

# PRINCIPAL EXAMINER'S REPORT



BOTSWANA  
EXAMINATIONS  
COUNCIL

## BGCSE SOCIAL STUDIES 2024

## PAPER 1: WRITTEN PAPER

### General Comments

The overall performance for the component is generally not good even though there was a marked improvement in candidates' responses to Section B.

The 2024 cohort exhibited similar competencies as the 2023 cohort in terms of responses to most questions. Candidates across all Centres attempted most questions even though there were some instances where candidates left some questions unattempted especially for question 4. This is very worrisome as it shows lack of commitment on the part of the candidates.

Section A in 2024 was less accessible to candidates: for example: question 1, candidates seemed to easily relate with the extract which covered the topic of Population dynamics. However in question 1b and 1c most candidates failed to meet the demands of the questions which expected them to use the skill of application and interpret the stimuli provided therefore a majority of candidates just copied the extract in verbatim. Also in question 2 candidates failed to engage with the pictures provided. However generally question 1 was well done compared to question 2.

It is recommended that Centres should ensure that prospective candidates practice more stimulus response questions as most of the candidates ignored the stimulus but rather just used general knowledge.

The overall performance on this section shows that candidates were NOT able to interact with the stimulus provided, therefore Centres are advised to give prospective candidates adequate practice in this regard through improving the quality of practice tests and exams. From the responses of candidates, it is clear that they DO NOT know how to answer application questions which is a high order skill, hence Centres are advised to prepare prospective candidates better so that they possess the requisite skills needed to answer Section A.

Section B on the other hand was more accessible to most candidates in the 2024 cohort as most candidates were able to meet the demands of questions: however definitions of some concepts was poorly attempted across the three questions. However, most candidates did not do well in question 3c, 4c and 5c which were high order tasks (discuss) hence demanded certain skills from candidates which they failed to portray. Responses of candidates in the three questions showed lack of content on concepts of "benefit of inter-marriage at society level" and "impacts of desertification and "the role of NGO's in promoting good governance" hence most candidates failed to score maximum marks on these questions. Therefore, Centres are encouraged to teach prospective candidates the skill of properly meeting the demands of high order questions so that they get all the allocated marks. Centres are also encouraged to teach prospective candidates to differentiate between different command words according to Blooms taxonomy e.g. difference between describe and explain. Centres are also encouraged to motivate prospective candidates to read widely and improve their vocabulary as well as improve their knowledge on current affairs in order to be better placed to attempt questions on the subject.

**Centres are also notified that for section b, alternative wording was used when marking definitions of concepts: i.e. candidates were not expected to define concepts word for word, but rather key words were looked for in a definition.**

### Comments on Individual Items

1 Generally majority of candidates performed fairly well on the question. The question was accessible to the majority of the candidates as they managed to interpret the passage and derive the answers from it. However, candidates had a challenge of developing their ideas as was required by question 1b and 1c. The general observation is that they rather copied the passage as it were. The passage provided the candidates with enough content to draw from but most failed to do so. The question was friendly as it started from low to high order thus helping candidates to have a good feel of the paper.

(a) Only a few candidates failed to give correct answers from the passage but instead used general knowledge e.g. they gave answers such as poor infrastructure and better paying jobs. Some also qualified the correct answers e.g. better shops instead of shopping, better health facilities instead of medical treatment. Candidates who gave wrong answers stated options such as job opportunities, better facilities, lack of employment. The following were the expected answers:

- Medical treatment
- Tourism
- Shopping
- Business

*1 mark for a correct answer [max 2 marks]*

(b) The question was accessible to majority of the candidates, majority of them performed fairly as most of them managed to identify the purpose of population census from the passage but failed to develop their points. The most common response was "For planning and decision-making purposes". Some of the expected responses were:

- Demarcation of constituencies to allow fair political representation process: it informs delimitation committee to be able to demarcate knowing the number of people to ensure even spread of representation/ to prevent a situation of imbalance in the number of constituents.
- Provides population data / it is used to forecast development planning based on current population data and decision-making purposes: population census helps the government to execute developments such as infrastructure development and provision of socio-economic programs.
- Provides information on population structure / trends: which makes it easy for government to come up with relevant social / economic policies.

