachers. The principal and the board chairperson were unavailable for the interview.

Table 5**Demographics and profiles of teachers of primary school E**

Age (yrs)	Male respondents	Female respondents	Academic qualification	Teaching experience	Position held in the school
<hr/>					
25-29					
30-34	1		Diploma	12yrs	teacher
35-39	1		Diploma	15 years	HOD

The participants from school E were both male and holders of Diplomas in education. They both had over ten years of teaching experience.

4.1.2 School inspectors' profiles

Two inspectors of schools were sampled out for this study. The first respondent was a 51 year old lady who holds a Bachelor of Education degree. She taught in primary schools for sixteen years before her appointment to the inspectorate. She has been a school inspector for the past 9 years.

The second respondent was a 44 year old man, holder of Diploma in education and with six years experience as an inspector of schools. He is also a former teacher with over ten years of teaching experience.

4.2 Teachers and principals' views on being held accountable for their learners' performance

Research question 1: What are the views of primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region towards being held accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners?

4.2. 1Taking responsibility for the performance of learners

PBA is an area yet to be explored in Namibia's education and as such it was important for the researcher to understand how acquainted teachers and principals were with accountability as a term and issues related to accountability in education. Both teachers and principals were asked how they would define Performance-Based Accountability in education. Some of the participants responded as follows;

A teacher at school A: "Taking responsibility of my learners' performance."

A teacher at school D: "Being punished if my learners perform poorly in their examinations."

A teacher at school C: "explaining why my learners performed poorly."

A teacher at school B: "being demoted or transferred if the learners do not perform well."

The principal of school A described PBA in education as follows:

In my opinion PBA in education is taking responsibility for my performance. Why do I say my performance and not the learners' performance? Because I believe that the learners' performance is a reflection of the teachers' performance in class. If teachers

teach well in class, learners are likely to perform well. Of course there are other issues like availability of learning materials and resources but all these may not be of any use if the teacher is not well prepared to teach the lesson.

The principal of school B indicated that “PBA in education is basically us educators taking responsibility of our performance which is portrayed by the performance of our learners.”

It was evident from the responses that most of the teachers and principals interviewed had minimal knowledge of what Performance-Based Accountability in education is or entails. While the participants had an idea of what accountability in education is; they were not clear on what exactly Performance-Based Accountability in education is. For instance, the researcher noticed that the participants’ definitions of PBA mostly denoted the negative connotation of sanctioning that accountability has always been associated with. Most participants defined PBA in terms of some punitive action being taken if the learners performed poorly. None of the participants mentioned taking responsibility for excellent performance. In essence they believed that PBA in education was only one sided and they associated it with being penalized for poor performance of the learners. This finding is contrary to what the literature has regarding PBA in education because the literature states that Performance-Based Accountability has an incentives component that includes both rewards and sanctions hence PBAS is not only castigatory as the participants perceived it to be, it has its positive side too.

The researcher noticed that the lack of clear understanding of what PBA in education exactly is negatively affected how the respondents viewed PBA in education. The researcher tried to solicit further responses through probing the respondents by

asking for example how they would feel if they were to be rewarded for their learners excellent performance, just like being penalized for their learners continuous poor performance. All the participating teachers and principals stated that they would be happy to receive the rewards and recognition for their hard work through their learners' performance. A few however added that for them regardless of the rewards, all that motivated them was their learners' excellent performance. The researcher thus noticed a difference in the participants' perceptions towards PBA in education when the reward aspect was mentioned.

The researcher also noticed that the participants in a way felt responsible for the learners' performance since they stated their understanding of PBA in relation to how the learners performed. For instance a teacher in school B stated his understanding of what a PBA in education as, "being demoted or transferred if the learners failed to perform well in the examinations." The participants therefore connected PBA in education with the learners' performance which is imperative in any PBAS.

The researcher however noticed that the manner in which the participants perceived taking responsibility for their learners differed. As discussed earlier, Gariepy et al. (2009) were of the opinion that the manner in which individuals viewed PBA in education mattered a great deal as it portrayed whether the individuals felt a sense of intrinsic or extrinsic accountability. Most of the responding teachers had a sense of extrinsic accountability which meant that they described the demands of PBAS as being enforced on them. Only the two principals of schools A and B portrayed a sense of intrinsic accountability from their points of view of PBA in education. They viewed

PBA in education as taking responsibility for their performance which is evaluated through their learners' performance. While the principals' point is that teachers should measure their achievement through learners' performance, some participants (nine teachers, and a principal) described PBA as taking responsibility for the performance of the learners, they somehow distanced themselves from the achievement of the learners. Whether intrinsic or extrinsic accountability, there was a unanimous agreement in most of the respondents understanding and definition of PBA in education as taking responsibility for the learning outcomes.

4.3 Performance-Based Accountability in education and learning achievements

As discussed in the first and second chapter, countries like the USA, UK, and Australia that have introduced PBAS in their education systems have seen improved performance by learners. The researcher thus tried to understand the participants' views regarding how the presence of a PBAP or PBAS in the education system was likely to impact on the learning achievements.

4.3.1 Performance-Based Accountability and improved learning achievements

Participants were asked about their feelings regarding how the implementation of a PBAS in the education system could impact on the learning outcomes. Their responses indicated that PBA could impact both positively and negatively on the learning outcomes. According to their responses the following are factors likely to contribute to

positive changes and consequently improved learning achievements if a PBA was to be implemented in Namibia's education system.

4.3.1.1 Improved classroom instruction

Four principals and ten teachers stated that if teachers were to be held accountable for the performance of their learners, there was likely to be an improved performance since in their opinion teachers would start to pay more attention to their teaching strategies to help improve the learners' performance.

According to the principal of school A:

Teachers and principals will know that their effectiveness is being judged through their learners' performance and I believe they will put more effort in how they present the lessons. For example the lazy teachers who do not prepare teaching aid like print outs, charts, diagrams, real objects to ease the learning process may be forced to do so, and learners will benefit from such.

A school B teacher:

What I would do differently from what I do now would probably be testing learners at the end of each lesson or topic to see how much they have learned because I would like them to perform well so that I can also avoid any penalty if they perform poorly.

On further probing the responding teacher in school B stated that as it was, he was not keen on assessing how much each learner learned at the end of each lesson.

According to him, all he does is teach to complete the syllabus on schedule.

A teacher at school D: "I would try to find out areas that my learners experience difficulties and teach again and again until I see better results..."

The participants thus stated that with the presence of a PBA in the education system, learning achievements was likely to improve because of the following possible changes in the classroom; focusing more on the syllabi, teaching more using text books, teaching aid, testing learners frequently, using group discussions, identifying and re-teaching areas that learners experience weaknesses amongst others.

4.3.1.2 Individual attention to the learners

Nine teachers stated that PBA in the education system is likely to improve learning outcomes through improved individual attention to the learners' classroom instructional needs. They said they would pay extra attention to the weaker learners so that the subject grades do not get affected. For example they stated that in the classrooms they would give individual attention to all learners and not assume that all the learners had understood what was being taught, and this they mentioned they would achieve by testing the learners at the end of each learning session by giving oral or written tests, asking learners to demonstrate or describe what had been taught at the end of the lesson.

4.3.1.3 Reduced teacher absenteeism

All the four principals of the different schools mentioned teachers being absent from school regularly as being one of the factors affecting how the learners perform. The principals of schools, C and D complained that some teachers always stayed away from school for one reason or the other to the extent that some teachers have been labeled

“chronic absentees” for staying away from school for lengthy periods. For example, principal of school C had the following to say “Some of the teachers take lengthy periods away from school for reasons like false sick leave, attending funerals of one relative after another at the expense of the learners’ time.”

A teacher at school E:

If PBA is introduced in our system then the teachers who always have a reason or two to be away will be caught up with because their learners’ performance will speak out loud, so they will either have to quit teaching, face the penalties or try to be in school more often and take care of their learners.

A teacher at school D said, “we will have to give the learners our best, attend all the classes without failure, because as it is now many teachers stay away from classes unnecessarily”.

The principal of school D on the other hand pointed out that several teachers have their own private businesses which help to supplement their income given that teachers’ pay is not lucrative, however according to him, some of the teachers seem to have misplaced priorities since they tend to be absent from school to take care of their businesses. In his opinion it was unfair for the learners to be left unattended by teachers who use official work hours to tend to their personal businesses. The principal of school D was of the opinion that learners achievement would improve if teachers were to be held accountable for their learners’ performance because he believed that to void any sanctions, teachers would be keen on their learners’ performance and that would include being present to teach all their lessons.

The researcher noticed that the participants mentioned these changes that they would most likely put in practice if PBA was to be introduced in Namibia's education with the penalizing aspect of PBAS in mind. In most of their statements, the reason for changing their instructional behavior was for the learners to improve their performance. In their minds the ultimate goal was to avoid sanctions rather than reap the rewards associated with the incentives aspect of a PBAS.

4.3.2 Performance-Based Accountability and negative outcomes on learning achievements

While, majority of the participants pointed out on the possibility of improved learners performance with the implementation of PBA in Namibia's education system, three teachers differed in their opinions. They mentioned some of the following possible reasons for learners' performance to worsen if PBA was to be introduced in the system.

4.3.2.1 Teacher demoralization

The teachers' responses indicated that teachers would be demoralized with the introduction of PBA and that alone would be a possible reason for learners to perform poorly. The researcher noticed that the teachers based their reasoning on the sanctioning component of PBAS which in their opinion was likely to demoralize the teachers whose learners continued to perform poorly. For example, two teachers argued as follows:

A teacher at school E:

I will not be happy going to work knowing that if the learners failed to perform well then I would be the one to take the blame. If I am not happy then how can I give my best to my learners? I think they will suffer from my bad moods and may not perform well.

A teacher at school D:

There are many reasons why learners perform poorly and it will be so unfair for me to be blamed if the learners do not excel. If I am penalized and I know I tried my best I will not be happy to go to class and teach and I believe that will have negative consequences to the learners.

4.3.2.2 Teacher attrition

Attrition is the rate at which teachers transfer from schools especially those categorized as poor performing or quit the teaching profession (Jackson, 2008). The researcher noticed that some of the teachers' views pointed towards attrition as possibly contributing to the reasons why the learning outcomes could be affected negatively with the introduction of a PBAS in Namibia's education system.

A teacher at school E:

...I will then prefer to move to better performing schools because my school has not been performing well and that is due to so many reasons, we lack basic learning resources unlike some schools, I will prefer to teach in a well resourced school because they have the necessary learning facilities and I believe they even have learners who are disciplined and learn with ease otherwise I will be in trouble here... but what will happen if no one wants to teach in poor performing schools? The learners will even suffer some more.

A teacher at school B: “If my learners do not perform well because I am demoralized within this profession then I would rather quit and venture into something else because I will not take the blame for what is clearly not my fault.”

According to a teacher at school D; “we are already demoralized even now so holding us accountable may make us look for other jobs which could be more rewarding.”

A teacher at school A:

I will be honest with you; many teachers including myself became teachers in state schools because of the security it offers. Once employed there are no worries about losing it but if PBA destabilizes this security our jobs have been offering then I know a number of teachers may resign and look for other jobs.

Their responses therefore indicated that if teachers are unable to take the pressure by PBAP to improve the performance of their learners then there is possibility that those who cannot take the pressure would leave the teaching profession. That would affect learners’ performance negatively because with few teachers, the teacher learner ratios would increase and learners would be disadvantaged. Hannaway and Hamilton (2008) however argued that it was better to have fewer but committed teachers who enrich learners’ lives by giving quality classroom instructions than having many teachers who are lazy, lack commitment and enthusiasm for their work and whose presence in schools is likely to be more destructive than value adding to learners.

4.3.2.3 Goal displacement

The aspect of goal displacement was also discussed in chapter two and according to Julnes (2006) it is the inclination of individuals to intentionally alter their actions in areas that are being measured so as to improve the ratings of their performance. The

researcher observed that the teachers' responses also pointed towards goal displacement through behavioral changes. For instance, some of their views are stated as follows:

A teacher at school D:

If too much emphasis is put on results then both teachers and learners may come up with means of survival to avoid being punished. If learners know they will be punished if they fail, they may decide to cheat in examinations, even teachers may want to "help" learners pass the examinations. Bottom line is learners will pass by scoring highly but not actual learning will be taking place.

A teacher at school A said; "We should not concentrate too much on the results, there is a lot of learning that takes place, some of which examinations can never be able to test."

According to a teacher at school D; "If we focus a lot on the results then I may be tempted to teach them what is to be tested so we will end up with learners who score highly but cannot apply what they learn when necessary".

These participants' views therefore concurred with Julnes (2006) warning that concentrating too much on results could trigger wrong practices that could lead to destroying learning programs rather than producing desirable outcomes.

4.3.3 Programs for below average performing learners

The participants were asked about the existence of achievement gaps in their subjects and about any programs they have in place to help close the achievement gaps between the low and high achieving learners in their schools. All participating teachers acknowledged the fact that their learners score differently in the subjects that they teach. What was evident though was the range of the performance gap that existed amongst

learners in the different subjects. According to the principal of school A, learners' performance varied in the various subjects. However in his opinion, most above average performers do not experience difficulties in most subjects compared to average and below average performers.

From the learners scores records presented to the researcher by the participating teachers from the different schools, the researcher noticed that the patterns on how learners scored in the different subjects were predictable. The researcher identified Mathematics and English as subjects that really posed challenges to learners and had the widest achievement gaps amongst the learners. The researcher noted that learners' performance in Social studies was above average and was a subject which had no obvious achievement gaps in the scores. In natural science, learners from the different schools performed averagely and the difference between the highest and the lowest scores by learners in the various schools was narrow.

Some participants responded as follows regarding the achievement gaps in their subjects:

A teacher at school A:

In last year's end of term examinations, the best learner scored 78% which is very good because it is way above average, the weakest scored 34%. The difference is big, but I believe English is a problem nationwide. For this particular learner and many others I will blame it on Afrikaans language. There is too much use of Afrikaans in these areas, even right here in the school.

