PRIMARY SCHOOL
LEAVING EXAMINATIONS

BOTSWANA
EXAMINATIONS
COUNCIL

2021
SUMMARY OF
PROVISIONAL
RESULTS

21

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PART 1.0: CONDUCT OF THE 2021 PSLE

1.1 Introduction

The PSLE is a national examination that candidates sit for at the end of the seven years of primary schooling. Candidates are assessed on the completion of the three year upper primary curriculum. The examination is intended to be diagnostic to provide candidates and schools with information on what has been achieved as well as identify areas of strengths and weaknesses.

This year, the examination was administered at the centres from 20th to 27th October 2021. The initial scheduled dates for the PSLE was 6th to 13th October 2021 and were moved as a response to the closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The annual training for Chief Invigilators was conducted virtually to reduce contact during the pandemic period. To ensure that the administration of the examination was standardised across the country, training material, which included guidelines for conduct of the examinations as well as those for administration of examinations under the COVID-19 pandemic were shared with all centres. Compliance to the examination regulations at the centres was also monitored through inspection visits, which were conducted before and during the examinations period.

1.2 Conduct of the 2021 PSLE

1.2.1 Candidature

A total of 46,984 candidates sat the examinations in 831 centres compared to 46 063 in 2020, showing a slight increase of about 2.0%. The increase in candidature was noted mainly in the government schools' category as well as the private school centres.

The breakdown of the candidature by centre type for the past five years is shown in *Table 1.1*.

Table 1.1: Breakdown of Candidature from 2017 to 2021

Year	Government school centres	Private school centres	OSET centre	Total
2017	41,731	2,584	112	44,427
2018	43,747	2,613	75	46,435
2019	44,659	2,783	78	47,520
2020	43,170	2,860	33	46,063
2021	43,798	3,151	35	46,984

1.2.2   Examinations under COVID-19 Conditions

Just like in 2020, Centres were provided with regulatory documents on how to administer examinations during the COVID-19 period and adherence to health protocols was emphasised. To a very large extent most centres adhered to the guidelines and health protocols.

1.2.3   Compliance to Examinations Regulations

Inspections were conducted before and during the examinations to ensure compliance to the regulations.

1.2.4   Incidents during the Examinations

Six types of incidents were recorded during the sitting of the 2021 PSLE, involving twelve (12) Centres as shown in Table 1.2. All the incidents were administrative in nature, there was no case of malpractice recorded at this level. There was no case of opening of wrong question paper packet, as has been recorded in previous years. This is noted as a great improvement. Only one (1) case of break-in was recorded compared to three (3) in the previous year.

Table 1.2:   *Incidents recorded at PSLE during examinations*

Incident type	No. of Centres	BEC Immediate Response	Action taken
Break-ins at Centres	1	The BEC Security Office was informed and they were able to establish through the Botswana Police that the examination papers were not tampered with.	The Centre submitted a report on the incident.
Use of photocopied answer sheets for Religious & Moral Education	1	The Centre was cautioned to always check examination material upon receipt from BEC. Answer sheets for the remaining components were provided to the Centre.	The Centre was requested to send a teacher to BEC to transcribe the photocopied answer sheets for REME at their cost. A cautionary letter was written to the Centre.

Swapping of candidate numbers	5	The Centres were advised to be more vigilant with the remaining components.	The Centres submitted reports to BEC. A cautionary letter was written to the Centres.
Use of wrong candidate number	1	The Centre was advised to ensure the candidate uses correct candidate number with the remaining components.	The Centre submitted a report to BEC. A cautionary letter was written to the Centre.
Swapping of barcoded scripts return envelopes	2	The Centres were advised to correctly label the envelopes by switching the stickers.	The Centres were cautioned to always check labels before packaging examination material. A cautionary letter was written to the Centres.
Scripts left out during packaging after candidates had written.	2	The Centres were advised to package the scripts separately and submit to BEC.	The Centres submitted reports to BEC. A cautionary letter was written to the Centres.

1.3 Marking of Candidates' Scripts

Marking of PSLE scripts, which was scheduled from 15th to 28th November 2021, was completed as per schedule at two (2) different marking venues compared to three (3) marking venues in 2020.The venues were still adequate for adherence to the COVID 19 protocols. A total of 1046 examiners were engaged to mark the scripts compared to 1004 in 2020. One hundred and forty (140) independent checkers were engaged to minimise errors during marking, ultimately reducing the time spent during data cleaning. This year there were no issues pertaining to marking raised by examiners.

1.4 Candidates with Special Needs

A number of applications were received from centres for access arrangements and special consideration procedures. The two procedures are proving to be critical in improving access to BEC assessments by candidates with special needs. Candidates whose applications met the criteria for the two procedures were approved. As in previous years, there were candidates who did not benefit from the procedures due to unavailability of documents that support their applications.

1.5 Access Arrangements

A total of 1179 applications were received in 2021 compared to 937 in 2020 at this examination level, showing an increase of about 26%. Out of the 1179 applications, 85% of the candidates provided supporting evidence while 15% did not. There was an increase in provision of supporting evidence when compared to 2020, where 74% provided the evidence required. The increase could be attributed to the fact that centres that had applied on time were given an extension to submit the required supporting evidence from specialists. The applications that were not submitted with the necessary documents up to the extended period were not approved.

Most centres did not have supporting evidence at the time of application, but submitted it after the deadline. As in previous years, the bulk of the evaluation reports were received late due to backlog at the Central Resource Centre (CRC) and other specialists.

1.5.1 Applications by special needs types

Most of the special needs types recorded an increase as observed for Learning Difficulties, Hearing Impairment and candidates with long term medical conditions. *Table 1.3* shows the number of applications for each of the special needs types in 5 year period. The increase in those that did not indicate the special needs type was very significant and this will be followed up during the evaluation sessions.

Table 1.3:   PSLE Applications by Special Needs Type

Special Needs Type	Number of Candidates				
	2017	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**
Learning Difficulties	181	369	572	780	804
Low Vision	42	55	40	48	31
Profound Loss of Vision (Blind)	1	10	2	5	6
Hearing Impairment (Deaf)	22	30	22	23	26
Hard of hearing	7	2	9	9	4
Physical Disability	21	6	7	15	10
Medical Condition	32	14	12	25	30
Multiple Disabilities	21	34	16	7	9
Not indicated	9	37	13	25	259
Total Number of Candidates	**336**	**557**	**693**	**937**	**1,179**

1.5.2 Types of PSLE access arrangements

Table 1.4 shows the number of candidates who applied for specific access arrangement in the 2021 examination cycle. An increase in applications for Modified papers (Learning Disability) and Assistive Technology Devices was noted as compared to 2020. A reduction has been observed for candidates with Visual Impairment (Enlarged print and Braille).

Table 1.4: PSLE Applications by Type of Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements	Number of Candidates				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Modified papers (LD)	57	38	682	488	734
Modified papers (Hearing Impairment)	20	34	46	23	26
Extra-time	110	440	302	869	981
Enlarged Print	50	57	35	43	23
Reader	94	229	651	712	712
Scribe/Oral Response	33	192	455	518	626
Braille	3	16	2	16	6
Rest breaks	32	68	69	60	60
Exemption from Setswana	20	34			
Preferential Sitting	9	3	5	36	30
Assistive Technology Device(s)	1	15	11	9	12
Access Arrangements not Indicated	14	38	1	25	278

1.6 Special Consideration

A total of fifty-three (53) applications were received in 2021 compared to fifty-eight (58) received in 2020. Forty-one (41) applications were submitted with supporting evidence while twelve (12) did not provide the required evidence. Applications by special consideration type were received as shown in the Table 1.5.

TABLE 1.5: APPLICATIONS BY SPECIAL CONSIDERATION TYPE

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION TYPE		NUMBER OF CANDIDATES WITH SUPPORTING EVIDENCE	NUMBER OF CANDIDATES WITHOUT SUPPORTING EVIDENCE	TOTAL
Ill health	Covid-19	14	0	14
	General ill health	17	10	27
Bereavement		6	1	7
Social problem (Assault, Trauma, Psychological problem)		4	1	5
TOTAL		41	12	53

1.6.1 All candidates who applied for special consideration were considered as they satisfied the criteria for eligibility.