*1 mark for a point identified 1 mark for its expansion [max 2 marks]*

(c) Most candidates performed fairly on the question as they were able to identify the negative impacts of rapid population growth on available resources. The majority of candidates were able to come up with a point from the passage as well as an end result hence they scored four marks, under development candidates failed to link the impact with rapid population increase, but rather

copied the passage as it was, demonstrating lack of understanding. Some of the common wrong answers were increased crime rates, prostitution and increase of HIV/AIDS. Some of those who attempted correct responses failed to score marks because of lack of use of quantification words at identification level e.g. they wrote pollution instead of increased pollution. Correct responses included:

- Land degradation : increased economic activities such as over cropping and other poor farming methods leads to overgrazing, and eventually bringing about loss of soil fertility, soil erosion etc. which results in decline in agricultural production/ increased poverty
- Overstretched budget: more developments would compel increased expenditure thereby resulting in inadequate funds or budget deficit.
- Deforestation: as people increase in number there is an increased demand for firewood leading to depletion of some tree species/ land degradation / soil erosion / desertification/ loss of habitat/ imbalance in the ecosystem.
- Increased pressure on the resources
- Increased pollution

*1 mark for point identification, 1 mark for its development and 1 mark for the end result. [Max 6 marks]*

**It is recommended that teachers give candidates much practice on the passage and how to interpret it as most candidates do not show any application skill but paraphrased.**

- 2 Generally, the candidates' performance to the question was slightly below average (4/10), they showed lack of understanding of the question items with the most challenging item being 2(a) (cultural diversity) and 2(c) where candidates fumbled with some Social Studies concepts. Some candidates also failed to relate the answers to the pictures. This was evidenced by frequent cancellation of correct answers by candidates.

- (a) The question was fairly performed by candidates. Majority of candidates were able to define culture but failed to define cultural diversity. Majority defined culture as a way of life of a group of people while cultural diversity as the co-existence of different ethnic groups in a society. Wrong answers candidates wrote were culture is how Basarwa identify themselves, for example telling others that he/she is a Mosarwa while cultural diversity is when one is identified as Mosarwa or Basarwa due to clothing and language, culture is practiced while cultural diversity is the preservation of culture for future generations. A few candidates used the word "accumulation" instead of "accommodation" of different cultures when defining cultural diversity. A few candidates defined cultural diversity as divergent of different ethnic groups.

Expected answers were culture is a way of life of people whereas cultural diversity is the existence of a variety / of cultural groups / ethnic groups within a society.

*1 mark for a correct definition of 1 concept, 2 marks for correct definitions of both concepts showing comparison*

- (b) (i) The question was fairly answered by candidates. However, a small percentage of candidates tended to give examples of aspects of culture i.e. fly whisk, sticks, beads, making cloths out of animal skin, dressing instead of dress/attire/clothing/clothes, food or crafts.

*mark for a point*

- (ii) The question was performed below average as candidates failed to interpret the pictures as they tended to give answers such as making fire skills, telling folk tales/ stories, language etc. A few candidates gave quite irrelevant answers such as geographical location, language barrier etc. Expected answers were music and dance / entertainment.

Technology

*1 mark for a point*

**Observation 2(b) (i) and (ii)**

**Some candidates failed to distinguish between material and non-material aspects of culture as they swapped answers.**

- (c) The question was good as it tested candidates' application skills, however majority of candidates failed to link answers to the culture shown on the pictures rather they addressed culture in general (not specific to Basarwa culture). Majority of candidates failed to show element of globalism when developing points identified. They also failed to conclude as they copied the question i.e., hence promoting culture. Candidates' performance to the question was therefore below average. It is recommended that teachers give candidates more practice on how to interpret pictures as most candidates do not show application skills.

Candidates failed to use action words at identification of a point. They rather wrote, museums, literature, festivals, curio shops etc. instead of establishment of museums, hosting of cultural festivals, using media or even cultural education. Common prefix candidates used were Batswana culture, people, our culture, this culture, their culture. Accepted prefix were our culture, this culture, my culture or Basarwa culture. Candidates misinterpreted the word promote in the question to mean develop as they wrote, build houses for Basarwa, buy clothes to protect them from harsh weather conditions i.e. winter, Basarwa should be taken to school and educated etc.

Some of the most common answers were inter-marriages, international relations, establishment of cultural clubs etc. Some candidates' conclusions were at identification of point i.e. exchange of culture, cultural tolerance which were not credited/marked.

Some candidates concluded points identified by writing about the benefits of tourism which are economical i.e. improved living standard of people, the country bringing foreign investors, bringing foreign exchange etc.