A teacher at school B:

I teach Mathematics and it is a subject that most learners in this school do not like because of their negative attitude and so I always have a big difference on how my learners score. In the

third term examinations the best had 74% and the worst had 40%... sometimes the lowest even gets 20%. This subject needs total commitment from learners, if learners are given homework they have to do them, they have to practice but I see some of these learners are not motivated, they just don't care.

All the four teachers of English and four teachers of Mathematics had the same opinion which was that there exists a large gap in how their learners perform. In general the teachers concurred that the performance in Mathematics is below average while English is average to below average.

Teachers of English indicated that learners who mainly used Afrikaans and vernacular languages back at home were the most affected and hence tended to score poorly in English subject. They also stated that learners who used English as the language for communication back at their homes had better advantage over those who use Afrikaans and vernacular speaking ones because all they have to do is put extra work in correcting grammatical errors.

Some teachers blamed fellow teachers for the low achievement in English subject. Two teachers, from school D and one from school E stated that teachers made no effort to help the learners improve their command in English as a language since some of the teachers had tendencies of switching to Afrikaans or vernaculars in the hope that their learners would better understand what was being taught. The principal of school D pointed out that most teachers themselves could barely communicate fluently in English; he thus noted that there was need for an intervention in teacher preparation programs so that all the teachers could master English language before being recruited to teach in primary schools. The principal asserted that English is not only Namibia's

national language but also the instructional language for almost all subjects taught in primary schools therefore he felt that learners were greatly affected by the fact that most of their teachers lacked command in the language.

The teachers of English also indicated that learners who attend pre-primary school had an initial advantage when starting primary school than those who never went to pre-primary since they tended to have a better learning foundation.

Mathematics teachers indicated that the learners input in the subject mattered a great deal and making teachers to be accountable for the learners' performance in such a subject would not be of great help in improving the subject grades. They also advised that the learners too had to change the negative attitude they have for the subject by being motivated and also being ready to work hard in the subject by frequent exercising and completing any homework.

4.3.3.1 Individual attention in the mainstream classes

Some respondents stated that once they acknowledge the fact that some learners are lagging behind they try and act promptly to avoid academic back log amongst the learners. The participants referred to the slow learners as those who could still benefit from main stream learning and those who could not. The respondents said that learners with milder forms of learning needs remain in the regular classes but are given extra attention in the form of individual attention.

Participants mainly from school A and B mentioned that in the process of teaching they try as much as they can to involve the slow learners by encouraging them

to participate in what is being taught. For example, the Mathematics teachers mentioned that they try to involve the learners in solving mathematical problems and not letting them take a back seat. Some participants mentioned that they would give homework and assess the weaker learners' performance daily. Two teachers said they work with the weaker learners at their pace which is always slower than the rest of the other learners.

The participants recognize that their learners do not have the same ability in grasping what is taught in class and thus they do not overlook this fact, rather they treat learners as individuals and grant them attention in the classroom as individuals.

4.3.3.2 Extra classes

Apart from school D and E participants from the other schools noted that they have extra teaching and learning programs which run beyond the official school hours to help the low learners or those with severe learning problems who have accumulated a severe academic back log to catch up with the rest of the learners in various subjects. They responded as follows:

Principal of school B: "My school has afternoon programs for all the learners. All the learners have to pay for this extra service which is included in the monthly fee because it is extra coaching and goes beyond the official school hours."

Principal of school A:

The afternoon classes offer extra tuition for the weaker learners and unlike some schools, we do not make our learners to pay any extra money, it's because if they were made to pay then some learners who really need the tuition in the various subjects would not benefit because some would

not be able to afford the extra fee. So it is free and compulsory for the learners who have been identified to need extra tuition.

A teacher at school C:

For those learners who do not perform well because they are playful or just lazy, we know their capability so in such cases we organize afternoon sessions to teach say a topic or section that is giving them problems. So we use variety of methods to try and help them catch up in such sessions.

4.3.3.3 Special classes

The participants indicated that slow and intellectually challenged learners or those with severe learning problems who have been unable to meet basic competencies in various subjects, and have already repeated once in the particular phase are enrolled in special classes which require special teachers to give them special lessons. According to the principal of school A, the special classes are for learners who have been unable to benefit from mainstream learning. He indicated that rather than transferring them to the next grades without having achieved basic competencies of the particular grades, extra caution is taken by enrolling them in the special classes in which they are given extra attention by teachers who use different or special teaching materials and teaching aids to help learners grasp what they felt was difficult to understand when taught in the main stream classes.

4.3.3.4 Remedial education

Participants stated that some learners' intellectual capability is affected by things beyond their control and are unable to benefit from the mainstream education. Some examples include the hearing and visually impaired learners, learners with psychological or emotional problems amongst others. Once such learners are identified, they are placed under the care of specially trained teachers who handle various special cases that affect such learners as they cannot benefit from the conventional learning.

The researcher noticed that the schools A and B whose academic performance was above average and School C whose performance was average had gone an extra mile to introduce extra learning programs for the below average performing learners to help them catch up with the other learners. The schools offered these programs mostly after the official school hours which end at one o'clock. The researcher however was alarmed by the fact that the below average performing schools D and E whose learners were in dire need for such extra tuition programs to improve learning achievements did not have any programs after one o'clock.

While schools B and C charged for the extra tuition fee, school A offered the tuition free of charge. A teacher in school E and the principal of school D indicated that teachers were not ready to spend their time to give afternoon classes without being given extra cash and parents on the other hand were reluctant and not cooperative with the idea of paying extra money for their children. They stated that some parents could not afford to pay the extra cash, while others insisted that primary education should be free.

4.4 Examinations in primary education

The participating teachers and principals were asked about the nature of examinations they give the learners. The teachers and principals stated that their learners sit for ordinary examinations which are set by their subject teachers and also marked and scored by the same teachers on regular basis. This implied that the only time their learners get exposed to a standardized external examination is when the grade ten learners sit for the grade ten examinations which marks the end of junior secondary education and qualifies the learners to join senior secondary depending on their performance in the examinations. According to Marope (2005) this practice denies the learners a chance for any early interventions due to the fact that any learning weakness that could have been detected if an external examination been introduced earlier would go unnoticed.

The Science, Mathematics and Social studies teachers further described the examinations as being mainly of being questions which are responded to by multiple choice answers. As for teachers of English, the participants said they rarely used multiple choice questions but rather used questions that demand the learners to respond by filling in answers.

An important aspect of examinations that the researcher noted while conducting literature review was that PBAS in education requires examinations to have an impact on individuals and not just be the regular examinations which have no consequences attached. Such examinations that have implications on individuals are called high stake examinations because they are not regular examinations and the results of the

examinations have consequences or implications for both the learners and the teachers (Elmore, 2002). It was therefore important for the researcher to understand how teachers felt about the use of high stake examinations in primary education.

The participants from the state schools A, C, D and E pointed out that the examinations offered within their schools are not high stake because there are little or no consequences attached to the performance of both teachers and the learners. For instance teachers teaching in the four state-owned schools said that learners are often transferred to the next grades even without having achieved basic competencies of the particular grade and teachers retain their positions in the schools regardless of how poorly the learners perform.

Teachers from the private school B however, asserted that the examinations they give are of high stake especially to them because how the learners perform in the examinations has a great impact not only on the positions they hold in the school but also in their job security. The principal of school B said:

One advantage of privately run schools is being able to recruit the teachers we feel are the best for the jobs, we also pay them well so the teachers have a contract to teach the learners in their various subjects and if learners are not performing well in particular subject we take action, sometimes the teachers are transferred from the upper grades to teach lower grades. In extreme cases the teachers' contracts are not renewed, some are even fired depending on how bad their cases are, so here we take everything seriously and examinations mean a lot especially to the teachers.

The principal of school B also indicated that parents demand a lot from the teachers since most school B's parents' target is to enroll their children in the secondary

schools which excel and according to the principal, such secondary schools do not admit just any learners but those who meet the schools expectations hence teachers in school B have to work extra hard to satisfy the parents expectations. In school B all examinations offered are of high stake since there are consequences attached to the learners' performances in all the examinations.

4.4.1 Standardized testing in primary education

Participants were asked their opinions concerning the use of standardized examinations to assess learners and in essence assess teachers through learners' performance. Standardized examinations are examinations that are administered and scored in a consistent manner. For example, all learners within a country, region or state sit for papers that ask similar questions, at the same time and with consistent scoring procedure (Goertz et al., 2001). The researcher needed to understand how the participants felt about the use of standardized examinations which often come in the form of multiple choice answers to evaluate learners. The researcher noticed discrepancies in the participants' responses and thus categorized their responses as those who proposed or opposed the use of standardized examinations in primary school education.

4.4.1.1 Proponents of standardized tests and examinations in primary education

Three principals and eleven teachers felt that learners should sit for standardized examinations because the conditions of standardized examinations are fair to the learners and also the teachers. For instance, the principal of school A said:

I cannot think of any other type of examinations that these learners can be given other than the multiple choice ones. It is easier to administer in large scale, mark and score; if the answer is correct, there is no doubt...it is fair unlike the fill in type of questions or essays.

His views were echoed by the other teachers. At the heart of their argument was the fact that standardized examinations are fair to the learners and reduces incidents of biasness on the teachers' side. They also said, it was easier to mark and score as each question was given equal weight. The participants also mentioned time saving and saving resources like answering sheets as reasons why standardized examinations should be offered in primary schools.

A teacher at school A said:

Filling in or constructing answers will be a big challenge to the learners because overall performance in English is still poor, I think it will be hard for them to write proper sentences this may disadvantage learners and teachers will have it rough marking the answer sheets.

Penfield and Lee (2010) share similar opinion with the school A teacher regarding non standardized examinations which they also call performance assessments. They argue that regardless of the academic value that non standardized examinations may bring along, non standardized tests are costly and time consuming to be implemented on a large scale. They further state that performance assessments are

problematic where there is no proper mastery of English because the tests tend to rely heavily on the learners ability to read and write. Hence they advocate for the standardized tests like multiple choice test in this regard.

4.4.1.2 Opponents of standardized tests and examinations in primary education

One principal and five teachers were of the opinion that non standardized examinations should be used in examinations as they provide learners with better chances of improving their performance than the standardized examinations which are mainly in form of multiple choice answers. The researcher categorized their arguments as follows:

4.4.1.2.1 Low learning achievements

The participants argued that the multiple choice examinations lower learners' achievement due to the fact that they are not challenging and expressive. A teacher at school D said:

sometimes weaker learners perform better not because they worked hard but maybe luck was on their side,...multiple choice answers may favor some people because some end up guessing the right choices, but that doesn't mean they understood what the question was asking.

A teacher at school B: "A learner, who fills in the right answer using the right spelling, stands a better chance of learning than one who simply picks an answer out of choices given because they look familiar."

A teacher at school C: “multiple choice examinations confuse some learners, especially when they see familiar answers which the examiners include intentionally to confuse them.”

Principal of school B:

multiple choice answers are not challenging to learners, and the brain is not stimulated to think beyond what has been given as the possible answers, essays and the fill in questions allow learners think out of the box, express themselves, and also to practice what was taught. Also in reality, outside school, no one gives you four, five or more options to pick from in a situation instead one has to act in the most suitable way depending on the situation because if one makes a mistake it may haunt you for a life time. So by giving multiple choice questions we are not allowing learners to think and act like in reality.

The principal’s sentiments on the unreal nature of standardized particularly multiple choice answers was also acknowledged by Stetcher (2010) who noted that opponents of standardized examinations always argue that the fixed set of responses which are already predetermined as in the case of multiple choice answers, true or false or even matching tests do not portray the true nature of performance in the real world since the real world rarely presents people with structured choices. In essence this means that in real world one has to make choices without any help from predetermined options thus in their opinion standardized examinations are in authentic.

The participants opposing use of standardized examinations argument was that multiple choice examinations do not encourage learners to challenge themselves beyond what is given as choices and some end up passing the examinations out of sheer luck and so passing the examinations does not really mean that there is any learning taking place.

They suggested the use of non standardized examinations such as essays, and filling in answers or working out by the learners themselves to help stimulate the brain and challenge the learners to think harder and improve the learning achievements. However they warned that non standardized examinations would mean more work for the teachers since they acknowledged that the multiple choice questions are easy to mark, score and grade.

4.4.1.2.2 Non-cognitive aspect of learning

The principal of school B pointed out that multiple choice answers in standardized examinations only measure the cognitive aspects of learning such as content knowledge, facts or skills taught by subject teachers within the syllabi. She argued that learners learn much more than what is in the text books or designed by the syllabi as to be learnt and which can never be tested because the standardized examinations cannot test. She mentioned that achievement of non-cognitive aspects of learning like creativity, ability to make sound judgments, critical thinking, problem solving skills amongst others are often overlooked because the type of examinations done do not give room for evaluation of such aspects which she noted are vital for survival out of school. She said:

Some of these learners may not go beyond grade seven, if they drop out for whatever reasons , what will help them make it out there will be survival skills, for example being creative or innovative. Of late learners are inquisitive and do not just take in anything given to them by the teachers. Some challenge us and I believe that such skills are important for survival however the

examinations only test for what is taught in class and any learning out of the classroom is overlooked.

The principals of school C and B concurred that there is a lot of learning that takes place, some of which standardized examinations or tests cannot evaluate. For instance, he mentioned debating skills, creativity, etiquette and discipline, ability to solve day to day problems which are imperative and practical in daily living. Opponents of standardized examinations thus questioned how much learning is achieved by use of multiple choice examinations and what the multiple choice examination overlooks.

4.4.2 Examinations as means of evaluating learning achievements

The participants were asked on their views concerning use of examinations or tests to assess how much learning has been achieved. Three principals and ten teachers stated that they felt examinations were the most suitable way of assessing how much the learners have achieved after a period of time. One teacher said:

I give my learners tests regularly after clearing major topics just to see how much they have grasped. Then judging by how learners perform in the tests, I get to know if learning took place or not. I don't just assume they understood everything and leave it till the end term examinations. Her sentiments were echoed by several other teachers who agreed that examinations were appropriate in determining if learning was taking place or not.