1.6.2 Candidates whose supporting evidence has not been submitted were allowed to do so up to the end of the six weeks results enquiry period.

PART 2.0: TECHNICAL PROCESSES

2.1 Introduction

This part of the report uses data from candidates on full time attendance at government schools only.

The PSLE diagnostic examination tests candidates in a total of seven (7) syllabuses. For the seven (7) syllabuses, there are six (6) multiple choice components and three (3) constructed response components, making a total of nine (9) components. The examination predominantly comprises of multiple choice components in support of the curriculum at this level which is largely knowledge based.

To support the diagnostic nature of the examination, each syllabus is divided into content domains of learning called Dimensions and grading is conducted at the level of a Dimension. The Dimension grades for each syllabus are then aggregated to obtain a syllabus grade and finally the syllabus grades are aggregated into a qualification grade. The grades available at the three (3) levels (Dimension, Syllabus and Qualification) are on a scale of A to E. Candidates failing to meet the minimum requirements for the lowest grade (E) at any of the levels are unclassified and assigned letter U. Grading of the syllabuses entails a number of processes which were executed accordingly as per procedures.

During the 2021 examination series, the candidates were provided with an opportunity to show what they know and what they can do and to the same level of demand as in previous years. The 2021 cohort had to show what they know and what they can do under a challenging environment which was similar to that of their predecessors due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the environment was similar, the magnitude of the impact experienced by the 2021 cohort extended over a period of two (2) years compared to the previous cohort which was impacted for a year only. The impact of the pandemic meant that candidates taking examinations in 2021 are **likely** to demonstrate a lower level of knowledge, skills and understanding at an overall national level, than those of previous years, through no fault of their own. Therefore, in subjects where this was evident, a post examination adjustment that compensates candidates who were disadvantaged at the time of the examination due to circumstances beyond their control was applied at a national level as impact at individual candidate level could not be easily quantified. It should be noted that such procedure is part of best practice in exercising the principle of fairness given that the circumstances experienced by candidates were beyond their control.

It should further be noted that application of the procedure will not change the circumstances the cohort faced as it also ensures that the integrity of the assessment is **not** compromised.

2.2 GRADING PROCESS

2.2.1 Standard Setting

The 2021 PSLE Standard Setting meetings took place from 01st to 05th November 2021. This year, the number of judges for all subjects were reduced to 10 upon realisation that all the subjects operated with judges who are highly experienced and competent in the execution of the procedure as per best practice.

During the week of standard setting, the normal standard setting procedure for PSLE (Angoff Procedure) was followed and judges for each of the subjects came up with cut-off scores to be applied for grading in 2021.

2.2.2 Validation of Outcomes

2.2.2.1 2021 Incidents log

Out of the 12 cases reported in the 2021 Incident Log, incidents from only three Centres warranted interrogation as they had potential for malpractice. The outcomes of the interrogations indicated normal performance for the Centres.

2.2.2.2 Centres with drastic changes

This year, there were 7 Centres which presented drastic changes in performance and they are still being interrogated to establish whether there could be anything anomalous in relation to the performance.

2.3 Performance by Syllabus

2.3.1 Quantitative description

This year, performance generally remained more or less the same as that of the previous year for English, Science, Social Studies and Agriculture while it declined in Mathematics, Setswana and REME. What is worth noting is that this year there has been a decline at Grade A across syllabuses even though it is insignificant except for REME where the decline is significant as compared to the previous year.

Furthermore, almost all candidates at syllabus level were able to reach the minimum Grade of E across all syllabuses except for Agriculture where there is still a significant number failing to achieve Grade E. It is also worth noting though that, a significant proportion of candidates are assigned U in at least one Dimension across syllabuses as in the previous year. What was also apparent this year was that the number of candidates' assigned U in the Knowledge Dimension has also increased for some of the syllabuses.

SETSWANA

Almost all candidates met the minimum requirement for the award of a grade at syllabus level. However, as noted in the previous year, about **8% (3000)** of the candidates failed to meet the minimum requirements for the award of a grade in the Communication Dimension implying that they cannot produce simple standard sentences in Setswana. Even though overall performance in the syllabus is at the same level as that of the previous year, it has declined significantly at credit grades.

ENGLISH

Performance in this syllabus remains at the same level as that of last year across all grades as reflected by the insignificant decline. Almost all candidates met the requirements for the award of a grade as in the previous year but what is worth noting is that in the Communication Dimension, about **6% (8000)** of candidates could not meet the minimum requirements for the award of a grade implying that they could not construct simple sentences in English.

MATHEMATICS

In this syllabus, almost all candidates met the minimum requirement for the award of a grade at syllabus level. However, the percentage of candidates obtaining Grade C or better declined significantly. As in the previous year, about **4% (2000)** of candidates could not qualify for a grade in the Computation Dimension implying that they could not perform the basic mathematical operations.

SCIENCE

Nearly all the candidates met the minimum requirement for the award of a grade at syllabus level. However, in the Knowledge and Understanding Dimension, **8% (about 4000)** of candidates could not meet the requirements for award of a grade. This meant that they did not understand the basic scientific concepts.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Overall performance in this syllabus declined insignificantly. Despite these, the number of candidates assigned U in the Knowledge Dimension has increased.

AGRICULTURE

Performance at syllabus level portrays an insignificant decline across all grades compared to last year. As in the previous year, there is still a significant percentage **(3.46%)** of candidates not meeting the minimum requirements for a grade award at syllabus level. Worth noting is that the percentage of unclassified candidates in the syllabus continues to be significantly higher than other syllabuses which is indicative of the fact that across years a significant

number of candidates complete the programme without having acquired basic skills in Agriculture. Within the syllabus, a significant percentage of candidates fall short of meeting minimum requirements for a grade award at the Knowledge Dimension (about **4%**) and the Understanding Dimension (about **10%**).

RELIGIOUS & MORAL EDUCATION

This year, candidates' overall performance (E or better) remained at the same level as that of the previous year but a significant decline has been noted at grades of A and B. Just like in the previous year, a significant number **2% (about 1000)** of candidates fell short of meeting the requirements for a grade award at the Knowledge Dimension implying that they did not know basic religious and moral concepts.

Table 2.1 presents cumulative percentages at each grade in each syllabus and differences between 2021 and 2020. The table also show the number of candidates at letter U and the difference in number between 2021 and 2020.

TABLE 2.1: CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE AT EACH GRADE IN EACH SYLLABUS AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 2021 AND 2020.

	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E	Number at U & differences
Setswana	15.79 (-1.22)	52.58 (-3.42)	79.98 (-2.71)	92.42 (0.11)	100.00 (0.00)	6 (2)
English	22.60 (-1.17)	47.18 (-1.03)	67.74 (-0.70)	82.81 (-1.29)	100.00 (0.99)	618 (163)
Mathematics	10.58 (-1.57)	28.62 (-3.64)	63.44 (-2.36)	87.55 (-1.40)	99.24 (-0.27)	357 (133)
Science	6.59 (-0.44)	24.04 (0.97)	55.66 (-1.1)	87.79 (-1.36)	99.38 (-0.09)	289 (44)
Social Studies	7.02 (-1.25)	28.32 (-0.83)	58.59 (-0.37)	88.06 (-0.28)	99.92 (-0.04)	39 (21)
Agriculture	8.31 (-1.38)	26.26 (-0.98)	59.52 (-1.81)	85.78 (-0.99)	96.53 (-1.49)	1630 (721)
REME	7.56 (-2.41)	26.72 (-3.15)	64.51 (-1.97)	91.15 (-1.64)	99.72 (-0.16)	130 (76)

2.3.2   Qualitative description

Unlike in the previous year where performance at dimension level indicated that candidates were stronger on recalling or remembering of information, this year candidates' performance on the Knowledge Dimension across the different syllabuses shows a decline, reflecting a deficit in knowledge acquisition in the different syllabuses. Candidates continue to display some weaknesses when expected to process information.

Further analysis on the content for each of the syllabus dimensions will be provided to stakeholders in a separate report.