Expected answers were:

- Cultural festivals / shows / exhibitions: hosting or participation in both local and international cultural festivals / shows / exhibitions / participating in international culture day: these avail

ample opportunities for other communities to get to see / exhibit and appreciate, adopt Basarwa artefacts (food, skin clothes) etc. as way of life of the Basarwa thus facilitating preservation of the Basarwa culture.

- Literature on Basarwa culture: Basarwa culture can be advertised by writing on Basarwa fire technology, skin clothes, fine arts, that is in a way eliminating cultural stigmatisation / discrimination practices or promoting cultural appreciation / tolerance / Cultural enrichment.
- Use of fine arts such as Basarwa music and dance: publicising singing of Basarwa music /songs and dance which in turn promote cultural identity of the Basarwa community.

*1 mark for identification 1 mark development 1 mark for conclusion*

- 3** The question was accessible to most candidates. This is indicated by all candidates' attempts to answer it. The question was fairly done, with most candidates scoring between 5 and 6 over 10. For each question, the following observations were made:

- (a) (i)** This question was well done by most candidates as they managed to understand and answer it correctly. Those who did not get it are those perceived a family as a wedding. The question was therefore well answered by most candidates. Few candidates who failed to give the correct answer gave answers such as, 'Family is a group of people living together/family is a man who married a women and they live together'.

The expected responses were a group of people related by birth / blood, marriage, adoption, or assimilation; a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood, or adoption, constituting a single household, and interacting with each other in their various social positions

*1 mark for a correct answer*

- (ii)** This question was fairly done as few candidates failed to define teenage pregnancy. Those candidates who did not get it correct defined teenage pregnancy as children / a child / individual / people and someone as they omitted key words such as girl / female / young women. The expected answer was along these lines: Teenage pregnancy is pregnancy in a female adolescent or young female under the age of 20 / pregnancy in a young woman aged 13-19 years.

*1 mark for correct answer*

- (b)** The question was inaccessible to most candidates as most were unable to attempt it. Majority of candidates seemed to be familiar with the role of UN in relation to the family. Most candidates did not attempt the question, and most failed to meet the requirements of the question as they mostly described instead of explaining the role of UN in promoting family ties. For example, candidates identified a point and failed to explain how UN promote family ties. The following are some of the incorrect responses given by the candidates:

- UN provide counselling to families.

- Provide peace and harmony in the family. These clearly indicate that the candidate did not know the roles of the UN. They failed to successfully meet the requirements of the question as the expected answers had to relate to the role of UN as some of the following:
- Provide humanitarian aid to natural disaster-stricken families: in order to prevent disintegration of families.
- Lobby for formulation and adherence to family protection laws or policies: to prevent social ills such as gender-based violence etc.
- Avail social safety nets: to ensure survival of family members/ ensure welfare of children through UNICEF.
- Funding of families: through UN organs for economic and social empowerment e.g. self-employment projects that are UN funded and directed to improving living standards of underprivileged families.

*1 mark for point, 1 mark for development, 1 mark for conclusion*

- (c) This question was quite challenging to most candidates but fairly attempted. Most candidates' scores ranged between 2 and 4 marks, as most struggled to expand and conclude their points. However, a few managed to get 6 marks as they were able to identify a point, expand and conclude which also showed that they were familiar with the concept of inter-marriage.

However, majority of candidates across all Centres failed to link points identified to the benefit to the society hence majority of candidates were able to score 4/6 on the question. It was also noted that some candidates from some Centres clearly lacked the skill of answering high order questions as they were identifying 3 points and describing them. This was a clear sign that they had no idea of how to answer high order tasks.

The main observations that were made are as follows:

- Candidates seemed not to understand the term 'inter-marriage' as some interpreted it to mean marrying from another country as they gave answers such as 'foreign exchange to improve development in Botswana', some mentioned the use of provision of skilled manpower to bring development in the societies which was completely not related to the expectations of the question.
- Some candidates gave answers in relation to "gene pool" most candidates focused on intelligence, physical features, and fitness' in their expansion.
- Others combined words like tolerance and enrichment in the same point identification or Unity and Social harmony.
- A handful who demonstrated understanding of the question gave correct answers and expansions but would struggle with conclusions as they gave conclusions like, 'promoting peace as a point identification yet in the conclusion they say lead to no conflict', which was a repetition of the point of identification.