A principal and six teachers however differed in their opinions concerning the role tests and examinations play in the learners' education. They argued that examination is not suitable for evaluating learning achievements. One of them responded:

Examinations only tell part of the story, for example if a learner does not pass the grade seven examinations, it does not mean that the learner is a weak learner because many things affect how these learners perform. For example, an average performing learner can sit for examinations when not feeling well hence sickness or stress can affect how the learner performs in that particular examinations.

A teacher said:

Several factors affect how learners perform in examinations, some may enhance or disadvantage how they perform. Some learners may cheat or receive help in the examinations so will the results portray the actual picture? I don't think so; judging performance basing on a particular examination in my opinion is not conclusive.

The principal of school C mentioned that due to reasons for example teenage pregnancies, frequent absence from school; some learners are affected negatively and end up performing poorly in examinations. He also mentioned that some learners come from abusive families so their performance may waiver depending on events prior to the tests and examinations.

Some participants suggested that learners' performance over the years on homework, projects and tests could give a clearer picture than one major examination. Two participants stated that both the curricular and extracurricular activities in the school should also be used to assess the learners since just like some learners are good in the classroom, others excel in outdoor activities. They gave some examples of successful athletes and sports men and women. In their opinion it was unfair that only class work gets to be assessed through examinations yet learners can still be successful if they excel in extra curricula activities too. In short, they argued that there should be a way of

assessing both class work and other activities that may not take place in classrooms but in the school.

In conclusion, the teachers and the principal who disagreed with the view that examinations and tests were appropriate means of assessing learning achievements asserted that examinations did not give a true picture of the actual learning situation as in the end examinations may favor or not favor some learners and also that extra curricula activities should also be examined to determine learners performance.

4.4.3 Examinations as means of evaluating teacher effectiveness

The participants were asked about their opinions regarding the use of examinations as a means of assessing how effective teachers are in the classrooms. Three principals and four teachers stated that examinations are suitable means for assessing teacher effectiveness while one principal and the twelve teachers from the different schools disagreed with that view. The teachers responded as follows:

A teacher at school E said: "How will they know the learners passed due to my effort as their teacher and not because the learners are just bright? Or failed because they lacked the basic necessities?" A teacher at school A: "No, no, no that will be unfair to the teachers, teachers teach and learners get examined not the other way round." A teacher at school D: "so many things affect how learners perform, so claiming that one is not an effective teacher simply because the learners failed examinations will not be fair to us."

The researcher noticed that most of the teachers concentrated their arguments on poor performance by learners and as such did not welcome the idea of them being

assessed through their learners' performance. However on further probing the researcher realized that the participants' responses differed if the learners performed well. While the teachers did not want to be associated with their learners' poor performance, they had no trouble taking credit for their learners' excellent performance. They mentioned that they take pride in their learners' excellent performance and would have no problem being considered effective teachers simply because their learners excelled in the various subjects that they taught. This thus came out as double standards by the participants wanting to take credit for learners' excellent performance and at the same time distancing themselves from learners' poor performance.

The principals' opinions on the other hand differed. They stated that use of examinations to assess learners is the most appropriate means of assessing how effective teachers are in the classrooms. They responded as follows:

Principal of school D:

Some teachers complain that the school lacks certain resources and that it is why their learners do not excel but what about this example, two teachers in the same school, teaching the same subject, same grade but in different classrooms, however one teacher's learners always excel while the other teacher's learners do not, how can one explain that? In my opinion one teacher is more competent than the other and it is only through examinations that we can identify the competencies amongst teachers.

Principal of school C:

Use of learners' performance in examinations to assess how effective a teacher is for me is the most straight forward way. If one's learners keep on failing the examinations then he or she cannot say that one is being unfair, the results speak for themselves.

These participants unlike those who felt using examinations to evaluate teacher effectiveness would be unfair, were positive of the idea of using examinations to determine teacher effectiveness.

4.5 Holding teachers and principals accountable for learning outcomes

Research question 2: How can primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region be made accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners?

The aim of this question was to draw responses mainly from parents and school inspectors. However it also intended to comprehend the suggestions from both teachers and principals on how they could be made accountable for the performance of their learners because they are the ones who are faced with the task of educating the learners and also the ones to be exposed to the demands of any PBA that could be put in place. The participants' responses were therefore categorized according to their groups (parents, inspectors and teachers and principals) to make analyzing of the data easier.

4.5.1 Parents' views on Performance-Based Accountability in primary education

4.5.1.1 Dissatisfaction with learning achievements

The participating parents were asked how they felt about the performance of their children in the respective schools and the general feelings of the parents they represent, regarding how their children perform in those schools. A parent and also the board chairperson of school A stated that he was happy with the performance of his

child since he had noticed a great improvement from the child's performance in the previous school. He said:

The girl has been performing much better since she was transferred here; I see her spending more time working on her school work at home. I would like to see her perform much better than this because I know she is capable of doing even better. This is one of the best performing primary schools in the country but it does not mean that we should be contented with what the children have achieved... if we can push them to work harder, there is room for improvement.

The parents at school B and D stated that they were not happy with how their children and the school performed generally. The parent at school B said:

This is a private school and we pay a lot of money for these children, even though my child's performance is above average, I would like to see him perform better than this because to get to those secondary schools that perform well in grade ten and twelve is not easy, they have to be top performers if they want to be admitted there.

The parent at school D on the other hand was utterly disappointed with his children's performance and the school's general performance. He said:

I don't know what more we can do, my children's performance is not pleasing at all, the school does not perform well, many parents are held in this situation because they are poor, ...if I was able, I would enroll them in better performing schools.

The parents' general feeling regardless of how their children performed was that they were dissatisfied if not disappointed with their children's and the schools' general performance. Being representatives of the other parents in the school board, they indicated that most parents who are involved with their children's education have been yearning for better performance from both the learners and the teachers.

4.5.1.2 Parents' views on holding teachers and principals accountable for learners' performance

Three parents who were also school board chairpersons in their respective schools were asked to describe actions that should be taken against teachers whose learners' continuously perform poorly in examinations. In essence the researcher was trying to elicit responses from parents on possible ways in which the teachers and principals could be held accountable for the learners' performance.

The parent at school D voiced his concern regarding how poorly the school had been performing and in his opinion, people no longer cared about the dismal performance by learners in the school. He felt that both parents and teachers had to act so that the learners could start getting serious with their work. In his opinion, it was the fact that parents showed little interest in their children's education that largely contributed to poor performance by the learners. He said:

The teachers may not be paying much attention to the learners because the situation is beyond them now. I don't think holding them accountable for the poor performance will help at this particular point because these children are failing due to a combination of issues. For example, very few parents here are concerned with how their children perform. Parents are not cooperative, majority of them don't turn up for parents meetings, they don't care about what goes on in school so how can we make the teachers responsible for what is beyond them?

He felt that sanctioning the already unmotivated teachers could do more damage to the situation than damage control.

The parent at school D asserted that other factors also contribute to learners' performance for example he indicated that the school's location had a lot to do with the learners' performance. He said that the school being located in one of the poorest townships in the city affected learning since its environment was not conducive for effective learning to take place. Secondly, he stated that most parents were living in poor conditions so much so that their most important concern was getting food and other basics thus their children's education was the least of their concerns. He further suggested that most of the parents' level of education could also be a possible reason why they do not pay much attention to their children's education. He further mentioned insufficient learning resources as a possible factor affecting the learners' performance.

The parent at school D therefore felt that teachers in his school need to be motivated first if any improvement was to be achieved. He felt that motivating teachers by giving them something that would raise their commitment levels and give them a reason to want to go and teach the learners was likely to have better effect than sanctioning them for the learners' poor performance.

The parents at schools A and C on the other hand emphasized that some action need to be taken against teachers whose learners continuously performed poorly. The parent at school B stated that it was possible for learners to perform poorly once in a while due to some reasons but something is indisputably wrong if learners taught by a particular teacher continuously perform poorly in the particular subject. He said:

Our school being privately run, we decide on what actions to take against such teachers. First we acknowledge the existence of a problem within a particular subject in which learners have been

performing poorly, the teacher is summoned so that the problem can be discussed with the respective heads of departments... if the learners' performance do not improve the teacher than gets a written warning, the second warning then depending on how bad the situation is they may be taken to teach lower grades, which they often feel is a demotion, sometimes the schools opts not to renew their contracts but at worst, a few teachers have been fired because in this school our learners performance comes first.

The parent at school B pointed out that while they place tight measures to ensure teachers performed, the school also has reward and incentives programs not only for the learners but also for teachers whose learners excel or show tremendous improvement. He said the teachers are publicly recognized for their hard work. The school organizes a prize giving day annually to acknowledge and reward the hard working learners and teachers. He also said often the teachers get recognition through achievement certificates, monetary rewards from parents' contributions, gifts and even staff trips or tours within Namibia because parents acknowledge that motivated teachers and learners tend to work harder and thus excel. He also affirmed that the rewards actually motivate the teachers and learners and that is apparent in how seriously the teachers take their work. They not only make time for afternoon classes but they are hardly absent from school and never need supervision to work.

The parent at school B confirmed that their learners have been excelling, amongst other reasons, because teachers know action is taken against them if they cannot deliver and are rewarded if their learners excel or show remarkable improvements. He concluded that teachers should not be left unaccountable because in his opinion they would end up being lazy and not committed to their work.

The parent at school A too acknowledged that teachers have to be held accountable if any excellent results are to be achieved. He said:

There is no policy that holds teachers accountable, but there should be one in place. Some action should be taken on poor performing teachers such as demotions, and the hardworking ones should be recognized and rewarded. I believe it will make teachers and even learners to be committed to their work because they will know that their work is somehow being evaluated, leaving the teachers like that encourages the likes of laziness and absenteeism.

4.5.1.3 Accountability to Whom and for what?

The researcher wanted to find out from the parents who they felt the teachers should be held accountable to in PBAS. Even though the parent at school D felt that the current situation in the school was not conducive to hold teachers accountable due to several reasons, he also felt that in an ideal situation, teachers should be held accountable to parents because it is their children that they teach. He mentioned that the school should organize annual parents' day in which they report how the learners performed. However he stressed it could only work if parents are sensitized to be committed and play an active role in their children's education.

The parent at school B stated that since the school is private, and exclusively run by what the parents pay as school fees then it is justified that teachers and the principal are held accountable to the parents. He said:

Parents pay a lot of money to the school as fees so teachers and the principal should be held accountable to parents not only to report the learners' performance but also to report on how the money was spent.

The parent at school A equally stated that teachers and principals should be held accountable both to parents and the government. He argued that it made sense that teachers are held accountable to parents because parents are stakeholders in education and play a great role and are the ones directly affected if their children do not get good education.

The parent at school A also said teachers and principals in state owned schools should also be held accountable to the general public through the government because the public is heavily taxed for the provision of public services which includes education and the government through the Ministry of Education uses the tax to subsidize the cost of primary school education. He explained that with the free primary education the government was spending a lot on primary school education so it would be justifiable to hold teachers and principals accountable to the government. He further said that it would be much easier because unlike parents, the government recruits teachers and can also decide to promote, reward teachers whose learners excel and demote, transfer or relieve the poor performing teachers off their duties; a privilege which parents in state owned schools do not have. Finally, he indicated that policy makers in education work hand in hand with the government and thus it would be easier to implement PBA in education if teachers were to be held accountable to the MoE than if parents are the only ones that the teachers and principals are to be held accountable to for the performance of their learners.

While there were different views amongst Parents' responses regarding who to hold teachers and principals accountable to for the performance of their learners, there

was a unanimous finding that there was indeed need to hold teachers and principals accountable for the performance of the learners to either parents, the public or the government through the Ministry of Education.

4.5.2 School inspectors' views on holding teachers and principals accountable for learners' performance

According to Elmore (2002) school inspection reports are important source of information regarding the possible factors affecting schools' performance. In addition, inspection on its own has the ability to elicit proactive deeds from the teachers, principals and the school management to address the issues that affect performance of the particular school. The responding inspectors were named the first and second inspector basing on the order in which they were interviewed.

Both inspectors of schools briefly described what their jobs as inspectors of schools entail. The first inspector of schools started by stressing that the objective behind school inspection services is to ensure high quality standards of achievement in schools. The inspectorate thus ensures that learners are given the highest quality of education possible. To achieve this, she stated that inspection of schools assesses the learning conditions, in schools. The second inspector added that as inspectors of schools they are also concerned with implementation of policies in schools, hence he indicated that they sometimes move around schools to evaluate how successful or poorly the policies of the Ministry of Education are being implemented in schools. Through these evaluations, he stated, they are able to get a feedback from schools on how easy or

difficult they find the implementation of these policies and be able to report back to the Ministry of Education.

The first inspector mentioned that during an inspection in any learning institution, the mission of inspectors of schools is to examine and evaluate the institution as a place where teaching and learning can adequately take place after which advice is given to teachers and the school administration to make improvements on problems revealed by the inspection.

The first inspector also stated that previously teachers felt that school inspectors were on a fault finding mission and would try to dodge school inspection. So with the task of the school inspector redefined as someone who is there to dialogue with and advise the teachers to improve the quality of education, she felt that teachers have been more open to school inspections than before.

Both inspectors outlined some of the goals of the school inspection as follows; to enhance the quality of education in schools by recognizing strengths and weaknesses of individual schools such that schools can be aware of weaknesses that exist within and find ways to act on them, and also emphasize on their strengths to improve the quality of education provided in the school. The other goal of inspection is to assess teaching and learning in schools and hence the school inspectors sometimes get into classrooms and experience the nature and quality of classroom instructions learners are exposed to.

Also in line with assessments of teaching and learning is assessment of the available teaching and learning resources and facilities in a school. They mentioned that School inspectors conduct and address needs assessments, evaluate the efficiency of

administration and management of education in schools, provide guidance and counseling on general professional matters and most importantly enhance feedback in the education system.

The first inspector described the different nature of school inspection as a full inspection in which the school gets a complete inspection in all areas such as standards of achievement, the curriculum delivery, school resources and facilities, school buildings and grounds, teaching, administrative and support staff, and all the other aspects of education in the school. She then stated that after a full inspection, the staff is as a rule advised accordingly and the inspector also writes an inspection report with recommendation as feedback to the ministry of Education.