The graph below shows trends in syllabus performance at Grade C or better over a period of 5 years. According to the graph, there has been a decline for all the syllabuses from 2019 to date.
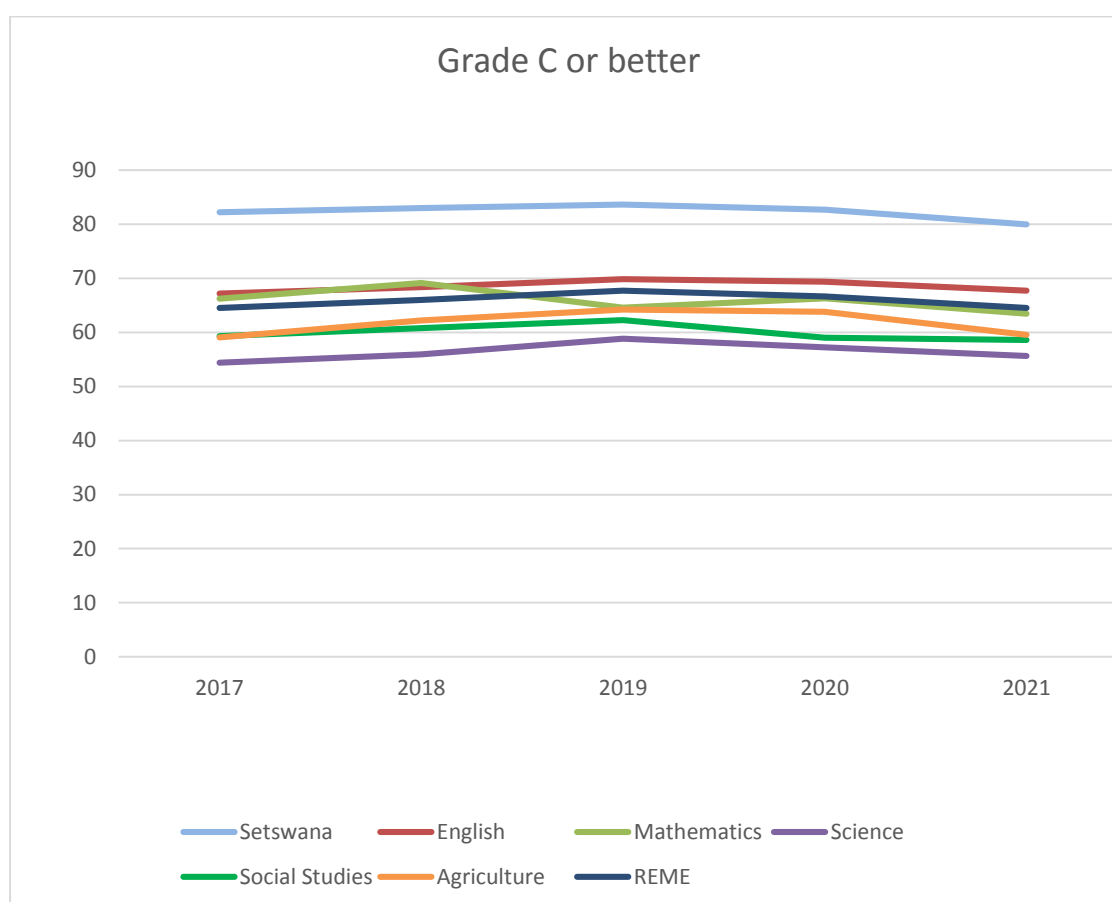
2.4 Qualification Results

Performance at qualification level shows an insignificant decline across grades except for grade E which is almost the same as that of 2020. Though the decline at Grades A to D is insignificant, its magnitude is higher than that of the previous year. The proportion of candidates obtaining Grade C or better decreased insignificantly by **1.44%** from **73.44%** to **72.00%** this year.

The percentage of candidates obtaining Grade A rests at **18.60%** indicating a drop of **1.81%**. This year, **37.40%** of candidates obtained Grade B or better, representing an insignificant decrease of **1.70%**. There is also a slight decrease of **0.42%** of candidates obtaining overall Grade D or better compared to those of 2020.

Table 2.2 shows overall performance by grade and the differences between 2021 and 2020. The difference in the number of candidates who failed to meet the minimum requirement for the award of a grade between the two years therefore designated letter U, is given in brackets.

Table 2.2: Overall Performance by grades for 2021 compared to 2020

Grade	Cumulative %		
	2021	**2020**	**Difference**
A	18.60	20.41	-1.81
B	37.40	39.10	-1.70
C	72.00	73.44	-1.44
D	92.00	92.42	-0.42
E	99.90	99.87	0.03
U **(Number at U)**	0.10 (52)	0.00 (14)	0.10 (38)

PART 3.0: SUMMARY OF RESULTS

3.1 Overall Performance

Figure 3.1a: Comparison of PSLE overall performance by grade between 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018 and 2017

	A	B	C	D	E
2021	18.62	18.76	34.61	19.97	7.88
2020	20.11	18.62	34.42	19.17	7.50
2019	20.81	18.09	35.43	19.12	6.43
2018	19.26	19.14	34.38	19.58	7.54
2017	17.11	18.78	35.73	21.62	6.55

Performance grades by year
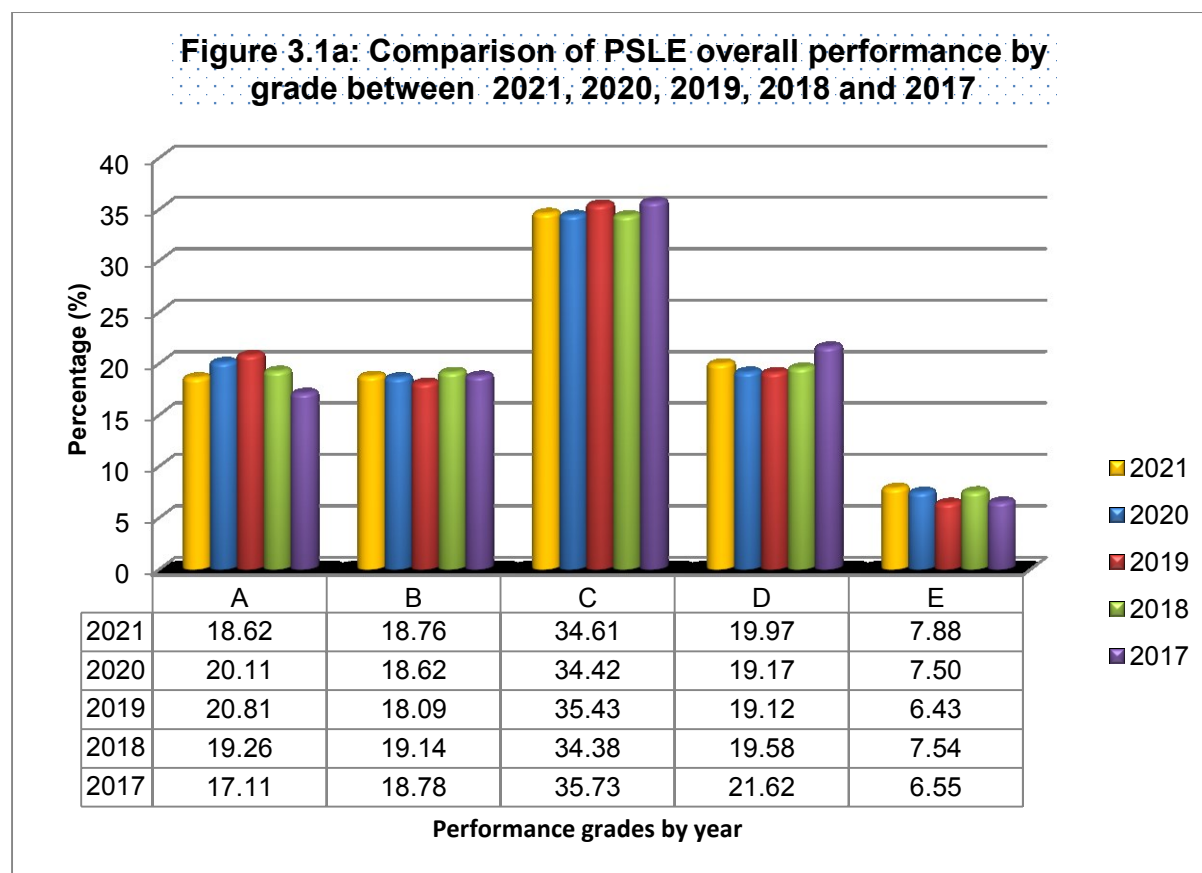
Figure 3.1a shows that in 2021, the percentage of candidates obtaining grade A has declined slightly by 1.49% from 20.11% to 18.62% in 2020. Proportion of candidates obtaining grade B has also remained about same with an insignificant increase of 0.14% from 18.62% in 2020 to 18.76 in 2021. Grade C also experienced a slight increase of 0.19%, from 34.42% in 2020 to 34.61% in 2021. Cumulatively, the percentage of credit pass grades (A-C) is 71.99% in 2021 compared to 73.15% in 2020. This represents a decline of 1.16% at A-C grades. The proportion of candidates at grade D increased slightly from 19.17% in 2020 to 19.97% in 2021. Grade E has experienced an insignificant increase of 0.38% from 7.50% in 2020 to 7.88% in 2021.