The following were some of the expected answers:



- Promote tolerance: it teaches the society cultural acceptance and the ability to be sensitive to the interests of different ethnic groups thereby creating peaceful coexistence within and across ethnic groups.
- Boost genes of off-springs: it has scientific value as different genes are transferred to the off springs giving rise to a generation that is strong and resilient to hereditary or recessive traits/diseases.
- Promotes Cultural exchange / Cultural enrichment: Skills transfer (language, production skills, and knowledge on key economic processes) between the two ethnic groups through activities and interactions leads to the receiving ethnic group being more tolerant/ productive and appreciative.

*1 mark for point, 1 mark development and 1 mark for conclusion*

- 4 The question was fairly accessible to the majority of candidates especially question C. However quite a number of candidates left questions A and B unattempted. The question was fairly done, with most candidates scoring between 5 and 6 over 10. For each question, the following observations were made:

- (a) (i) The question was poorly done across all Centres, most of the candidates got the concept wrong while some left the question unanswered. Their common answer was defining a government.

Some of the expected answers were: - A nation or territory considered as an organised political community under one government. - A political division of a body of people that occupies a territory defined by frontiers and has authority to administer a system of rules over the people living inside it. - A political entity that regulates society and the population within the territory.

*1 mark for a correct definition*

- (ii) The question was well done. Candidates gave answers such as ‘an image a country wants to be seen by other countries / outside its boundaries. Some candidates confused the concept with Foreign Currency.

Other expected answers were: The mechanism governments use to guide their diplomatic their diplomatic interactions and relationships with other countries / A government strategy in dealing with other countries.

*1 mark for a correct definition*

- (b) The question was poorly performed; a few candidates were able to score 1 over 2. Most candidates confused the National Principles with Botswana’s Five national principles of Botho, Development, Unity, Democracy, Self-Reliance with ‘Botho’ being the most common answer given by candidates. Those who were able to score 2 marks were able to write a point and develop it with common answers as ‘Respect for human rights, Non-interference, and Good Neighbourliness.



Other expected answers were:

- Protection of national interests or Botswana first: Botswana's domestic needs such as security, food security must be met first before extending a helping hand to the international community etc.
- Protection of territorial integrity / national sovereignty defines and shapes Botswana's dealings with other countries as an independent nation with the aim of protecting its boundaries etc.
- Peaceful co-existence/ Good neighbourliness: Botswana's dealings with other countries is guided by the need to live peacefully with its neighbours by upholding existing protocols and even forging new peaceful resolutions on conflict management.
- Non-interference in the internal affairs of other States: Botswana exercises restraint or refrain from dictating on what other countries should do internally or at international level.
- Non-alignment on world matters / neutrality: by remaining resolute and neutral regardless of the influence of the superpowers or world political blocks.
- Respect for human rights: Botswana is signatory to treaties on human rights and does not condone human rights violations.
- Respect for international law: Botswana promotes and adheres to laws that govern the international community.

*1 mark for a point and 1 mark for its expansion*

- (c) This question was answered well by most candidates as they managed to score between 4 and 6 marks. Those who did not get it are those perceived to be lacking vocabulary and grammar skills and teachers should encourage on reading widely to improve vocabulary because they need to understand English for comprehension of ideas. The candidates however failed to meet the requirements of the question as they were able to write a point and its development but failed to give a conclusion or repeated the point to be the conclusion. Common answers given by candidates were: - It causes soil erosion, death of plants and animals, loss of tourism etc. Some candidates were clueless about desertification confusing it with terrorism.

The expected was along these lines:

- Loss of plants species (pastures, herbal plants, fuel wood etc.): the capacity of land to support plant life is reduced as loose soil buries plants or exposes their roots to the sun, robs them of moisture leading to depletion of some plant species / loss of biodiversity.
- Loss of soil fertility: the most productive layer of the soil is blown away from the surface swiftly due to lack of vegetation cover and lack of nutrients leading to low crop yields / decline agricultural production / shortage of food / lack of food security / high food prices / poverty / increased government expenditure to improve the quality of soil.
- Increased Soil erosion: increased run off from desertified areas makes the soils extremely prone to invading desert, exposed to wind resulting in dust storms etc. / low crop yields /

decline in agricultural production / shortage of food / lack of food security / high food prices / poverty.