The first inspector further indicated that after the full inspection, sometimes depending on the urgency a follow up inspection is conducted. She described a follow up inspection as a subsequent visit whose aim is to evaluate the extent to which the advice and recommendations given to the staff in the previous inspection were implemented and if there has been any success since the implementation.

The second inspector noted that sometimes, due to financial and time constraints, a partial inspection in which inspectors only examine a particular aspect of school life for example the boarding section, school finances and accounts, feeding programs etc. is conducted. This is opposed to a full inspection which looks at all educational aspects in the school.

They also stated that a special inspection is sometimes called in for emergencies such as when learners go on strike, or when there are reports about misconducts of teachers or principals in particular schools.

4.5.2.1 School inspection and Performance-Based Accountability in education

The researcher needed to understand the inspectors' views regarding holding teachers accountable for the performance of their learners. The first inspector indicated that in all the years that she had been with the inspectorate, she had come across schools that perform poorly constantly and the standards of performance had never improved but the same principals and teachers, continue to serve in those schools. She felt that for instance if the principals or teachers are to be held accountable; some action needs to be taken like transfers or demotions but that has not been the case. Hence she felt that at present there is little accountability by teachers and principals as far as performance is concerned.

The second inspector indicated that there is an urgent need for teachers and principal to be held accountable and not be left in the status quo that they are in at present. He said:

It is very important that someone is held accountable for the learners' performance. This is because state primary schools are funded with public money to provide one of the most vital public service to the nation. So if the fact that schools are funded by the taxpayers' money is not a reason enough to hold someone accountable, then the fact that schools provide an important public service to the nation should be a reason to hold educators accountable so that they can provide the best service in this area of public service.

The inspectors asserted that by not demanding for performance from teachers through holding them accountable, first of all taxpayers money gets to be wasted. Secondly, the life chances of individual learners in schools are negatively affected since they are exposed to poor quality education and that in essence means the learners will have poor quality of life in future and the nation's economy will also be negatively affected. The inspectors felt that by holding teachers, and principals accountable, education standards is likely to improve and give learners better life chances in future through improved economy of the country.

The first inspector stated that inspection of schools could be one way of demanding for PBA in education because inspection of schools helps schools to focus on their strengths, identify and work on their weaknesses to improve or maintain achievement standards. For instance she indicated that schools could benefit through implementation of recommendations from the inspections.

The first inspector however warned that on its own, inspection was inadequate means of demanding for PBA in education as inspections have no performance consequences attached. She gave an example that even if a school complained that the poor performance was due to fewer teachers in school, if more teachers were brought in to the school but the standards of achievement failed to improve, there is not much the inspectorate can do. She therefore felt that inspection of schools could help PBAS by raising "red flags" in a school situation nevertheless a more effective measure needs to be put in place to make teachers and principals take their roles seriously.

4.5.2.2 Challenges to effective school inspection in Khomas Education Region

The inspectors were asked about the challenges to the school inspection process that would be a possible hindrance to any successful implementation of PBA in primary education.

Both inspectors pointed out some concerns which they felt if addressed appropriately could help inspection of schools be an effective mechanism for reporting on the performance of teachers and principals. They were both of the opinion that inspectors of schools require intense high quality training. The first inspector for instance stated that inspectors of schools are not adequately trained to conduct an inspection whose report could have possible consequences to teachers and principals as performance is concerned. Both inspectors agreed that most inspectors were former experienced teachers who are appointed to the inspectorate by the Ministry of Education and do not receive thorough training to enable them to conduct their work efficiently and effectively. The second inspector therefore indicated that the inspectorate requires highly trained inspectors to make accurate evaluations of these schools especially if their reports on school inspection have consequences attached on learners' performance.

The first inspector pointed out the need for absolute transparency and cooperation from the teachers, principals and school management to enhance the process of school evaluation. She mentioned that in order for the inspectors to make accurate judgments regarding schools, teaching, administrative and support staff have to be truthful and not conceal or omit any information as inaccurate information is likely to lead to inspectors reporting inaccurate learner performance in schools.

The second inspector asserted that to collect accurate information, it was important that all key people in school (principals, teachers and administrators) be in attendance during inspection and as such a short notice should be given before the visits by the inspectors. He argued that giving a notice before inspection gives a better chance of key people to be present for inspection rather than giving impromptu visits and risk missing key personnel in the school. He said it was important for all personnel to be present for inspection as it helps to engage teachers, principals and administrators in the process of inspection and that in essence allows them to identify with the judgments made and personally take in any advice given. He however acknowledged that notifying schools of impending inspections has its own setbacks since it allows the principals, teachers and administrators time to cover their weaknesses, mistakes such that when inspection is conducted, the findings may not reveal those weaknesses and this affects the validity of the inspection reports. He argued that rather than fail to get the key people during inspections, they prefer to give the shortest notice possible so that individuals in the school do not have time to cover up their shortcomings prior to inspections.

The first inspector noted that the school inspections were irregular and some schools had not been inspected in ages while others had not had follow up inspections to find out if the recommendations and feedbacks had been implemented. She indicated that for PBAS to succeed, all schools in the region ought to be inspected regularly.

Both inspectors mentioned that more resources such as finances, vehicles for transportation in remote areas need to be availed to the inspectors to enhance the

inspection process, make inspection of schools regular and as a result obtain more accurate outcomes.

To conclude, the inspectors' opinion was that the Ministry of Education in conjunction with the inspectorate needs to address any issues or obstacles to a successful inspection because they felt that there should not be room for inaccuracy in PBAS in education because someone is likely to be sanctioned for another person's inefficiency.

4.5.3 Ways of holding teachers and principals accountable for learners' performance

The main aim of this section was to find out the perceptions of parents, inspectors, teachers and principals on how to adequately hold teachers and principals accountable for the achievement of their learners. From their responses most of the participants had no trouble with the idea of holding teachers accountable for their learners performance but with the specific details of holding them accountable. For instance, most of them mentioned that if teachers were to be held accountable then all stakeholders in education, such as parents have to play their roles effectively otherwise they felt it would be unfair to expect teachers to work effectively without the full support of other stakeholders. The researcher therefore classified similar responses from the different participants as follows.

4.5.3.1 Public display and reporting of examination results

Both inspectors and two parents felt that by displaying the results of examinations publicly, teachers and learners would be forced to put more effort in their work. The parent at school A said:

Primary school teachers need something that will make the work harder than they are currently doing. Unlike the secondary schools which publish grade ten and twelve examinations results in national newspapers, grade seven results are not, I feel that teachers and even learners do not take the examinations seriously because they are regular. Grade sevens should sit for a national examination and the results should be made public nationwide to make both learners and teachers to work harder.

The first inspector said:

... Making public results of grade seven examinations might make the learners work harder to avoid scoring low grades which if published could be embarrassing, I think even the teachers would feel embarrassed if their subject columns had the lowest grades. I know some may say it's not the best way of handling things but I feel all the teachers will want to avoid the low grades and take pride in good grades by their learners.

Participants acknowledged how hard the process of making public grade seven results could be and the negative impact this method was likely to have on poor performing learners and teachers, however they felt that the learners' performance should not be compromised for the sake of a few lazy learners and teachers. They stressed that learners and teachers should not see it negatively but rather as a wakeup call to start working hard and avoid low grades to avoid embarrassment. The parent at school B said:

It's up to them, if they are found in the section which embarrasses them; they should blame themselves because they have been given seven years to avoid being embarrassed if the results were to be on newspapers. They should just do it like they do it for the grades ten and twelve, it could help.

Apart from publishing grade seven results in newspapers, the second inspector advised that schools should have annual meetings with parents in which the schools report to parents on the learners' performance for the year. He felt that such meetings could provide an opportunity for parents to discuss and express their concerns on their children's performance.

The second inspector's concern regarding such meetings however was that some schools already hold such meetings but the meetings often are not taken seriously. He mentioned that he had received complaints from principals that few parents show up for such meetings. The turn up for such meetings according to the inspector gets even worse with poor performing schools. He therefore asserted that such reporting meetings can only be productive if teachers and parents take their roles seriously by making the learners' performance a priority. He said:

It is pointless to call for parents meeting and just report on the learners' performance, I think it could work if something with more impact is attached to reporting, like rewarding both learners and teachers for their achievements. So these parents meetings can also double up as prize giving days.

The respondents identified public displaying of results and reporting to parents regularly on the learners performance as possible ways of demanding for PBA, however they pointed out that parental turn out to such meetings had to improve and

consequences to be attached to such meetings for them to be effective in improving learning achievements.

4.5.3.2 Rewards and incentives

All the participants were in agreement that teachers, principals and learners could be held accountable through rewarding the excelling ones and sanctioning poor performers. The teachers and principals all agreed that teachers whose learners excel should be rewarded to continue motivating them to maintain or improve the standards of their learners' achievements and also inspire the averagely performing teachers to aim higher and also be able to get the rewards.

Out of the five schools that participated, only two schools had rewarding programs in place. School A has rewarding program for the learners only. The principal said:

Being a state school, we run the school absolutely on state funding so in as much as we would like to give material or monetary rewards to these hardworking teachers it's not easy because that would be very expensive. However we recognize teachers' hard work through public recognition and issuing certificates of excellence and vouching for promotions to the hard working teachers whose learners excel...As for the learners, we give top performers incentives like publicly recognizing their achievements, giving rewards in the form of learning materials, stationery, and once a year we organize for top five performers in all the grades to attend the Windhoek show in October annually.

The principal of school B stated that they have reward programs for both teachers and learners. She said that a slight portion of the fees that parents pay on monthly basis is

allocated for reward programs for both teachers and learners to help motivate and in essence improve performance by the learners. She said, apart from rewarding learners with stationery and learning materials, top three and the most improved learners in each grade together with teachers whose subjects excel go on educational or recreational tours annually around the country and in her opinion the tour is coveted by all the teachers so they get motivated to work hard. Secondly, she stated that teachers get monetary and material rewards on prize giving days which they organize annually. She also indicated that in addition to monetary and material rewards, teachers whose subjects excel are publicly recognized and awarded certificates of excellence. Finally she said that the school being private has the jurisdiction of promoting hard working teachers whose learners excel in the various subjects.

The parent at school D whose school has not been performing well felt that giving incentives to the unmotivated teachers in his school could be the first step to improving the poor performance of the school, however he questioned the possibility of such a program since the school was struggling to provide the basic learning materials . He nevertheless concluded that the reward programs could be something positive that both teachers and learners could look up to and thus the motivation could help improve the learning standards of any school.

From their responses, it was apparent that the participants acknowledged the power behind recognizing and rewarding individuals for their hard work. They felt that through the rewards the teachers not only feel recognized for their achievements and

appreciated for the effort they put in their work but the rewards are a source of motivation which keep them going on with goals set to get the rewards.

Two excelling schools A and B also had reward programs in place for learners. They felt it was important because in their opinion learners need to be motivated hence the recognition and rewards are ways to keep a healthy competition amongst the learners since each learner would be eying the top prize.

4.5.3.3 Sanctions of teachers and principals

The researcher noticed leniency on the responses of most participants as far as sanctioning of teachers was concerned. Some participants felt that teachers who are sanctioned should be the ones whose learners have been performing dismally for a long periods of time. The principal of school D argued:

I think it would not be fair to punish a teacher whose learners performed poorly for the first time because one never knows what really caused such a performance. I think the teachers who have been given opportunities to improve but have not are the ones who should be sanctioned.

The participants who were not for sanctioning teachers felt that there was great possibility that sanctions could demoralize teachers and hence worsen the standards of achievement of the school. They warned that it was important for proper measures to be taken before implementing the sanctions.

The participants who identified sanctioning as a possible motivation to improve the quality of learning achievements in schools felt that before any sanctions are to be implemented, it was only fair that the teachers be involved in the formulation of issues related to sanctions so that they would be able to own the sanctioning strategies and not

feel victimized. According to the first inspector, teachers would be in a better position to take the sanctions positively if they were involved in discussing all issues concerning sanctioning teachers rather than having sanctions imposed on them.

Participating teachers were also of the opinion that if they were to be sanctioned learners too had to be sanctioned so that both parties could be motivated to work harder. Otherwise they felt it would be unfair to punish teachers while no measures were in place to sanction the learners. For instance the teachers complained that the learners are transferred to the next grades even if they do not deserve. Hence they mentioned that sanctioning learners who do not excel by promoting only the learners who merit could make the learners also to work harder than if they are transferred to the next grades when they do not deserve. The perception was that it would not be fair to expose teachers to demands of accountability alone since it takes more than teachers to improve the standards of achievement in an education system. The participants however suggested the following ways as means of sanctioning the teachers whose learners' continuously perform dismally.

4.5.3.1 Written warnings

Nine teachers, three principals and the three parents stated that before any action is taken teachers whose learners continue to perform below averagely in their subjects should be issued with written warnings. The principal of school B pointed out that in her school, in the similar manner in which excelling teachers are recognized and awarded certificates of excellence; the teachers whose subjects' performance is constantly poor

are often given written warnings. She said the written warnings are a constant reminder that teachers have to put more effort in their work and should they fail to improve the learners' performance then some action will be taken against them. They suggested that warnings are lenient and give individuals opportunities to improve before other extreme measures can be implemented.

4.5.3.3.2 Demotions, transfers and dismissals

The participants concurred that some action needs to be taken against teachers who over the years have not been performing. The principal of school A wondered about the fact that teachers are often sanctioned for going against the professional codes of conduct for instance chronic absenteeism from school, having sexual relationship with learners, impregnating learners, just to mention a few, yet they don't get sanctioned for failing to perform to the satisfaction of the one task they are employed to do which is teaching.

Other respondents responded in the following way, a teacher at school A for example said "...we cannot keep on sacrificing the learners' future just because we do not want to upset a teacher who has not been able to deliver."

Principal of school B "...in my school if you cannot perform to our standards, we have no choice but to release you"

The parent at school D:

If I had the power, I would dismiss a few teachers who after all these years are still in this school despite how poorly their subjects have been performing. I can only hope that at some point the teachers will be transferred to other schools but there is never guarantee that they will leave.