Figure 3.1b: Overall Grade Trends (A-B, A-C, A-D, A-E) 2017-2021

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
A-B %Pass	35.89	38.40	38.90	38.73	37.38
A-C %Pass	71.62	72.78	74.33	73.15	71.99
A-D %Pass	93.24	92.36	93.45	92.32	91.96
A-E %PASS	99.79	99.90	99.88	99.81	99.84
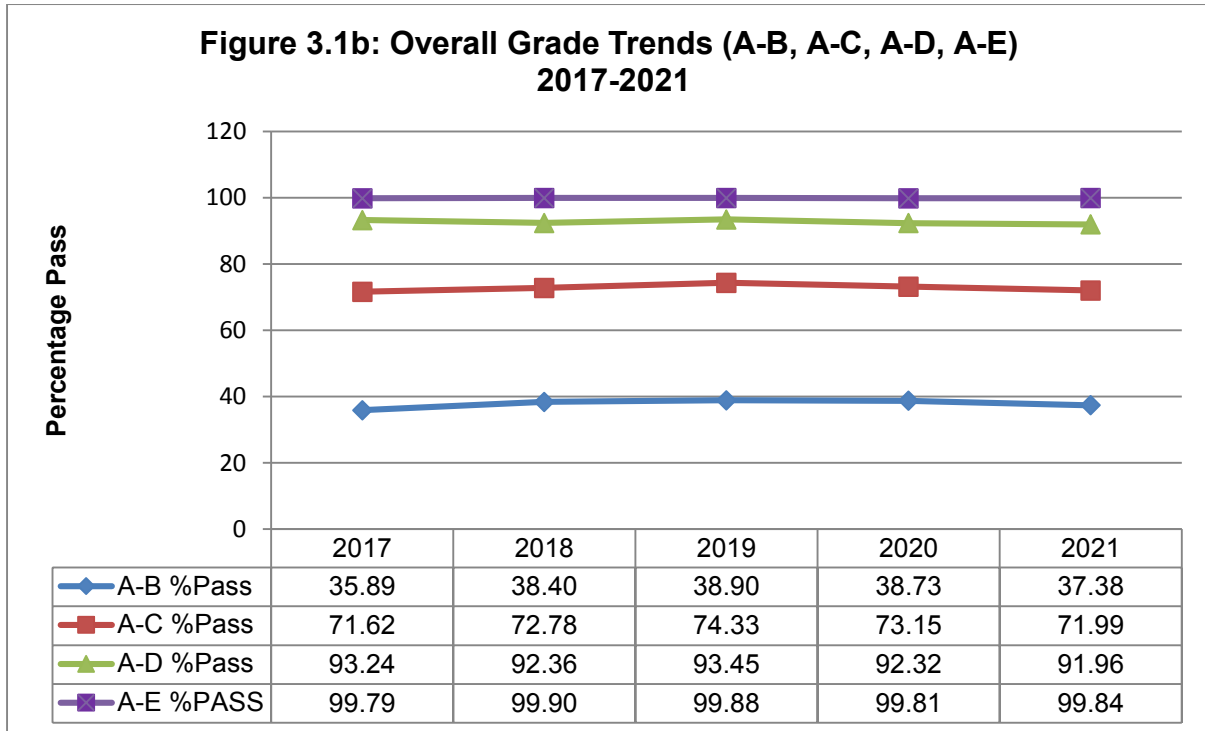
Figure 3.1b depicts a trend analysis of overall grades (A-B, A-C, A-D and A-E) over a period of 5 years. A-B registered a steady increase from 35.89% in 2017, to 38.90% in 2019. However, in the period 2020 to 2021 it realised a decline of 1.35% from 38.73% to 37.38%. A-C grades have also been steadily increasing from 2017 to 2019, reaching the highest in 2019 with 74.33% but declined to 71.99% in 2021. A-E and A-D grades seem to be consistent at around 100% and around 92% respectively in the past five (5) years.

3.1.1 Performance by Out of School Education and Training (OSET) Centres

Fig. 3.2 Overall OSET Candidates Performance by Grade

	A	B	C	D	E	U	X
2021	5.71	17.14	57.14	14.29	0.00	5.71	0.00
2020	0.00	0.00	30.30	42.42	6.06	0.00	21.21
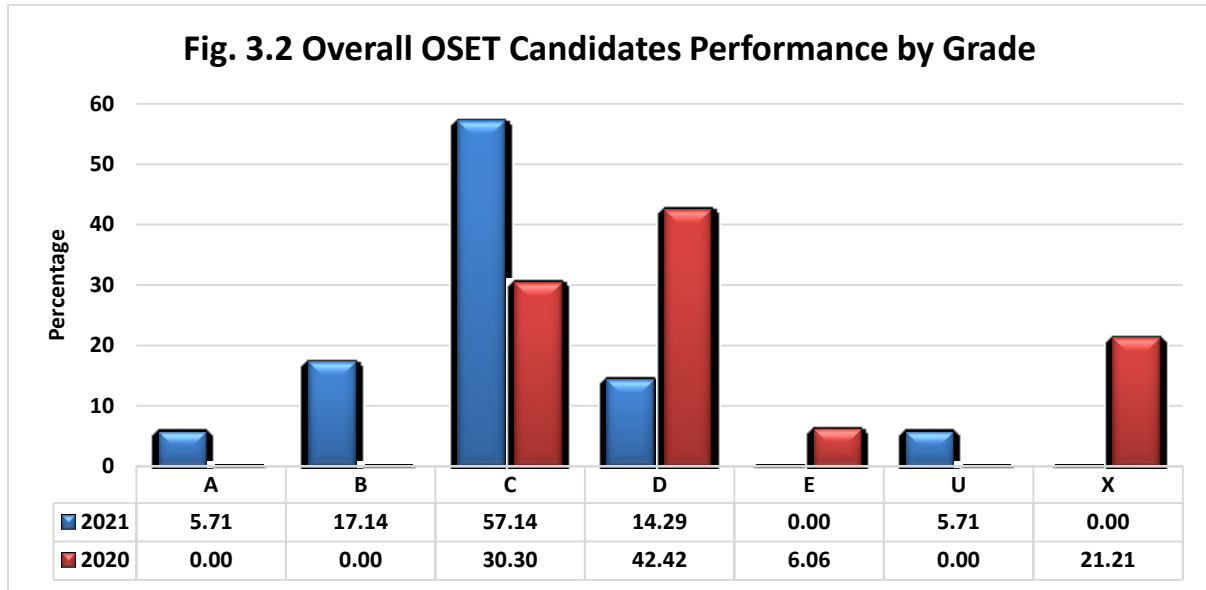
Figure 3.2 shows performance of OSET candidates in 2021 compared to 2020. There were a total of 35 OSET candidates in 2021 compared to 33 in 2020. Most candidates obtained grade C in 2021 at 57.14% while in 2020 most candidates obtained grade D at 42.42%. Grades A-C accounted for 79.99% and 94.28% for grades A-D in 2021, which is a significant improvement from last year, considering that last year no candidates were recorded for Grades A and B, and grade C was at 30.30%. However, 5.71% were ungraded, in 2021.

3.1.2 Performance by Special Educational Needs

Fig. 3.3.1 Overall Distribution of Special Needs by Grade

	A	B	C	D	E	U
2021	1.86	6.37	31.12	41.20	19.10	0.35
2020	4.42	8.84	29.45	38.69	18.34	0.00

Figure 3.3.1 shows the overall distribution of candidates with Special Educational Needs by their grades in 2021 compared to 2020. The results show that there has been some declines at grade A and grade B as follows; 1.86% obtained grade A compared to 4.42% in 2020, and 6.37%% obtained grade B compared to 8.84% in 2020. However, 31.12% obtained grade C in 2021 compared to 29.45% in 2020. In both years the grade D is the modal grade.