- Enhances tourism: development of gullies, dongas, sand dunes may become attraction sites for tourists resulting in increased foreign exchange / improved standard of living of citizens / decline in the tourism sector

*1 mark for point identification, 1 mark development, 1 mark conclusion*

- 5 The question was fairly done. Majority of candidates who were able to answer it scored 5/10 (marks). There were some candidates who did not attempt to answer (scripts were left blank), while some chose to answer some items leaving others blank.

- (a) (i) The question was poorly done: Majority of candidates were defining government as an institution that rules the country and not a 'political' institution. This led to them losing marks. Candidates who were able to score, defined it as "a system through which a society is ruled" or "a body / group of people responsible for ruling a country". Candidates were confusing government with governance and yet others were mentioning one portion of government being the "elected" leaving out the "unelected".

Expected responses were a branch or provision of the supreme authority of a state / nation taken as representing the whole. / The political direction and control exercised by the state over its citizens. / a system through which a society / nation is ruled. / a political institution that runs the affairs of a country / a group of people / body.

*1 mark for a valid point*

- (ii) The question was fairly done. Majority of candidates were able to define accountability as "taking responsibility for one's own actions" some candidates gave answers like "taking responsibility for anything that happens", showing that they were not aware that it has to be what the country or an individual has done.

*1 mark for a valid point*

**Centres are advised to help prospective candidates to improve their accuracy when defining concepts.**

Some expected responses were being obliged to explain, justify and take responsibility for one's own actions / responsibility to do things a person is charged with.

*1 mark for a valid point*

- (b) The question was poorly attempted across all Centres. Majority of candidates failed to describe the composition of the judiciary. They included the President, cabinet and Dikgosi. They also could not describe the specific role of the judiciary like "trying cases" and "interpreting the law". Instead, they gave answers like "implementing the law" and "enforcing the law" of which are also done by other branches of government. They associated the Judiciary with law making and approval of laws before being passed to other branches.

Some expected responses include tries and judges / adjudicates / prosecutes cases / punishes those that break the law: The branch of government responsible for applying a country's laws in particular cases and responsible for administering prosecutions / hearings.

- Composition: it is the branch of government consisting of Courts, judges, magistrates etc.
- Interprets the constitution: the Judiciary reads, analyses and interprets the law before making necessary decisions / Branch of government invested with the power to strike down laws that it deems unconstitutional.

*1 mark for a point and 1 mark for its development.*

- (c) The question was fairly done on average, candidates scored 4/6 (marks). The majority of candidates were able to give the role of NGO's in promoting good governance but failed to give the development to show how that is done. They also failed to link their conclusion to good governance, as some brought up characteristics of good governance as their points /ID, without the role, i.e. promote, provide or protect, e.g. education, transparency etc., instead of providing voter/ human rights education, promote transparency.

Some candidates gave answers not related to good governance like NGOs addressing environmental issues. Still some candidates gave government entities like IEC, Ombudsman and DCEC as NGO's. Centres should really instil the skill and the expectations of the discuss question to the candidates.

Some expected responses include:

- Promote accountability / transparency on national matters / NGO's act as checks and balances to the government / criticise government: by questioning government decisions on key national matters, advising the government and even partaking on national issues thereby compelling the government of the day to deliver on its mandate.
- Facilitate rule of law / advise government on law making
- Promotion of education, for example voter education / human rights education

*1 mark for point identification, 1 mark for development and 1 mark for the conclusion / end result.*

## PAPER 2: WRITTEN PAPER

### General Comments

For this component, candidates generally did well in attempting to answer the questions that were placed before them. Centres generally did well in questions such as 1(a), 1(c), 2(c), and 4(b), where they managed to identify good points as well as expand well on them.

Other questions such as 1(b), 3(c), 4(c), 5(a), 5(b), and 5(c) were fairly done as most candidates were able to identify the points, with an effort to give some elaboration on their points. However, they failed to draw conclusions. Questions such as 2(a), 2(b), 3(a), 3(b), and 4(a) appeared to have been the most challenging to the candidates. Most candidates just provided general knowledge of the concepts and failed to link those concepts to the questions at hand.