The researcher noticed the desperation and helplessness in the school principals of schools C and D as far as this issue was concerned. It was evident that the principals recognized that some teachers had been in the schools for lengthy periods and their subjects' grades were still low yet there was very little they as principals can do.

Some of the sanctions in the participants' views included transferring teachers who have been in the particular schools for three or more years and have not been able to improve the standards of achievement in their subjects. The point was not to allow teachers stay in one school for long if they cannot deliver. Two teachers stated that the teachers could be transferred to rural schools where most teachers would not readily go to be their wake up calls.

The principal of school B gave examples that in her school some teachers have been demoted from their positions as heads of departments. She warned that some individuals do not take demotions kindly so in two cases the teachers opted to quit teaching in her school all together. She stated that it was important to take such actions to make teachers realize that they cannot be too comfortable in their positions and have to lead the department members by being good examples.

The principal of school B further indicated that in her school which is run privately, teachers whose learners still perform poorly even after the warning letters and demotions if any, are often dismissed. This was contrary to the responses of the principals in state owned schools who do not have the jurisdiction to dismiss any teachers from their schools.

4.5.3.4 Contracting or licensing the teaching profession

Two principals, two parents, and a school inspector mentioned that the most suitable way of holding teachers accountable for learners' performance is to offer teachers jobs on contractual basis rather than being permanent employees of the government. The principal of school C for instance indicated that he was certain that employing teachers through contracts or licenses would make teachers to give their best to the learners through lesson preparations and classroom instructions since they would know that their jobs are not permanent. He said "I believe teachers will work harder than they are doing now if the jobs were offered as contracts. The problem is how practical can it be?" The principal of school A:

We find security in our jobs as it is now because we know we have a lifetime employment so I think for some teachers it is sort of a hiding place, the government doesn't pay attention to individual teacher's work so they may not deliver to satisfaction but will have their jobs as long as they stay in the profession. If teachers are to be given employment contracts which should be renewed only if one performs then they will start taking their work seriously.

The participants hence mentioned that achievement standards in the country as a whole would improve if teachers were offered job contracts since they would be forced to work hard to be able to renew their contracts. They however warned that despite the possible effectiveness of employment contracts in improving learning achievements, it would be hard to put the idea in practice as they believed that teachers in Namibia are protected by the Namibia National Teachers' Union (NANTU)

4.5.3.5 Regular inspection of schools and impromptu school visits by education officials

Parents, inspectors and four teachers suggested that teachers could be made accountable by being answerable to school inspectors and education officials. Both inspectors of schools mentioned that not all schools get to be inspected regularly hence some schools have not been inspected in ages. The second inspector was concerned that if such schools did not have efficient and effective school management then it was possible to have a state of laissez-faire (freedom to act as one pleases due to lack of proper leadership) for both teachers and learners and it was likely to interfere with the learners learning achievements. He thus indicated that through regular inspection of schools, teachers and the school management would be aware that the Ministry of Education is on the lookout for improved performance in schools and the state of doing - as-you- please will not exist.

The parent at school A pointed out that once in a while schools should get unannounced visits from high ranking education officials. He narrated to the researcher an incident that happened earlier in the year whereby the Minister of Education and some education officials dropped by in a few schools unannounced and found the schools in chaos. According to him that is the best way to find exactly how schools operate. He argued that giving prior notification gives the teachers and management time to sort out their misdeeds so that by the time the officials drop by everything seems to be in order. He supported his argument that most teachers were absent from school on the day the minister dropped in those schools without notice hence it gave a true picture of

what goes on in those schools. He therefore was of the opinion that such impromptu visits from high ranking education officials to schools should be increased so that teachers are kept on a tight leash and learners possibly benefit by improved learning achievements.

4.6 Possible challenges to Performance-Based Accountability in the Khomas Education Region

Research question 3: What are the challenges to Performance-Based Accountability of primary schools in the Khomas Education Region?

The purpose of this research question was to gauge the participants' perceptions on issues that they believed could pose impediments if PBA was to be introduced in Namibia's education system. This was essential particularly basing on most participants' responses on research question two which sought to find out how participants felt about holding teachers and principals accountable for the performance of their learners. Most of the participants had acknowledged the importance of introduction of PBA in Namibia's education however they felt that some changes had to be made to the current situation in education if PBA was to be implemented successfully in the system.

The researcher felt that the responses to this research question was of importance particularly to the education policy makers in future should a policy on PBA be put in place, because they would be aware of the challenges that they would likely to be faced with beforehand and thus be proactive when formulating such a policy. The following

issues discussed below were identified by the participants as possible obstacles to PBA in Namibia's education.

4.6.1 Learner diversification

Learner diversification is an issue that emerged several times in the participants' responses which is a potential challenge to PBA in Namibia's education. Richards, Brown and Forde (2006) describe learner diversity as the various dimensions of individual learners or learners in a group which tends to create achievement gaps between the different learners even though they are exposed to similar learning contexts at school. They give examples of the various dimensions as differences in culture, ethnicity, genders, race, previous educational experiences, groups of learners with various challenges such as socio-economic disadvantaged learners, the physically challenged learners to mention a few. A teacher at school C said:

We enroll learners from various backgrounds. Most of my learners whose performance are constantly below average somehow as I have noticed come from poor and unsupportive background. We can only do much as teachers but back at home they need supportive environment so that they don't have two different worlds, that is school and home. Learning should continue to take place even at home.

Another teacher at school C said:

We have learners from both poor and rich backgrounds... When we give home work we expect parents or guardians to assist their children with them, if not directly then indirectly by giving them ample time to do the assignments but you find that when the poor background learners go back home then they have to change from learners to home managers, they have to do all the house chores.

Twelve more teachers had similar sentiments however two parents, two teachers and two principals had different opinions. For instance, the principal of school A said, “I agree that poverty impacts negatively on learning achievements however I think that what is really required by the learners is motivation from inside, we have had very poor learners who have excelled from this school.” He said that the issue of learners lacking basic competencies in English and mathematics was a nationwide problem and doubted if the actual problem lay within their home environments.

The first inspector also stated that most poor schools (in terms of the available learning facilities and resources) are likely to enroll learners from low economic background, and it would be expected that the learners would perform averagely or below average, however there have been on many occasions learners who have excelled from such schools and backgrounds. She therefore argued that learners from poor background do excel and therefore poverty should not be an excuse for failure.

Gariepy et al. (2009) concur with the first inspector that PBAS should never be lenient on schools from poor background because that would mean that the government has low expectations of such learners. They argue that a PBA ought to be applicable to all learners irrespective of their backgrounds, that way even learners from poor background will know that they are not expected to perform poorly because of poverty but rather that the government has confidence in them and expects them to perform satisfactorily irrespective of their backgrounds.

As far as racial and consequently cultural diversity was concerned, majority of the participants’ responses indicated that some races thrive academically more than

others. For instance, some participants indicated that white learners tend to achieve more academically than black and colored learners.

In their views, they were confident that their socio-economic backgrounds contribute a lot to their learning achievements. For instance, some participants indicated that most white learners come from well-to-do families and therefore they are enrolled in schools which excel and the schools tend to enroll mainly white learners and a handful of black and colored learners from the elite families.

They also indicated that the few white learners, who happen to enroll in state schools, tend to have an upper hand in learning achievements since they have better exposure in the society and also tend to get better quality pre-primary education than most black or colored learners some of whom never get the chance to attend pre-primary education.

The argument on the how racial diversity affects learning achievements hence got down to the idea that some races are favored by their socio-economic status in the society while others are not. Hence they felt that PBAS would favor races from better socio-economic backgrounds and disadvantage the majority from poor socio-economic backgrounds.

4.6.2 Transfer of learners to the next grades

Majority of the participating teachers and principals stated that the current practice of transferring learners without meeting the basic competencies of the particular grade is likely to challenge the implementation of any PBA in the education system.

They mentioned that learners are protected by promotion policy which according to (MoE, 2009 p. 35) states that “No learner shall repeat more than once in any of the primary or junior secondary phases. A learner who does not comply with the minimum promotion requirements for the second time must be transferred to the next grade”. The participants pointed out that as it is currently, learners are only required to repeat one grade once in a phase, which means that they can only repeat once in lower primary phase and once in the upper primary phase even if the learners’ performance is below average.

Most of the participants preferred that the learners repeat the grades if they do not meet the promotion requirements. That way they felt it would be easier to help learners be able to grasp basic competencies rather than postponing the problem to next grades which are more demanding. They also argued that learners would also be forced to work hard to be able to achieve at least the minimal promotion requirements because the grade transfers encouraged laziness and little effort on the learners’ part.

This practice of transferring learners to the next grades according to most participants would pose challenge to a successful PBAS. The teachers stated that the practice of transferring learners has a negative impact on both the learners and teachers performance since the grades ahead are often more challenging such that if learners are transferred to the next grades without mastering the basic competencies then chances are high that they would never excel in those grades. They argued that that PBA in education would help learners to excel by putting more effort in their work however

there was need to address the problem of transferring learners to next grades if PBA was to be implemented successfully.

4.6.3 Inadequate learning resources

Another potential challenge identified from the participants' responses if PBA was to be introduced in Namibia's education system was lack of adequate learning resources. The participants acknowledged that lack of sufficient learning resources is a major reason for poor performance by most learners. They indicated that for learners to perform well, they ought to be supported with sufficient learning resources and facilities. According to the first inspector, most teachers and principals always attribute poor performance by learners to inadequate or limited learning resources in schools.

She also asserted that assessing the available learning resources and in what condition they are is part of their task as inspectors. She said:

It is realistic to evaluate academic achievements of schools in line with the resources available for teaching and learning. It is not easy for learners to improve or excel if they have limited resources, teachers also get frustrated if they cannot have access to the teaching materials they need and so part of what we do in the field is visit the schools, and asses not only the availability but also the condition of learning resources and facilities such as classrooms, furniture, hostels, laboratories, teaching and non teaching staff amongst others.

A teacher at school C: "we need more classrooms to ease the congestion we are experiencing currently and also so that we can attend to each learner individually..."

A teacher at school E: "The few text books we have are not up to date so sometimes you find that only the teacher and a few learners have the recommended text books."

A teacher at school D: “the learners could really benefit if they had a computer centre complete with internet connection because nowadays information is right at ones finger tips and is always up to date.”

A teacher at school A: “We need more qualified teachers to reduce the teacher learner ratio. Most private schools have only twenty to twenty five learners per teacher maybe that is why most of the private schools perform well.”

Some of the mentioned materials and facilities included more classrooms, teaching materials, libraries stocked with up-to-date books, computer and science laboratories, internet access, resource centers, classroom furniture, hostel furniture and most importantly more qualified teachers.

It was evident from the responses that learning ought to be supported by sufficient learning facilities and that the absence of such facilities tends to impact learner performance negatively. Hence the argument was why hold teachers accountable for learners poor performance while they are not really to blame for the poor performance.

One teacher said:

If we can be provided with adequate learning resources then I would not mind being held accountable for the performance of my learners but as for now there is a lot to be done before the thought of holding us accountable. First we should be provided with adequate teaching materials, classrooms, and well stocked library etc. then demand for accountability for performance.

Whereas most of participants agreed that availability of sufficient learning materials is key to learners excelling, one principal and a teacher had different views. They both agreed that learning resources were important for learners to excel. However,

the principal of school B believed it was the utilization of the available resources that was important. She stated:

... Yes we have a library which is not very well stocked. But I hardly see the learners make use of the library. The availability of a library is one thing and making use of it is another thing. Learners can only perform better if they make use of it. However, I must say that their major excuse is always that they don't get up to date information.

One teacher on the other hand had the following to say:

There are a lot of complaints concerning inadequacy of resources, but I know if the teachers and learners are committed, they can still perform well regardless of what is there or not...When I look at what these learners have, I see much difference in what they and most learners in the rural areas have. Yet with such difficulties, a number of learners in the rural areas still manage to perform better. So for me it's a matter of being committed and focused on teaching and learning.

Regardless of their arguments the two participants agreed with the rest that if teachers and principals were to be held accountable then it was only fair that they are provided with adequate teaching and learning resources before being held accountable for performance of the learners. In this regard, inadequacy of learning resources in schools could be an impediment to successful implementation of a PBA in Namibia's education.

4.6.4 Lack of capacity to change

Literatures like Stetcher and Camm (2010) report that even if schools are provided with the necessary learning resources as a PBAS demands, the performance will not automatically improve on itself rather the teachers and principals should have

the capacity to use the resources to drive the changes required to improve the standards of achievements in their schools. Some characteristics of capacity as Stetcher and Camm note are intrinsic accountability and high quality teacher preparation. They indicate that if teachers lack intrinsic accountability and are poorly trained for their teaching roles then even with adequate resources, they will probably lack the capacity to drive the needed changes towards improved standards of learning achievements. Lack of capacity to change thus is a great challenge to PBAS.

The researcher identified both lack of intrinsic accountability and inadequate teacher preparation from the respondents responses. For instance only two teachers and two principals felt that teachers and principals should be responsible for their learners learning outcomes even without PBAS in place. As already discussed majority of the teachers sited various reasons for example inadequate learning resources, learner diversity, poverty and many more as reasons why learners perform poorly and as such they felt it would be unfair to hold teachers and principals accountable for learners performance since it was beyond their control. This implies that majority of the teachers do not feel internal accountability for learners performance and as such even if they are provided with all their demands they may still be unable to create changes on their own. The point therefore is that success in a PBAS may not be achieved if teachers and principals lack intrinsic accountability and motivation.

4.6.5 Equity issues

Issues of equity in schools arose from the participants' responses concerning teachers and principals being held accountable. The first equity issue was the fact that schools do not have the same level of learning resources. Participants argued that some schools are well resourced and have almost all learning resources and facilities while some struggle even to obtain the basic teaching and learning facilities.

They also argued that better equipped schools in terms of learning resources tend to attract learners from better socio-economic backgrounds while the schools which are inadequately resourced tend to serve learners from poor background. Furthermore, they argued that experienced teachers whose learners excel also tend to be attracted to better equipped schools which are well established. For example a teacher at school E said that good teachers in terms of learners' performance tend to be attracted to better performing schools which are well resourced and established. She said that most teachers only go to the likes of School E as last resort and some who are able teach for a few months before finding their way to better performing schools.