Fig. 3.3.2 Performance By Special Needs Type in 2021

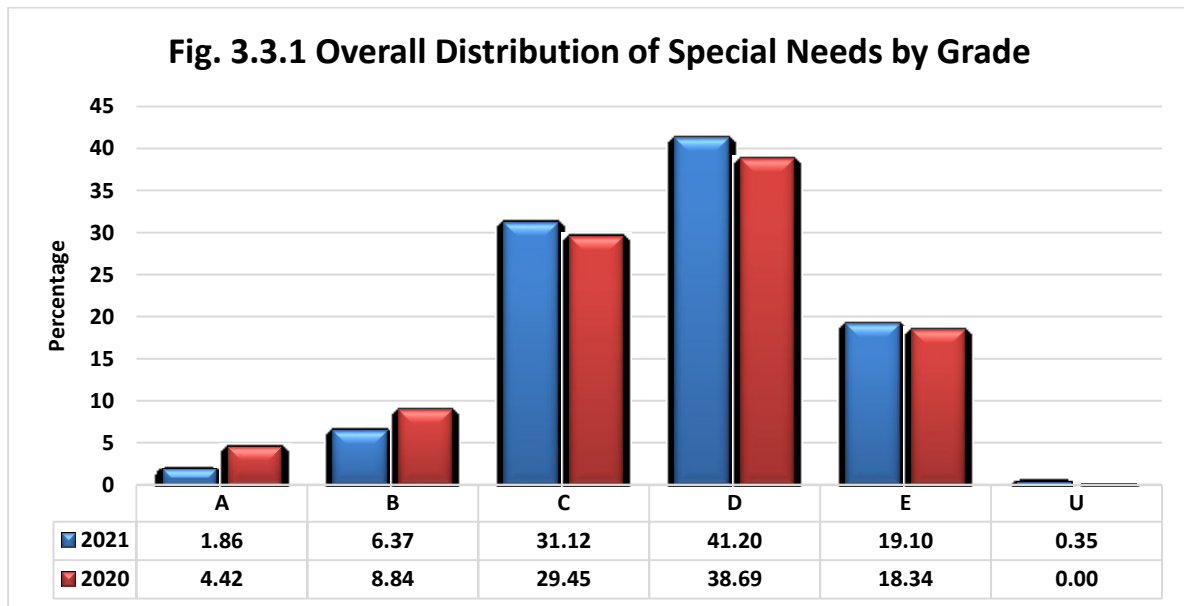|	A	B	C	D	E	U
Hearing Impairment	0.00	0.00	0.00	33.33	66.67	0.00
Multiple Disabilities	3.57	0.00	14.29	57.14	25.00	0.00
Learning Disability	1.64	6.78	32.79	40.49	17.99	0.31
Visual Impairment	0.00	21.43	14.29	35.71	28.57	0.00
Medical Conditions	14.29	0.00	57.14	19.05	9.52	0.00
Physical Disability	0.00	0.00	75.00	25.00	0.00	0.00
Not Specified	1.59	0.00	15.87	58.73	22.22	1.59

Figure 3.3.2 shows performance by special needs categories that sat the 2021 examinations. The assessment catered several special needs categories which included: Hearing Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Learning Disability, Visual Impairment, Medical Condition, Physical Disability and some not classified. The performance in these categories was towards the lower grades C, D and E. There were few candidates awarded grades A and B. However, it was encouraging to find 14.29% candidates with medical condition awarded grade A and 21.43% of candidates with Visual Impairment awarded grade B. The physical disability group attained grade C with 75% compared to other special needs categories. Within the D grade, the multiple disabilities category was higher at 57.14%. Most candidates with hearing impairment obtained grade E, 66.67%.

3.2   Performance by Regions

Figure 3.4: Proportion of Candidates Awarded Grade A to D by Educational Regions

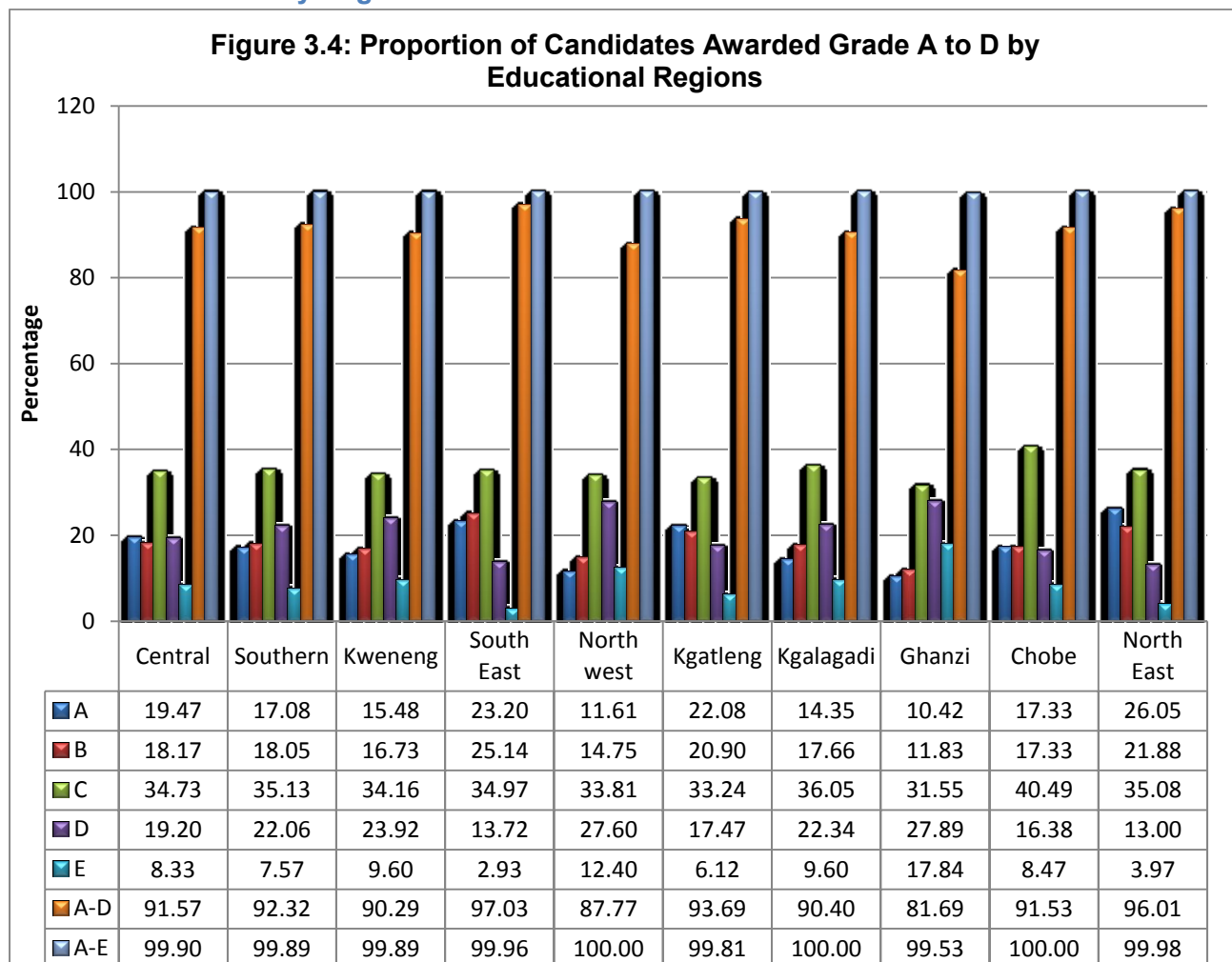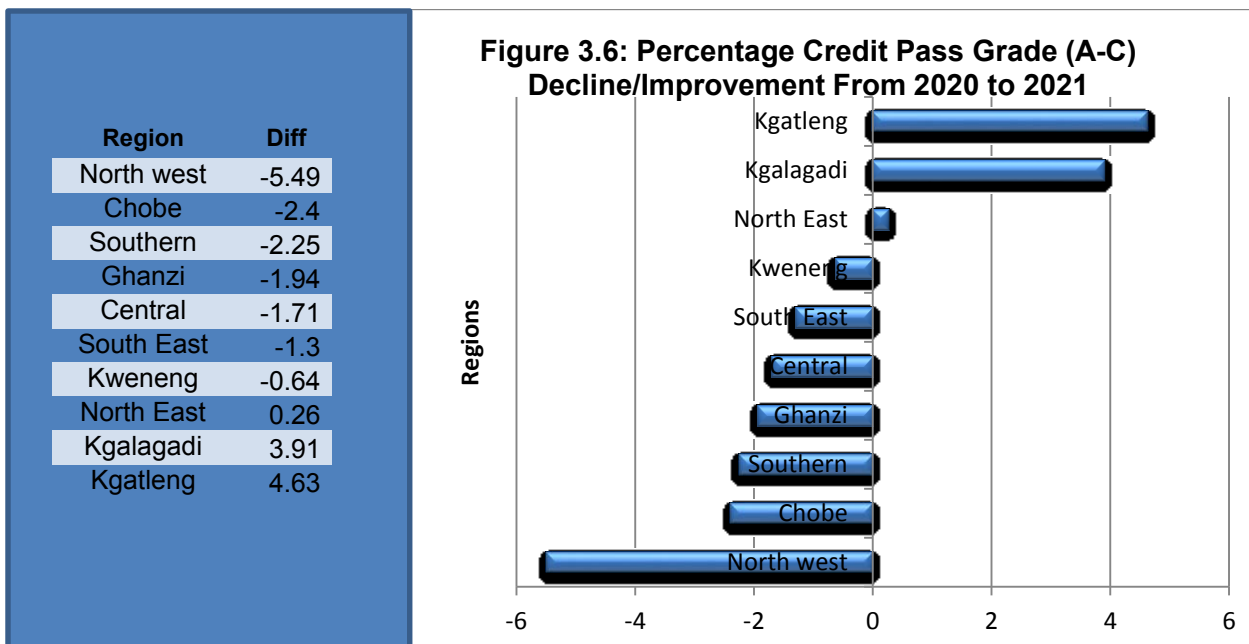|	Central	Southern	Kweneng	South East	North west	Kgatleng	Kgalagadi	Ghanzi	Chobe	North East
A	19.47	17.08	15.48	23.20	11.61	22.08	14.35	10.42	17.33	26.05
B	18.17	18.05	16.73	25.14	14.75	20.90	17.66	11.83	17.33	21.88
C	34.73	35.13	34.16	34.97	33.81	33.24	36.05	31.55	40.49	35.08
D	19.20	22.06	23.92	13.72	27.60	17.47	22.34	27.89	16.38	13.00
E	8.33	7.57	9.60	2.93	12.40	6.12	9.60	17.84	8.47	3.97
A-D	91.57	92.32	90.29	97.03	87.77	93.69	90.40	81.69	91.53	96.01
A-E	99.90	99.89	99.89	99.96	100.00	99.81	100.00	99.53	100.00	99.98