### Comments on Individual Items

- 1 (a) The question was done well across Centres. Most candidates were able to describe how transport and communication is important to Botswana's economy. Only a few of them failed to link the relationship between the economy and the industry. They instead wrote about the importance of transport in general while others wrote about the impact of the industry on the lives of the people e.g. 'helps transport people from one place to another'. It is important to point out that the question was accessible to almost all the candidates. It was easier for them to identify the point and its development.
- (b) This question was fairly done even though some candidates had limited content when presenting their answers. There was a repetition of some of the key words from the question itself e.g. 'cultural groups accept each other because they tolerate each other'. They mostly wrote about peace and cultural tolerance as different points whereas they are linked as one point. Candidates who were able to write about conflicts presented it in a negative point of view e.g. 'avoid conflicts'. This led to loss of marks. Generally, there was evidence that cultural tolerance was confused for importance of culture by some candidates e.g. answers from candidates included 'teaches norms and values', 'promoted *botho*' etc.
- 2 (a) Not well done. Most candidates failed to answer this question, they aligned it to the good characteristics of a national citizen. It was evident that they confused global with national citizen. Their answers captured duties such as payment of tax, voting and taking part in national activities. Moreover, candidates failed to qualify their answers to show the global aspect, hence losing marks.
- (b) It was not well answered by most Centres. Most candidates failed to answer the question as expected. This is because of the following reasons: they confused it with issues of addressing gender disparities, while others concentrated on the role of females at family level. In addition to this, a significant number of the candidates explained duties of the government in promoting gender equality, missing the point on how women contribute. Also, some candidates explained how citizenship is acquired in Botswana which was parallel to the question. Lastly it should be noted that some candidates were able to identify their points but failed to elaborate or link them to promotion of good citizenry, some using the points as their development.

(c) The question was well done. Most candidates were able to meet the demands of the question. They scored good marks in this question. However, the challenge noticed was the candidates' failure to show contrasting sides to their ideas, leading them to lose marks. Some candidates failed to provide two developments in most cases as they used the question to support their first development. Most candidates also struggled to provide conclusions related to their points. Nevertheless, most candidates demonstrated wide knowledge of the concept of Covid 19 as a global crisis.

3 (a) The question was poorly done. In almost all the Centres it was evident that candidates failed to outline steps followed when forming a government in Botswana, in fact they outlined stages of law making in Botswana. For example, some of their responses included the stages a bill go through until it becomes a law.

(b) Not well done. Most candidates failed to zero in on the responses of the dikgosi as the question demanded. Instead, they wrote about the role played by dikgosi during the threats of assimilation into the Union of South Africa and the incorporation into the BSACo. A significant number of them also lost marks due to mentioning of wrong names of some chiefs and this nullified their answers. Some also failed to come out clearly on how the dikgosi reacted to the declaration but rather stipulated the reasons why *dikgosi* were skeptical about the declaration.

(c) The question was fairly done. Most candidates were able to state ways in which Botswana government promotes economic diversification but failed to expand or show diversification part in their discussion hence scored lower marks. In addition, they mostly wrote about economic development, therefore the question was not accessible to them.

4 (a) The question was poorly done by most Centres. Candidates failed to address it because they described ways in which multi-ethnicity promote nation building which was a reverse of the question. It seemed they were confused by the word 'hinder' leading to them writing positives of nation building.

(b) The question was generally well done. Most candidates were able to score quite well in this question. This showed their good level of understanding/comprehension of the question.

(c) Fairly done question. Candidates attempt on answering this question was fairly good. The challenge however was the confusion of African Union with SADC. The examples which they gave were those ones of SADC which then led to loss of marks.

5 (a) The question was fairly done by most Centres. Candidates obtained partial marks here because their responses were not aligned to the question. For example, some of their responses were on characteristics of good governance such as transparency, accountability, respect of human rights etc. instead of writing answers such as 'The Republic', 'Citizenship' 'Executive' etc.

(b) Fairly done by most candidates. Majority of candidates were able to identify causes of conflict over the use of natural resources but failed to show where conflict was hence partial marks.

They mostly addressed the effect. Some candidates also confused natural resources with human resources which nullified their responses.

- (c) The question was fairly done. Most candidates' responses showed that they understood who the disadvantaged members of the society were. They were able to discuss their contributions to economic development. However, they failed to elaborate more and failed to draw conclusions to their argument. There was also evidence of a few candidates who discussed the contribution of the government instead.

## **PAPER 3: WRITTEN PAPER**

### **General Comments**

The 2024 paper was purely a research paper as such it was accessible to most candidates compared to the papers written in the previous years, most questions were basic research questions. The candidates also related so well to the two scenarios used for Q1 and Q2 particularly scenario 2 on the issue of depression. Whereas in the past two years the component was concerned with candidates failing to write basic components of research like aims, findings and conclusions, the 2024 cohort seemed a bit different and demonstrated growth in the component as most of the candidates adhered to the basic requirements of writing stems when formulating the aims and findings which were question 2c and 2d as well as conclusion in question 1c. Despite this improvement, the team also observed that there were still some candidates who wrote the stem 'I found out/ found out' when drawing conclusions which calls for Centres to train candidates more on the difference between writing findings and conclusions.