The participants argued that this inequity in educational resources would advantage and disadvantage schools hence most participants wondered if teachers from poorly equipped schools who would be expected to comply with the same accountability demands for learners' performance as those ones from well equipped schools. For example a teacher at school C said:

Most working parents and successful business men and women tend to enroll their children in schools which are known to excel and have well established names. So where does that leave the

poor learners if they are even lucky enough to go to school? It would not be fair for all schools in the country to the same accountability system because there is no equity in learning resources.

One teacher gave an example of learners in the northern part of Namibia which is often affected by floods annually and as a result schools get inaccessible and also damaged. He indicated that learning is always disrupted by the floods annually and they only have a portion of the year to learn, hence his concern was how fair it would be to demand similar PBA from teachers who teach in such schools and those who have a whole year of teaching without any disruptions.

The teachers thus indicated that if a uniform PBA was to be applied across the country irrespective of the difficulties some learners and teachers go through, then that would be quite inequitable. They felt that this would be a challenge because it would not be fair to compare the performance of learners with adequate learning resources who have ample time to learn with the performance of learners who barely have the basic learning resources and some whose learning is often disrupted. Some participants wondered about the possibility of tailoring accountability demands to suit schools with different socio-economic backgrounds in order to avoid injustice.

The other equity issue arose from the participating teachers and principals' response was that not all subjects which are taught at the primary school level are examined. The participants indicated that there were a number of subjects which are timetabled to be taught on regular basis however the learners are not exposed to any examinations. From the participants' responses, the researcher noted that subjects like Religious and Moral Education (RME), Arts, life skills, Physical Education (PE) and

computer literacy in some schools are taught by qualified teachers regularly but are not examined. The participating teachers in this study happened to teach subjects which are examined (Mathematics, English, Science and Social studies) hence they wondered how just it would be if they were to be held accountable for their learners performance based on examinations yet other teachers subjects do not get tested hence do not get to be held accountable. Participants felt that it would be a challenge to attain equity in the sense of holding teachers whose subjects' are not examinable to account for their learners' performance. The teachers thus stated for fairness in PBAS, all subjects should be examined.

The final issue on equity which concerned the respondents from all the five schools was the issue of teacher qualification. Majority of the responding teachers were qualified with Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD) which is being phased out since the merging of the teacher training colleges with the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education in order to qualify primary school teachers in the country with Bachelor of Education Degrees. They felt it would not be fair to hold both Diploma and Degree holders to the same demands of PBA since they felt that Degree holders would be better qualified than Diploma holders. Majority were of the opinion that BETD holders be given a chance to upgrade so that they get to be at the same level as the Degree holders before any demands of accountability could be made and in essence, the issue of difference in teacher qualification seemed to be a likely challenge if a PBAS was to be implemented.

4.6.6 Roles of education stakeholders in Performance-Based Accountability Systems

The teachers and principals constantly brought up the issue of stakeholders and their roles in education in their responses. The researcher noticed that all the teachers and principals mentioned the fact that different people play different roles in the provision of education and as such it would not be fair to make teachers solely accountable for learners' performance if other stakeholders do not carry out their roles effectively.

Some participants mentioned that if they were to be held accountable the learners too had to be held accountable for their performance. For instance a teacher at school B said:

If teachers are to be held accountable, learners should also be held accountable so that each party gives the best in the learning process. Holding teachers accountable and leaving the learners unaccountable will not be fair to the teachers. For example to hold learners accountable for their performance, only learners who pass should be promoted because promoting weak learners will affect the general performance of the class. If learners understand that they can only be promoted if they qualify, they are likely to put more effort in their studies.

The point they put across therefore was that it was only fair to hold both teachers and learners accountable for the learners' performance because they play different roles in the learning process so both ought to play their roles effectively.

Parents are the other stakeholders in education who both teachers and principals felt have to take their roles seriously. The principal of school A said:

How can parents be held accountable? I believe that if parents play their roles well and are cooperative with their children's school then better results can be achieved. So parents should support the learning process of their children by performing their roles well.

The principal of school D expressed similar sentiments by stating that it is hard to make any progress with parents who are uncooperative. He indicated that some parents do not even know the location of the school where their children go to. He asserted that most parents do not show up to the school for any reason. He further complained that when homework is issued parents ought to ensure that their children get time to do their homework before going to bed however he complained that it is not the case with most of his learners as teacher often complain about a number of learners who never bother to do their home work and other assignments.

The principal of school D believed some parents are illiterate, and thus had no interest in what was going on at school. Sahlberg (2008) notes that educated parents provide their children with suitable learning environment at home and better academic support than illiterate or uneducated parents since they know and appreciate the value of education in the society.

Four principals and fourteen teachers argued that if parents take little or no interest in their children's education, then their children tend to perform poorly. Thus they felt that before they could be made accountable for the performance of their learners, it is in order that parents are sensitized to take their roles in educating their children seriously and thus be involved in their children's education failure to which even they as stakeholders could be held accountable.

Finally and most importantly was the role the Ministry of Education plays in the provision of the necessary teaching and learning resources. This is because primary education in state-owned schools is free and catered for by the government. The participants from the four state-owned schools A, C, D and E pointed out that the government needs to step up its provision of educational resources and facilities to improve performance in state owned schools. They argued that it would be unreasonable for the same government that has the responsibility to provide basic learning facilities to ask for Performance-Based Accountability from teachers who are struggling to teach in schools that have insufficient learning resources. (Sahlberg, 2008, p.10) argument concurs with that of participants regarding the role stakeholders in education. Sahlberg indicates that:

Intelligent accountability stresses the principle of mutual responsibility. This means that accountability dynamics should be regarded as a two way process. On one hand, schools should be accountable to decision makers, educational authorities and the community as a whole for the overall outcomes of schooling which should include both the cognitive and non-cognitive aspects. On the other hand decision makers and authorities should be held accountable for the providing schools, teachers and principals with the resources, conditions and opportunities needed to attain jointly agreed educational goals.

The participants thus felt that the MoE should provide the schools with sufficient resources before demanding for performance. Leithwood (2005) concurs with the respondents by questioning how justified it is for a teacher or school to be held solely responsible for matters involving a shared causal responsibility. Leithwood explains that the success of learners in a school is a function of many factors. Leithwood for instance

asserts that while quality of instruction is important, it is significantly influenced by factors which the government or the community and not the teachers or schools have control such as physical conditions of school buildings, class size and time available for teachers to prepare for classes to mention a few.

The first inspector however indicated that even if the schools do not get adequate support in terms of the learning materials and facilities, it would still make sense for the MoE to demand some sort of accountability for performance based on the available facilities. She said:

By the MoE giving support to primary schools in terms of educational inputs, money is still spent whether the resources are adequate or not. There can never be a state where teachers will say now we have all the resources we need; there will always be in adequacy on one part or the other. So I think that support however little without accountability for performance will always lead to a situation where the support measures lack direction and focus and thus quality in education can never be achieved.

Her point therefore was that since it would be difficult for the MoE to provide learning resources to all the primary schools' satisfaction, it is just to demand for PBA from teachers and principals because even though the resources may seem inadequate, money is spent to provide them and also there ought to be accountability for the sake of direction towards improved standards of achievement in education in the country.

The argument here was that learning process is mutual and involves shared responsibility. This implies that all parties to education, be it learners, teachers, parents, the community, the Ministry of Education to mention a few have a role to play responsibly and effectively towards achieving the set goals in education. In the

participants' opinions if any success is to be achieved in a PBAS then all parties have to play their roles effectively because one party's ineffectiveness is likely to affect the success of the others and in a PBA situation, it will be unjust to penalize teachers and principals for poor performance if they do not get support from the other stakeholders.

4.6.7 Teacher preparation and continuous professional development of teachers

A number of respondents including teachers, principals, parents and inspectors of schools were concerned about the quality of teacher preparation especially if teachers and principals were to be held accountable for their learners' performance. Their concern was that teachers are not adequately trained to educate the learners to such an extent that they could be held accountable for the learning achievements of the learners and in the majority of the respondents opinion, this concern could be a possible setback to PBAS. Some studies like O'Day (2002) and Anderson (2005) concurred that successful teaching largely depends on how much professional preparation (specialized knowledge and skills) teachers and principals obtain and their ability to apply such knowledge and proficiencies to the learning situation. In essence it would be a challenge to bring teachers and principals to account if their learners do not perform well if in the first place, they, the educators are not well prepared to handle their responsibilities.

While all the teachers and principals in this study were qualified teachers, some with Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD) which is currently being phased out of the Namibian education system and others with degrees, there was a general consensus that a lot has to be done to improve teacher preparation especially if teachers are to be

held accountable for their learners' performance in an effort to improve quality of primary education not only in the Khomas Education Region but the entire nation. The principal of school C argued:

I am still of the opinion that teachers and principals have to be accountable for their learners performance but I think they should be highly trained and prepared for their jobs. Otherwise I feel it may not be easy to implement PBA. As it is now, most teachers will probably be sanctioned because many learners performance is below average and that may not go well.

Although most participants believed that the quality of preparation of primary school teachers was likely to improve due to the former teacher training colleges which formerly offered Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD) merging with The University of Namibia's faculty of Education to qualify primary school teachers with degrees, the principals and a few teachers doubted that the degrees would improve quality of teacher. For example the principal of school B said:

Merging the colleges with the university was a good move, it means the government is serious with improving the quality of primary education but in my opinion it still may not work because most people go for teaching because they do not qualify for top courses like medicine, engineering, law and many others which enroll top performers in grade twelve examinations. So as long as people go for teaching due to lack of choice, even with the degree, there would be no motivation from within to push them to work hard.

A teacher at school C on the other hand argued that people's intention for joining the teaching profession is what mattered, and as such even with a Degree if there is no commitment of the teachers part then the qualification would not be of much importance.

All in all, majority of the participants argued that for teachers to respond better to the demands of PBAS in order to raise the standards of learning achievements then teachers need to be highly trained in specialized skills and knowledge so that they can teach effectively.

Another issue affecting quality of teachers as revealed by the study is inadequate continuous professional development for the in service teachers. For instance, there was concern by the respondents who were holders of BETD. Most of them stated that if teachers will no longer be offered BETD then it would be unfair for BETD teachers and bachelor degree teachers be evaluated on the same level or be held accountable to the same demands of PBA on the grounds that their qualification would be inferior to the degree holders. Four teachers and two principals indicated that there was need to upgrade the quality of the BETD holders in the system to avoid any intimidations or prejudices against them the degree holders flood the primary education system. They pointed out:

A teacher at school A: “the current BETD holders in the system should be given a chance to upgrade. Study leaves should be given to those who are willing to upgrade to a degree”

A teacher at school E: “I would seriously consider going to the university to upgrade, hopefully since I already have a diploma, they can give us two years instead of four to upgrade the diplomas to a degree.”

Apart from upgrading diplomas to degrees, some respondents mentioned the need for conducting and attending regular in-service trainings, seminars and workshops.

Three teachers stated that they could not remember the last time they attended any in-service workshop and the reason given was that the departments often appointed teachers like HOD's to represent the schools whenever such workshops are organized hence somehow it had taken long before they as individuals could attend, however one teacher mentioned that they still benefit indirectly from the workshops since the advisory teachers often update them on what was discussed.

It was evident from the participants' responses that there were several issues that could pose challenges and ought to be addressed if PBA was to be implemented successfully in Namibia's education system.

4.7 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the researcher presented, analyzed and interpreted the findings of the data. The analysis of the data was guided by the research questions of this study. The first research question discussed, analyzed and interpreted the findings of participants' views regarding PBA in education. The second research question discussed, analyzed and interpreted participants views on holding teachers accountable for learning outcomes and the last question addressed the findings on the views of participants regarding possible challenges to a PBAS in Namibia's education system.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the major conclusions derived from the findings of this study and the previous studies that were discussed in literature review. It also gives recommendations based on the findings of this study. Also in this chapter, the researcher suggests research problems for further study.

5.2 Perceptions of teachers and principals regarding Performance-Based Accountability in primary education

5.2.1 Performance-Based Accountability in Namibia's primary education

The purpose of the first research question was to seek a profound understanding of the perceptions of the participants regarding holding teachers and principals accountable for the performance of their learners in an effort to improve the performance of learners in the Khomas Education Region.

The first conclusion was that the study found that the respondents had a vague understanding of what PBA in education entailed. The findings from the study indicate that whereas the participants clearly understood that PBA is taking responsibility for the learning achievements of their learners, their perceptions of PBA inclined towards the negative connotation of accountability. For instance, they only talked of PBA in terms of being penalized if their learners performed poorly. None of the participants made

reference to the positive side of PBAS, for example being rewarded for the learners' excellent performance.

This negative perception of PBA by participants indicated that their understanding of PBA in education was that a PBAS is castigatory in that it only seeks to improve learning achievements through penalizing the teachers. This is contrary to what previous studies state about the nature of a PBAS. The studies point out that in order to hold teachers and principals accountable for learners performance, PBAS should have an incentives component which should not only sanction teachers whose learners continuously perform poorly but should also reward teachers whose learners excel (Elmore, 2002; Hout & Elliot, 2011; Stetcher & Camm, 2010). In this respect apart from penalizing poor performers, it also rewards excellent performers and therefore the study finding in regards to participants understanding of PBA was not in line with the results from previous studies.

While prior studies indicate that PBAP and PBAS in education aim to improve learning achievements and reduce achievement gaps amongst learners, Namibia lacks such a policy. The study finding was consistent with what literature has on PBAS given that regardless of their perceptions on PBA in education, the participants acknowledged the importance of a PBAS in Namibia's education. The study finding indicates that lack of a PBAS in Namibia's education is detrimental to learning achievements given that that there has been a care free demeanor in most teachers since they are not held accountable for the learners' learning achievements. For this reason they argued that teachers have not been committed to teaching and some are often absent from school to

attend to their private businesses at the expense of the learners' time. The study also found that there was a better chance for learners' performance to improve with a PBAS in Namibia's education because teachers are more likely to be committed to their work and improve the learning achievements through improved classroom instructions, individual attention to learners, and reduced absence from school, programs for extra instruction for learners at risk of failing amongst others if they knew that they would be held accountable for the performance of their learners. In this respect, the findings concur with what literature states about PBAP and PBAS in education and improved learning achievements.