Figure 3.4 shows that North East region had the highest proportion of Grade A (26.05%), followed by South East (23.20%) while Ghanzi had the lowest proportion of Grade A (10.42%), and followed by North West (11.61%). Ghanzi (81.69%) had the lowest candidates awarded (A-D) grade, and all regions have recorded at least 99% for grades A-E.

Figure 3.5: Proportion of candidates awarded grades A to C credit grades in Educational Regions
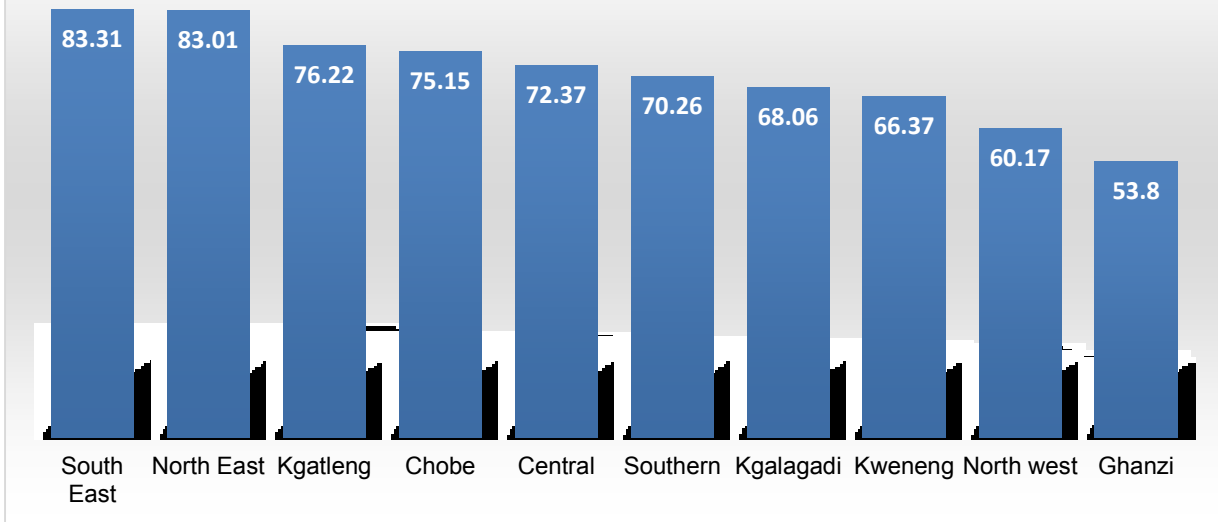
It is observed from Figure 3.5 that South East Region with 83.31% and North East Region with 83.01% performed significantly higher than other regions on proportions of candidates obtaining A to C. The least performing region is Ghanzi at 53.8%.

Region	Diff
North west	-5.49
Chobe	-2.4
Southern	-2.25
Ghanzi	-1.94
Central	-1.71
South East	-1.3
Kweneng	-0.64
North East	0.26
Kgalagadi	3.91
Kgatleng	4.63

Figure 3.6: Percentage Credit Pass Grade (A-C) Decline/Improvement From 2020 to 2021

Performance differences between the years 2020 and 2021 among regions shows a decline. Most regions obtained lower A-C grades in 2021 compared to 2020. The largest decline was experienced by North West (-5.49%), followed by Chobe (-2.4%), Southern (-2.25%). Kgatleng experienced an improvement in the A-C grades (4.63%), followed by Kgalagadi (3.91%).

3.3 Performance by Subject

Figure 3.7: 2021 PSLE Subject Grades A to E

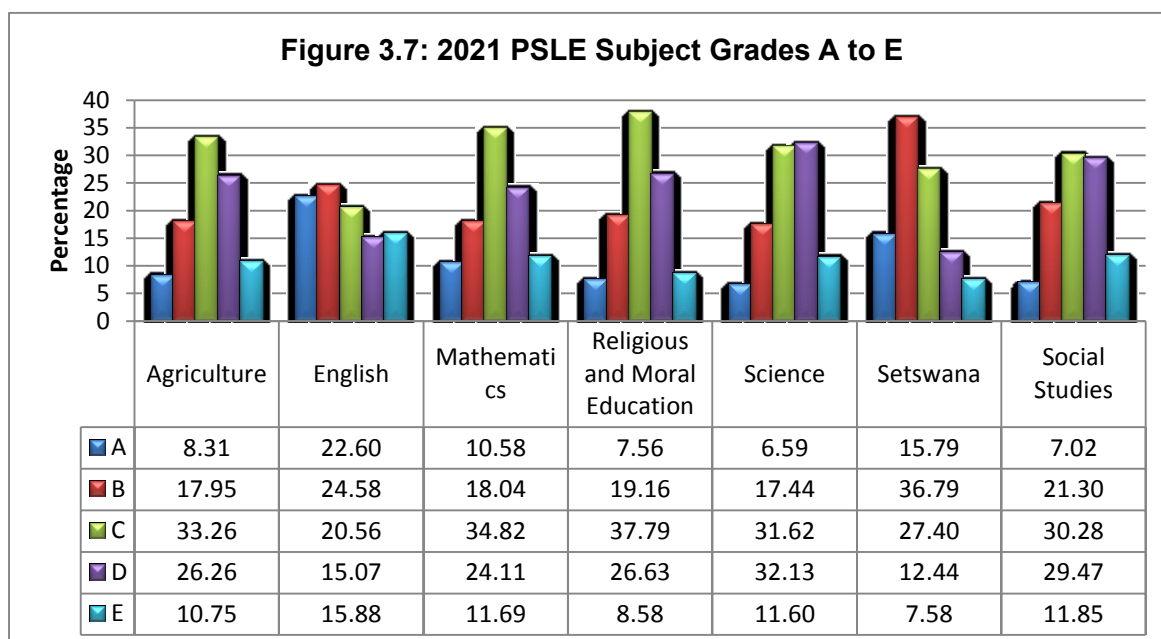|	Agriculture	English	Mathematics	Religious and Moral Education	Science	Setswana	Social Studies
A	8.31	22.60	10.58	7.56	6.59	15.79	7.02
B	17.95	24.58	18.04	19.16	17.44	36.79	21.30
C	33.26	20.56	34.82	37.79	31.62	27.40	30.28
D	26.26	15.07	24.11	26.63	32.13	12.44	29.47
E	10.75	15.88	11.69	8.58	11.60	7.58	11.85