5.2.2 Examinations in primary school education

Previous research on PBA indicates that at the heart of a PBAS is constant measurement of learning achievements through external standardized high stake testing (Goertz et al., 2001; Suspitsyna, 2010). The tests are external and standardized in the sense that they are not set, marked or scored by regular subject teachers but with selected examiners, who set, assess and score the examinations which are taken by learners of a particular region, country or state for at the same time.

The study finding however was not consistent with what previous studies portray because the finding indicates that learners in primary schools take ordinary examinations which are set, marked and scored by their regular subject teachers throughout their seven year period. According to Marope (2005) this is detrimental to learning achievements because exposing learners only to ordinary examinations set and assessed by their

regular teachers for seven years delays the chances of early interventions for learners with different academic needs which can only be discovered through external examinations. Studies indicate that in PBAS learners should be exposed to fully standardized external examinations at intervals throughout the period of primary for example every three years, or twice in primary education phase.

The tests and examinations are also called high stake because the results of these tests are used to make major decisions concerning the learners and teachers. In essence, there are consequences attached to the results of these examinations. From the findings of this study, the researcher came to a conclusion that primary school learners in Namibia are not exposed to any high stake examinations. It was apparent from the study findings that learners take regular examinations with no consequences attached for the seven year period in primary education phase. For instance, the study finding indicates that learners who do not meet the basic competencies of the particular grades are transferred to the next grades and often fail to understand the difference between learners who are promoted to the next grades and them who are transferred since they end up in the same classroom despite their poor performance.

The study finding indicates that grade seven learners sit for regular examinations which make them eligible for junior secondary education. Studies by Lewin et al. (2011), Goertz et al., (2001) and Suspitsyna (2010) assert that examinations ought to be of high stake so that the results have impact on both teachers and learners. Lewin et al. (2011) for instance argue that results of high stake examinations ought to determine learner intake or placement in various secondary schools to motivate learners to work

hard in order to qualify for those coveted excelling secondary schools. However, in Namibia's situation there are no stakes attached to performance in grade seven examinations hence contrary to the expectations of a PBAS as revealed by previous studies.

Finally, as regards what previous studies reveal about the nature of examinations in PBAS is that in high stake examinations, performance of learners in these examinations are not only consequential to the learners but the teachers too. For instance Lewin et al. (2011) and Anderson (2005) state that the results of high stake examinations are used to make major decisions concerning teachers for example in promotions and demotions of teachers. This study finding however indicates that learners in Namibia's primary education are only exposed to ordinary examinations without any stakes, there are no consequences attached to the teachers regarding the performance of learners in those examinations. This implies that the examinations are of no stake at all which is contrary to what studies indicate about examinations in PBAS.

5.3 Holding teachers and principals accountable for the performance of their learners

While the literature like Marope (2005) and Dentlinger (2005) indicate that there is no education policy in Namibia that holds teachers and principals accountable for the learning achievements of learners, an unexpected finding in this study was that School B, a privately run school, on its own demands Performance-Based Accountability from teachers and the principal. The study found that due to the fact that the school is run

privately, parents pay a lot of school fees for their children as opposed to learners who receive free primary education in state primary schools and thus there is pressure on the teachers and the principal to perform to the parents' satisfaction. If parents are dissatisfied with performance of their children, they tend to transfer them to better performing schools and this would disadvantage the school. For this reason teachers are employed on contracts which are only renewed if the teacher happens to deliver to satisfaction. Teachers in this school are also promoted or demoted depending on how their learners perform. Therefore whereas teachers in state primary schools in the Khomas Education Region are not held accountable for performance of their learners, teachers in school B a private school have to be accountable for the performance of their learners.

This study findings show that participants acknowledge that learners' performance is likely to improve if teachers and principals are held accountable for the performance of their learners. Like previous research (Gariepy et al., 2009; World Bank, 2008) the findings suggest that the teachers and principals should be held accountable for their learners' performance to the parents, the general public and the government through the Ministry of Education. The study findings indicate that it would be easier for the MoE to implement particularly the incentives aspect of PBAS given that it is within its jurisdiction to take actions like to promote, demote, dismiss, and transfer teachers who perform and do not perform to satisfaction.

Previous research indicate that to hold teachers and principals accountable for the learning achievements teachers should be both rewarded and sanctioned for excellent

and dismal performance respectively (Elmore, 2002; Hout & Elliot, 2011; Stetecher & Camm, 2010). Studies suggest that to sanction, teachers should be; demoted, transferred, dismissed, have teaching contracts or licenses in the system so that they can only be given to competent teachers and renewal of the contracts or licenses be subject to performance. While this study findings were consistent with the previous studies by pointing out the above mentioned ways to sanction teachers whose learners continue to perform poorly, the findings also indicated that more lenient forms of sanctions for example issuing of at least two written warnings to teachers whose learners continuously perform poorly should be used before the above mentioned which were viewed to be a bit extreme for teachers being sanctioned for the first time.

Previous research by Wilcox (2000) show that inspection of schools is the most widely used form of accountability in education systems. The findings of this study was consistent with previous research in the sense that regular inspection of schools was likely to improve the quality of learning achievements because teachers would know that they are under constant observation. The study found that through regular inspections, teachers would improve how they prepare for classes and would avoid absenting themselves from school unnecessarily. Learners would therefore stand to benefit with these behavioral changes in teachers which regular inspection of schools could possibly bring along.

The study findings however indicate uncertainty in the ability of school inspectors to conduct school inspection whose reports have the potential to sanction teachers and principals who have not been able to perform as PBAS in education

demands. The findings therefore suggest that while the participants concur with the results from prior research that inspection of schools is a means of holding teachers and principals accountable for their learners' performance, they questioned the credibility of the inspection reports especially if the reports have the potential to sanction teachers and principals.

The findings of this study concur with studies which were conducted before for example by Supovitz (2010) and Elmore (2002) that a teacher who is promised a reward if the low performing learners improve their performance is likely to adjust some activities that he or she is able to control such as how well instructional materials are presented, and additional instructional time or paying extra attention to the low performers. Just like the studies, the findings indicate that if teachers and principals were to be rewarded for their learners' excellent or improved performance then they would improve the way they prepare or present the lessons and would be more committed to improving their learners' performance. The findings suggest that the rewards could be in form of monetary rewards, promotions, public recognition, certificates of excellence to mention a few.

5.4 Possible challenges to Performance-Based Accountability in the Khomas Education Region

5.4.1 Demoralization and teacher attrition

Previous research indicates that the major challenges to PBAS are likely to impact negatively on learning achievements (Hannaway & Hamilton, 2008; Jackson,

2008). The findings of this study were consistent with the findings of prior studies in the sense that some factors associated with implementation of PBA in an education system are likely to impact negatively on learning outcomes.

Just like the previous studies (Anderson, 2005; Hannaway & Hamilton, 2008; Jackson, 2008) the findings note that if teachers felt too much pressure to improve learning achievements through the demands of PBAS then chances were that teachers would be demoralized and this as participants indicated is likely to lower learning achievements.

Whereas previous studies show demoralization of teachers in general as a possible reason for low learning achievements in PBAS, the findings of this study goes further to indicate that teachers in schools that have been performing poorly academically would be more demoralized than teachers in schools which have been excelling academically. The findings point out that teachers and principals teaching in schools whose performance has been below standard would be more affected by the pressure to improve learning achievements in their schools.

This study finding also indicates that teachers from the schools which have been performing poorly lack or have less intrinsic accountability while teachers in schools that have been excelling posses more intrinsic accountability. This finding is consistent with previous research by Gariepy et al. (2009) who conclude that teachers who lack intrinsic accountability do not have the sense of taking responsibility for learning outcomes on their own and as such would not readily accept demands from an external source of accountability. On the other hand teachers who have intrinsic accountability

feel responsible for their learners' performance without any external demands of accountability and therefore they readily accept the demands of a PBAS in an education system.

The researcher found out in this study that teachers in poor performing schools lacked intrinsic accountability since they were giving reasons to justify their learners' dismal performance yet had put no effort to help improve learning achievements for instance through extra learning programs beyond the official school hours since they demanded to be paid for the extra hours and given that parents were reluctant to pay there were no extra classes in place. This was contrary to the situation in a school which has been excelling since the teachers stayed behind after the official school hours to help the learners despite the fact that they receive no extra cash for the extra classes. This implied that there was lack of intrinsic accountability in teachers whose schools have been performing poorly and it could result to low learning achievements because they would easily be demoralized by the demands of PBAS.

A finding that was consistent with previous studies (Elmore, 2002; Jackson, 2008) was that teachers who teach in schools which lack adequate learning resources would be more demoralized than teachers who teach in well resourced schools since they felt that a number of factors affecting the learning situation in the school would disadvantage their learners. The study finding suggests inadequate qualified teaching staff, lack of computers and internet facilities, in adequate classrooms, text books and reading materials to be among some of the factors that could negatively affect learning achievements. The finding indicates that some factors are beyond the teachers' control

and thus they would feel demoralized if they were to be penalized for their learners' poor performance. The challenge to PBAS therefore would be enforcing a uniform PBA to teachers who teach in well resourced schools and those who lack the basic learning facilities.

Findings from prior research suggest that when teachers get demoralized or are unable to keep up with the pressure to improve their learners' performance, they tend to quit the teaching profession (Jackson, 2008). According to the finding by Jackson, higher rate of teacher attrition has been reported due to the demands of PBAS. The findings of this study also show that there is a big possibility that teachers whose learners continuously perform poorly would be impelled to quit teaching profession due to demoralization and too much pressure to improve learners' performance and also to avoid possible sanctions that may come with PBAS in place.

5.4.2 Role of stakeholders in education

Findings from previous studies indicate that accountability should be based on the principle of mutual responsibility such that teachers and principals should not be solely held responsible for matters involving a shared responsibility (Leithwood, 2005; Sahlberg, 2008). The findings of this study were consistent with the previous studies since there was acknowledgement of the fact that it takes a number of key players to provide for education and therefore holding teachers and principals solely accountable for learning achievements would be unjust especially if the other key players failed to play their roles effectively.

For instance, the study findings indicate that learners who do not excel should not be transferred to the next grades and only those who meet the promotion requirement should be promoted. This would motivate learners to work harder to merit promotion. In this regard, learners would also be held accountable for their performance. The findings also suggest that the MoE should provide adequate learning resources to schools, parents to be involved in their children's education by turning up for meetings regularly, provide support for their children back at home and the community as a whole to support education by providing the necessary assistance to schools. In short there is need for all parties in education to play their roles effectively to enhance the teaching and learning process. The findings further indicate that if teachers and principals were to be held accountable then all the stakeholders in education ought to be held accountable for their roles in providing education otherwise teachers would feel victimized if they were the only ones to be brought to account.

5.5 Research recommendations

- Primary school teachers should be held accountable to some extent for the learning outcomes of their learners. The findings indicated that not holding teachers and principals accountable for their learners' performance is detrimental to learning achievements.
- In order to reward teachers and principals whose learners excel or make tremendous improvement as PBAS demand, teachers and principals should be promoted, given monetary incentives, certificates of excellence and publicly

recognition of their achievements. To sanction teachers whose learners perform poorly consistently, teachers and principals should be first given two written warnings addressing the problem of their learners continuously performing poorly. If learners performance does not improve after the two written warnings then the teachers and principals should be transferred, demoted, and any monetary incentives if any should be withdrawn.

- Grade seven examinations should not only be external and standardized but should also be of high stake as is required by PBAS. To make the grade seven examinations high stake, all grade seven learners in the country should take the same examinations and the results of the examinations should determine learner placement in the junior secondary schools. For example, best performing learners in the grade seven examinations should be selected to enroll in the top excelling secondary schools.
- Provision of education involves different parties who should play their roles effectively and since PBA in education is also a shared responsibility, learners should be made to be accountable for their performance. For instance, only learners who meet the minimum basic competencies of the particular grade should be promoted, those who do not merit promotion should repeat the grades and not be transferred to the next grades.

5.5.1 Recommendations for further research

An unexpected finding was that School B, a private school which has been excelling for the past few years already holds teachers and principals accountable for their learners' performance. The researcher wondered if the fact that teachers in the school are held accountable for their learners' performance could have contributed to the excellent performance. Thus the recommendation from this study to further research on PBA in Namibia's education;

- An investigation on the existence and nature of Performance-Based Accountability in privately run schools
- How the existence of PBA in private schools if any, contributes to the performance of learners in such schools.

5.6 Chapter summary

The study found mixed perceptions regarding holding teachers and principals accountable for the performance of their learners. Even though not all teachers and principals were ready to embrace PBA in education mainly because their understanding of PBA in education which was that PBA is castigatory in that it only seeks to improve learning achievements through penalizing the teachers, the findings indicate that they acknowledged that PBA in primary education is essential in improving the learners' performance. The findings thus indicate that teachers and principals should be held accountable to the parents, general public and the government through the MoE for the learners learning achievements. Finally the findings also indicate that certain challenges

like provision of adequate learning resources; equity issues to mention a few could prevent successful implementation of PBAP and PBAS and as such ought to be addressed before any demands of accountability can be enforced on teachers and principals.

Studies reveal that any form of PBA in education is better than no accountability at all (Gariepy et al., 2009). There is need for PBA in Namibia's education system. This chapter therefore provided the major conclusions drawn from this study and the recommendations drawn from the conclusions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter requesting for permission to conduct the study.

Christine Awuor Adere

P. O. Box 35130,
Pioneers Park
27 July 2011.

The permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education,
Private Bag 13186
Windhoek.

Dear Sir,

Re: Permission to conduct research in primary schools in the Khomas Education Region

I am a registered, second year Masters Student (enrolment number 201031434) in the faculty of education at the University of Namibia. As part of the curriculum requirements for the award of Master of Education degree of the faculty, I have to conduct research in any area of interest in education management and administration. In pursuit of this, I have undertaken to study "*Performance-Based Accountability of primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region of Namibia*".