Figure 3.7 shows that the highest proportion of candidates awarded grade A was in English at 22.60%. The lowest proportion of candidates awarded grade A was in Science at 6.59%. For English and Setswana, grade B is the modal grade, at 24.58% and 36.79% respectively. Grade C is the modal grade for other syllabi. Religious and Moral Education had the highest proportion of candidates awarded grade C at 37.79% compared to other subjects. Surprisingly, English has the highest proportion of candidates awarded grade E at 15.88% even though it also has the highest proportion of Grade A candidates.

Figure 3.8: 2021 PSLE Subject Pass Levels: Credit Pass Grades (A-C) by Subject
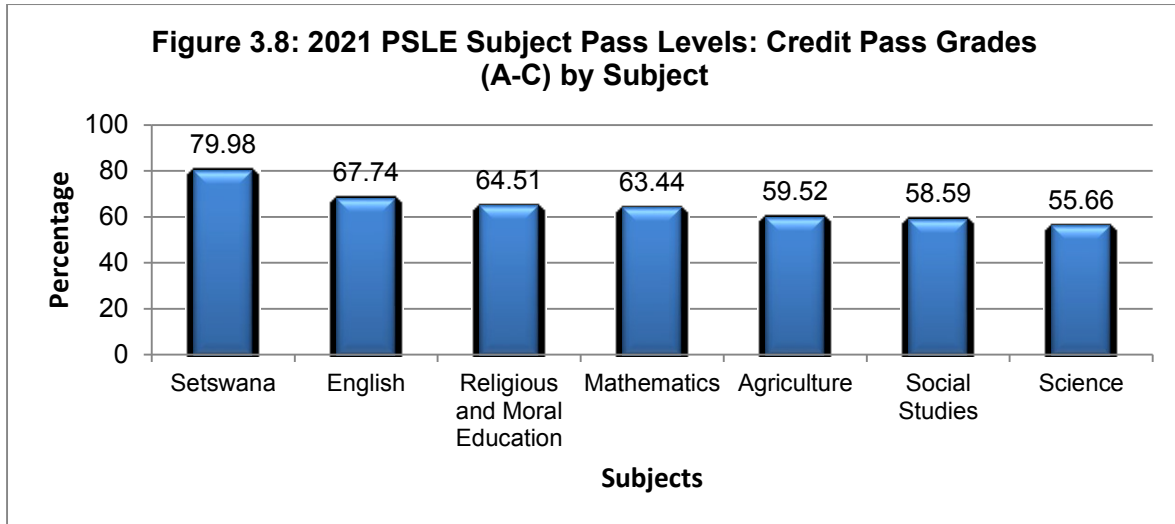
According to Figure 3.8, Setswana registered the highest A to C grades at 79.98% followed by English at 67.74%. Science has the lowest A to C grades at 55.66%.
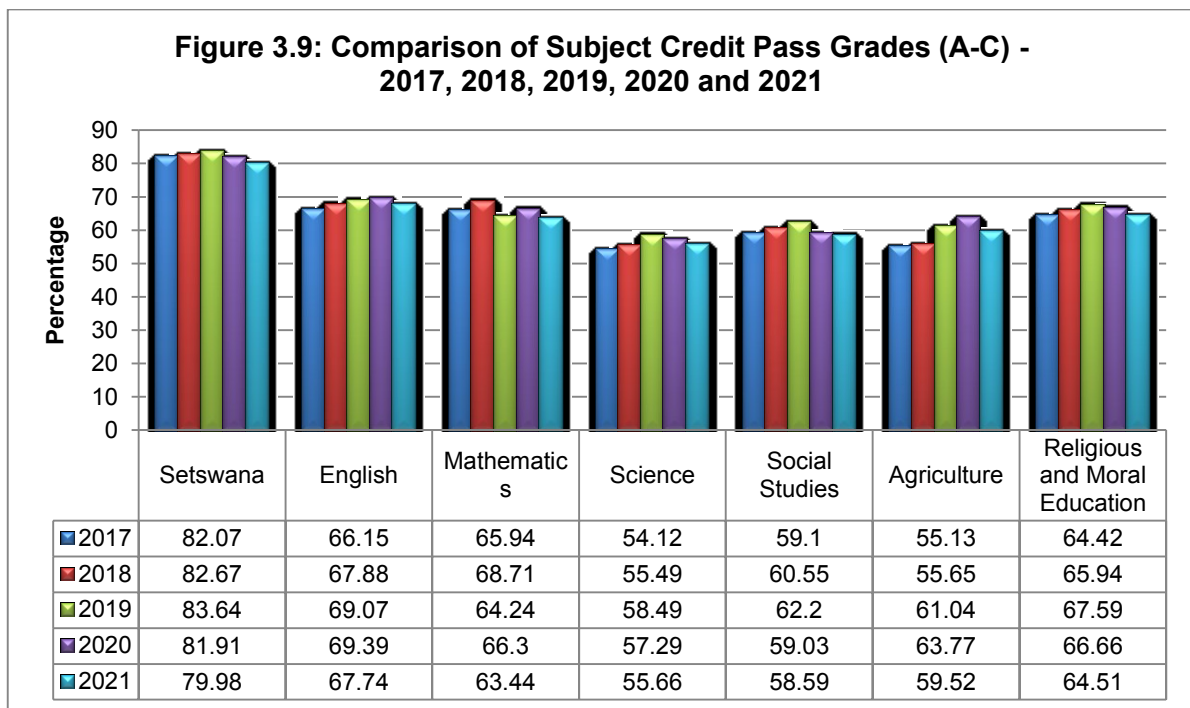

Figure 3.9: Comparison of Subject Credit Pass Grades (A-C) - 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021

	Setswana	English	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Agriculture	Religious and Moral Education
2017	82.07	66.15	65.94	54.12	59.1	55.13	64.42
2018	82.67	67.88	68.71	55.49	60.55	55.65	65.94
2019	83.64	69.07	64.24	58.49	62.2	61.04	67.59
2020	81.91	69.39	66.3	57.29	59.03	63.77	66.66
2021	79.98	67.74	63.44	55.66	58.59	59.52	64.51

Figure 3.9 shows all subjects experienced a slight decline in performance in 2021 compared to 2020. The average decline across subjects was between 1 to 2%.