Performance-Based Accountability research is still a new area of research in education particularly in Namibia. I therefore hope that the findings of my study will be able to inform policy makers in education in Namibia and also lead to further research by other scholars given that little research has been conducted in this area. I hope that my request to conduct this study will be granted. Attached to this letter is an introduction letter from the Head of Department of Education management and Administration, Faculty of Education and a copy of proof of registration at the University of Namibia.

Thank you.

Christine Awuor Adere

Appendix B: Informed Consent

Performance-Based Accountability of primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region

You have been invited to participate in the research about Performance-Based Accountability of primary school teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region. The information collected from you may be used by the Ministry of Education to formulate a policy that will aim to improve the performance of primary school learners in Namibia.

Participation in this study is out of free will and should you feel uneasy you may withdraw from the study at any time. There are no risks from participating in this study. All information that will be provided by you will be treated confidentially and will be used for research purposes only and for that reason your real names will not appear anywhere in the study.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research and any other questions, you can have them clarified before commencing participation in the study.

I have read the above statements, and have had an opportunity to ask questions, which have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to voluntarily participate in the research study described.

Participant's signature

date

.....

.....

Appendix C: Interview guide for principals

Interview instructions

Your responses to the questions are appreciated and will be useful in the study; therefore, you are encouraged to try and respond to them to the best of your knowledge and understanding. You are also requested to answer the questions as frankly as possible as the information will be treated confidentially.

Please feel at ease, and free to ask for clarifications in case you fail to understand what is being asked during the interview process.

A. Personal and school details

- 1 Age?
- 2 Sex?
- 3 What is your highest academic qualification?
- 4 How many years of experience as a primary school principal do you have?
- 5 Please give me a brief background of the school.

Alternative questions and probes

- i. When was the school established?
- ii. How many learners are enrolled in the school?
- iii. What learning resources are available in the school?
- iv. How has the school been performing academically?
- v. Is there anything else about the school you would like to inform me?

B. Perceptions of Performance-Based Accountability in education

- 6 How would you define Performance-Based Accountability in education?
- 7 In your opinion, how can the implementation of PBA policy in education impact on learning outcomes?
 - i. Do you think it would impact positively or negatively on the learners' performance? Please justify your answer.
- 8 When your school excels academically, how does that make you feel as their principal?
- 9 When your school continuously performs poorly, how does that make you feel?
- 10 What efforts or programs have you put in place to help the low achieving learners?

Alternative question

- i. How does the school help the low achievers to improve their learning achievements and close or reduce any existing achievement gaps?
- 11 In your opinion, are tests and examinations appropriate means of measuring
- i. Learning achievements?
 - ii. Effectiveness of teachers?

Please justify your response.

- 12 What is your view concerning external examinations?

Probing questions

- i. In your opinion how can external examinations impact on learning achievements?
 - ii. At what stage of their education do learners sit for external or any standardized examinations?
 - iii. In your opinion is it timely? If not why not and what suggestions would you make concerning the un timeliness of these standardized or external examinations.
- 13 Do you give any high stake examinations?
- i. Alternatively do you give any examinations that whose outcomes are consequential to both learners and teachers?
 - ii. If yes, what are the stakes both to the teachers and learners?
 - iii. In your opinion how could high stake examinations impact on learning achievements?
 - iv. If No, why not? What suggestions regarding this current situation of offering examinations that have no stakes would you make?

C. Holding teachers accountable for learning outcomes

- 14 How can teachers be held accountable for the performance of their learners?

Alternative questions and probes

- i. In your opinion what actions should be taken against teachers whose learners continuously perform poorly in their subjects?
- ii. What should be done to teachers whose learners excel in examinations?
- iii. How does the school reward or sanction teachers whose learners excel or continuously perform poorly respectively?

- iv. How do you feel the implementation of the sanctions and rewards aspect of PBA policy would affect the teachers' morale and effectiveness?
 - v. Alternatively, how can the rewards, incentives and sanctions aspect of a PBA policy in education alter the behavior of both learners and teachers?
- 15 What are your views regarding inspection of schools in relation to learners' performance?
- Alternative questions and probes
- i. How frequent do you get visits from the inspectors of schools?
 - ii. In your opinion how can school inspection impact on learners' performance?
 - iii. How often do you get feedback from the inspection reports?
- 16 How frequently do you organize forums to address and report to parents on the performance of the learners?
- i. Are there any letters to parents and kept records on such forums? Could I please have a look at them?
 - ii. How would you describe the parents or guardians turn out or attendance of such forums?
 - iii. In your opinion how can these public reporting on performance forums impact on learning achievements?
 - iv. If no forum has been held please give details as to why not.
 - v. What is your feeling concerning this situation?
 - vi. How do you think lack of forums for public reporting learners' performance could impact learning achievements?
- 17 What is your opinion about principals being held responsible for the performance of learners in their schools?
- i. To whom should principals be held accountable to?
 - ii. How should they be made accountable for the learning outcomes of their learners?

D. Challenges to PBAS in education

- 18 What socio-economic back grounds do your learners come from?
- i. How do you think this affects their learning achievements?
- 19 What resources does the school have (Teachers, buildings, facilities, materials and any other)?
- Alternative questions and probes
- i. How many qualified teachers have you?

- ii. Are there any untrained teachers in the school?
- iii. Do the teachers in your school receive any in-service workshops, seminars and opportunities for their professional development?
- iv. How regular are teachers exposed to these in-service seminars, workshops or training programs?
- v. In your opinion are the learning resources adequate (buildings, facilities, materials and any others)?
- vi. How do you feel the existing resources affect the performance of the learners?

20 What other obstacles do you think PBA policy is likely to be faced with?

Appendix D: Interview guide for teachers

Interview instructions

Your responses to the questions are appreciated and will be useful in the study; therefore, you are encouraged to try and respond to them to the best of your knowledge and understanding. You are also requested to answer the questions as frankly as possible as the information will be treated confidentially.

Please feel at ease, and free to ask for clarifications in case you fail to understand what is being asked during the interview process.

A. Personal and professional details

- 1 Age
- 2 Sex
- 3 What is your highest academic qualification?
- 4 How many years of experience in teaching primary schools do you have?
- 5 What subjects do you teach?
- 6 Apart from teaching do you hold any other positions in the school?

B. Perceptions of Performance- Based Accountability in education

- 7 How would you define Performance-Based Accountability in education?
 - 8 In your opinion, how can the implementation of PBA policy in education impact on learning outcomes?
 - i. Do you think it would impact positively or negatively on the learners' performance? Please justify your answer.
 - 9 When your learners excel academically, how does that make you feel as their teacher?
 - 10 When your learners continuously perform poorly, how does that make you feel?
 - 11 What is the performance gap between your highest and lowest performing learners?
 - 12 What efforts or programs have you put in place to help the low achieving learners?
- Alternative question
- i. How do you help the low achievers to improve their learning achievements and close or reduce any existing achievement gaps in the subject that you teach?

- 13 In your opinion, are tests and examinations appropriate means of measuring?
- Learning achievements?
 - Teacher effectiveness? Please justify your response.
- 14 What is your view concerning external examinations?
- At what stage of their education do learners sit for external or any standardized examinations?
 - In your opinion is it timely? Please justify your answer.
 - If not what action should be taken to address the issue of timing of these examinations.
- 15 Do you give any high stake examinations?
- Alternatively do you give any examinations whose outcomes are consequential to both learners and teachers?
 - If yes, what are the stakes both to the teachers and learners?
 - In your opinion how could high stake examinations impact on learning achievements?
 - If No, why not? What suggestions regarding this current situation of offering examinations that have no stakes would you make?

C Holding teachers accountable for learning outcomes

How can teachers be held accountable for the performance of their learners?

Alternative questions and probes

- In your opinion what actions should be taken against teachers whose learners continuously perform poorly in their subjects?
- What should be done to teachers whose learners excel in examinations?
- How does the school reward or sanction teachers whose learners excel or continuously perform poorly respectively?
- How do you think the implementation of the sanctions and rewards aspect of PBA policy would affect the teachers' morale and effectiveness?
- Alternatively, how can the rewards, incentives and sanctions aspect of a PBA policy in education alter the behavior of both learners and teachers?
- To whom should teachers be held accountable to for performance of their learners?

- 16 What is your view concerning principals being held accountable for the performance of their schools?
- 17 What are your views regarding inspection of schools in relation to learners' performance?
Alternative questions and probes
 - i. How frequent do you get visits from the inspectors of schools?
 - ii. In your opinion how can school inspections impact on learners' performance?

D. Challenges to PBAS in education

- 18 What socio-economic back grounds do your learners come from?
 - i. Please explain how their backgrounds affect how they perform
- 19 In your opinion how do the existing resources in a school ground affect the performance of the learners?
- 21 What resources does the school have (buildings, facilities, materials and any other)?
Alternative questions and probes
 - i. Have you received any in-service workshops, seminars and opportunities professional development since recruitment?
 - ii. How regular do you attend these in-service seminars, workshops or training programs?
 - iii. If you have never attended any in-service training please give details as to why not.
 - iv. In your opinion how can in-service training, seminars, workshops and continuous professional development impact on the learners' performance?
 - v. In your opinion are the learning resources adequate (buildings, facilities, materials and any others)?
 - vi. How do you feel the existing resources affect the performance of the learners?

22 What other obstacles do you think PBA policy is likely to be faced with?

E. Is there any additional information that you feel is helpful to this study that you would add?

End.

Thank you for your time and participation.

Appendix E: Interview guide for the inspectors of schools interview instructions

Your responses to the questions are appreciated and will be useful in the study; therefore, you are encouraged to try and respond to them to the best of your knowledge and understanding. You are also requested to answer the questions as frankly as possible as the information will be treated confidentially.

Please feel at ease, and free to ask for clarifications in case you fail to understand what is being asked during the interview process.

A. Personal and professional details

- 1 Age
- 2 Sex
- 3 What is your highest academic qualification?
- 4 How many years of experience in the inspectorate as an inspector of schools in Namibia?
- 5 Briefly describe your job as an inspector of schools in relation to accountability.

B. Views on Performance-Based Accountability in education.

6 How would you define Performance-Based Accountability in education?

7 In your opinion, are teachers and principals in the Khomas Education Region adequately held accountable for the performance of their learners?

IF YES explain your reasons.

IF NO,

- i. Why do you feel they are not adequately held accountable?
- ii. What should they be held accountable for?
- iii. To whom should they be held accountable to?
- iv. How should they be held accountable?
- v. What should be the consequences?

C. Views on inspection and challenges to Performance-Based Accountability in education.

- 8 In your opinion, is the inspection of schools adequate as a way of holding teachers and principals responsible for learner performance or improving the teaching practices of the teachers? Please explain your reasons.
- 9 Do you feel the inspectors' are appropriately trained and qualified to conduct the school inspections especially if their reports on the outcome have some consequences? Please justify your answer.
- 10 How frequent and for how long do you conduct inspections in schools?
- 11 How much notice are schools given prior to the inspectors' visits?
 - i. In your opinion how can the length of the notice prior to inspection impact on the reliability of the inspection reports?
- 12 Feed back to schools is an important aspect of inspection.
 - i. How often do schools get feedback from ministry of education concerning school inspection outcome?
 - ii. Does the ministry of Education respond to all the needs of the school from inspection reports that schools require to make changes or reach the set standards?
- 13 What are some of the challenges experienced by the inspectorate that are likely to hinder the process of Performance-Based Accountability of teachers in the Khomas Education Region?

D. Is there any additional information that you feel is helpful to this study that you would add?

End.

Thank you for your time and participation.

Appendix F: Interview guide for parents

Interview instructions

Your responses to the questions are appreciated and will be useful in the study; therefore, you are encouraged to try and respond to them to the best of your knowledge and understanding. You are also requested to answer the questions as frankly as possible as the information will be treated confidentially.

Please feel at ease, and free to ask for clarifications in case you fail to understand what is being asked during the interview process.

General details

1. How long has your child/children been attending this primary school?
2. How long have you held the position of chairperson of the Board of governors in the school?
3. As a parent to a learner in this school, are you satisfied with the performance of your child?
 - i. If not what do you think should be done to improve the situation?
4. As a chairperson of the school board, you are entrusted with the task of representing the parents and the community as well, how contented do you think parents in this school are as concerns the performance of their children?

B Holding teachers and principals accountable

- 5 In your opinion, how can teachers be held accountable for the performance of their learners?

Alternatively

- i. In your opinion what actions should be taken against teachers whose learners continuously perform poorly in their subjects in an effort to improve achievement standards in the school?
 - ii. What should be done to teachers whose learners excel in examinations so that they continue to give excellent performance?
 - iii. To whom should they be held accountable?
- 6 What is your view concerning principals being held accountable for the performance of their learners?

Alternatively

- i. In your opinion, what actions should be taken against principals whose schools perform poorly constantly?
- ii. What should be done to a principal whose school excels academically?

C Challenges to Performance -Based Accountability

7 In your opinion how do you think the environment you provide your child/children at home affect how they perform academically?

Probing questions

- i. How much help with homework do you give the child/children?
- ii. How do you help the child/children create time to study or do their homework?
- iii. In your opinion, how does the home environment including the neighborhood affect the child's/ children ability to study at home?

8 How do you think the schools resources available for learning affects how the learners perform?

Probing questions

- i. In your opinion are the current resources in the school adequate for learning?
- ii. If yes please justify your answer, if not what suggestions can you make to improve the current situation?

9 In your opinion as a parent, what other obstacles do you think PBA policy is likely to be faced with?

9 Is there any additional information that you feel is helpful to this study that you would like to add?

End.

Thank you for your time and participation.

Appendix G: Observation schedule

Physical settings

- Where is the school located?
- What is the school's environment?
- What learning facilities, resources are available for the teaching and learning process?

Activities during and beyond official school time

- What activities are taking place during the official class hours?
- What teaching or learning activities are taking place beyond the official class hours?
- Is there presence of teachers? And what are they occupied with?
- Is there presence of learners? What are they occupied with

Indicators of diversity amongst the learners

- Racial differences
- Means of transport to and from school

Any Emotions and expressions expressed by the participants during the interviews.