3.4 Overall Performance by Gender

Figure 3.10a: Overall Performance on the 2021 PSLE by Gender

	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E
Female	22.69	20.34	36.06	16.97	3.86
Male	14.54	17.17	33.17	22.96	11.89

Figure 3.10b: Overall 2020 PSLE Performance by Gender

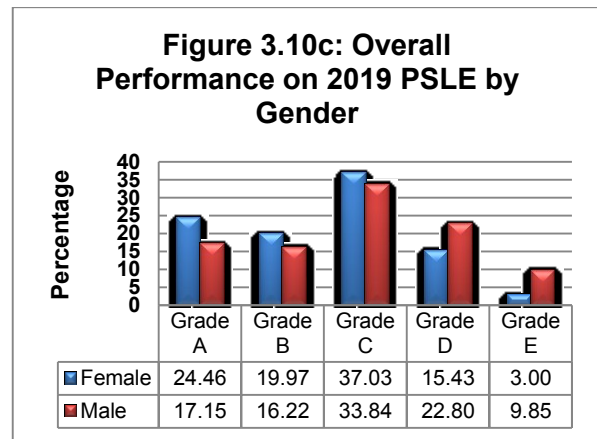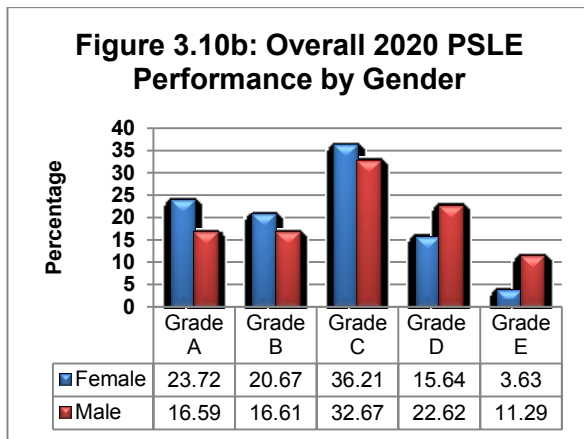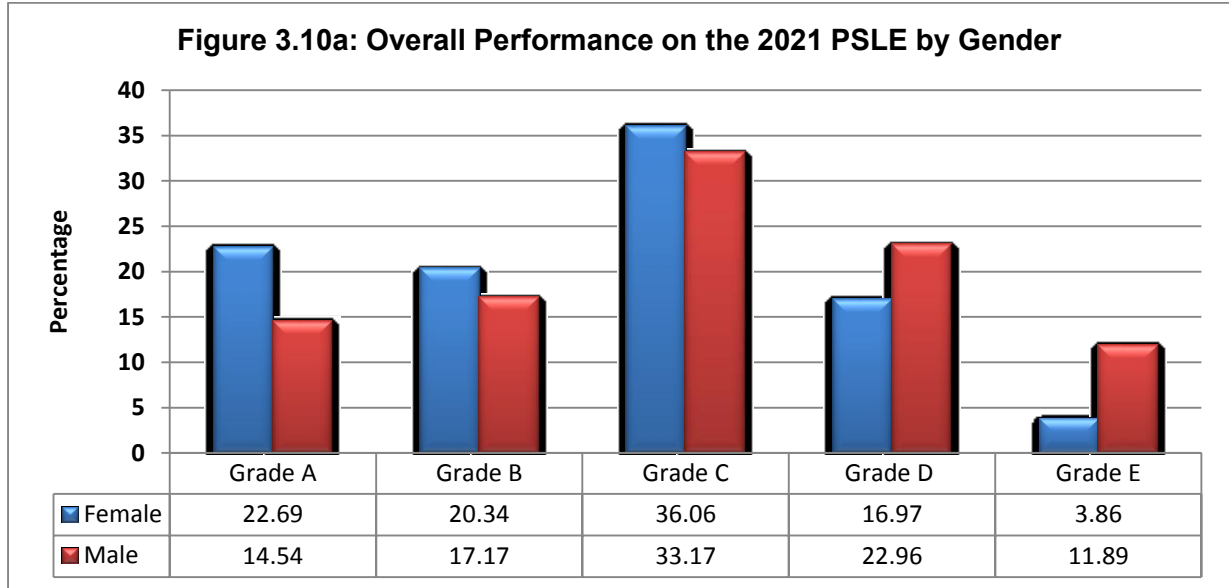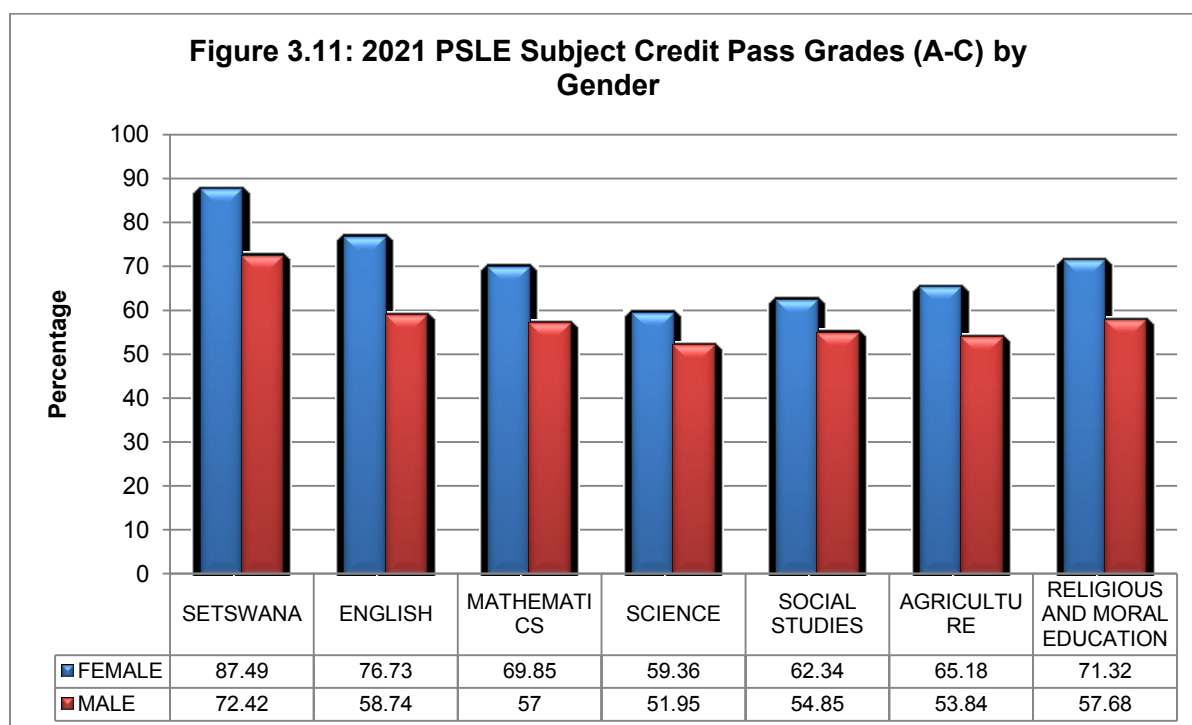|	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E
Female	23.72	20.67	36.21	15.64	3.63
Male	16.59	16.61	32.67	22.62	11.29

Figure 3.10c: Overall Performance on 2019 PSLE by Gender

	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E
Female	24.46	19.97	37.03	15.43	3.00
Male	17.15	16.22	33.84	22.80	9.85

Figure 3.10d: Overall Performance on the 2018 PSLE by Gender

	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E
Female	22.75	21.00	35.92	16.71	3.56
Male	15.70	17.24	32.81	22.51	11.60

Figure 3.10e: Overall Performance on 2017 PSLE by Gender

	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E
Female	20.23	20.78	37.20	18.36	3.25
Male	13.96	16.76	34.23	24.92	9.88

Generally, females outperformed their male counterparts across a stretch of five (5) years; 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 results as shown in Figures 3.10a to 3.10e. The proportion of males obtaining Grades D and E was more than that of females in the 5 - year period.

Figure 3.11: 2021 PSLE Subject Credit Pass Grades (A-C) by Gender

	SETSWANA	ENGLISH	MATHEMATICS	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES	AGRICULTURE	RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION
FEMALE	87.49	76.73	69.85	59.36	62.34	65.18	71.32
MALE	72.42	58.74	57	51.95	54.85	53.84	57.68

For the year 2021 at subject level, females outperformed their male counterparts in all subjects at grades A to C as depicted by Figure 3.11.

3.5   Summary of the 2021 PSLE Results

o   A total of 46 984 candidates sat the 2021 PSLE compared to 46 063 in 2020, representing an increase of 2% in candidature between 2020 and 2021.

o   Overall, there is a decrease of 1.16% in the candidates awarded Credit Pass Grades A to C, in 2021 (71.99%) compared to 2020(73.15%).

o   Setswana registered the highest A to C grades at 79.98% followed by English at 67.74%, while Science has the lowest A to C grades at 55.66%.

o   Females performed better than males across all subjects.

o   Analysis by dimensions indicates that generally, candidates are weak on high order thinking skills.

o   Two (2) Regions experienced a significant improvement compared to 2020, while three (3) regions experienced a significant decline.