This year the method of data presentation assessed in question 1(h) was a statistical table and the general observation made was that despite the method rarely tested in the previous years, the candidates adequately demonstrated their skills by drawing the table and labelling all items. However, Centres still need to emphasise the structure of a table as a box with rows and columns because some candidates did not enclose the rows and columns with borders. Therefore, Centres are encouraged to train candidates to practice different data presentation methods because some candidates presented their data in the 'usual' commonly used methods like line graph and bar graph.

The quality of work and presentation of candidates' work has improved across candidates as it was observed in the layout of answers on the spaces provided, the tables drawn, the aims and findings as well as the questionnaire. Candidates also displayed knowledge on designing a questionnaire with regard to providing adequate components of bio data and constructing questions. However, Centres still need to encourage candidates to observe the allotted marks and provide adequate questions because most of them provided few questions which limited attainment of the maximum marks.

### **Comments on Individual Items**

- 1 (a) Generally, most candidates were able to come up with a suitable title, Botswana Inter-censal growth rates between 1971 and 2011. There were still some candidates who reproduced the instruction or wrote an incomplete title that omitted key information like Botswana and censal periods ranging from 1971 to 2011. Centres are encouraged to train candidates on how to come up with a title for the study NOT for presenting the results because some candidates formulate titles like: Bar graph showing the results of a study on Botswana inter-censal population growth between 1971 and 2011.
- (b) Most candidates were able to identify the data presentation method that has been used as a bar graph hence the question was well answered. Only in isolated instances, there were candidates who wrote quantitative method or even wrong data presentation methods like table, histogram and even pie chart.
- (c) The question was fairly done, there is a great improvement on how candidates draw conclusions, despite that improvement, and there were some candidates who started their conclusions with the stem I found out that: There were other candidates who provided reasons



for the observed growth rates instead of concluding what the different bars meant and making comparisons between the censal periods

Therefore, Centres are urged to train candidates to master the two components and understand that they are two distinct components of research. Candidates should also be familiarised with the use of most/highest, lowest/least as words that should be used instead of numbers as candidates gave the growth rates for different censal periods without making any judgement of what they meant.

- (d) Question was fairly done, candidates demonstrated an understanding of what trend is, some were able to address the demands of the question by stating the trend and detailed the decrease using the inter-censal periods and growth rates starting from 1971-1981 to 2001-2011.

There were some candidates who just stated that the trend as decreasing/declining or in a phrase or sentence as the population growth rates were decreasing between 1971 and 2011 and did not go on to provide the details of how the decrease or decline happened. The other group just gave a description: population growth rate was 4.5% during 1971-1981, it decreased to 3.5% in 1981-1991, then decreased to 2% in 1991-2001 and 1.5% in 2001 to 2011 These scenarios led to attainment of partial marks.

- (e) Average performance on this question, some candidates used what could have been the answer on 1e at 1c & 1d where they provided reasons in the conclusion and description of trend (misplaced reasons), some candidates provided reasons for an increasing population growth instead of reasons for a decreasing population. Those who provided some of the above were limited in scoring maximum marks because they repeated points. Some of the common repeated responses included: high death rate and outbreak of diseases; Family planning and use of contraceptives just to cite a few, Candidates also displayed a tendency where they would state a point and extend the same point in a statement e-g High death rate- a lot of people died between 1971 and 2011.

- (f) Fairly answered question, candidates could recall the advantages of using oral interviews however candidates still displayed a tendency of negative answering, for example the researcher does not have to wait for answer, the method does not cater for the literate only.

Most of the advantages candidate stated included: Provides first-hand information / Suitable for both literate and illiterate people / Yields immediate responses.

- (g) The question was badly done with most candidates being able to state at least one point especially on allocation of resources/ budgeting purposes but failed to expand it such that it addresses impact of decreasing population growth. Other candidates were just giving general purpose of research but failed to relate them to the information on population. The question required some level of comprehension and application of the scenario by way of suggesting what the government could do with information showing declining population growth over the years. However, candidates merely demonstrated understanding of the concept of population census, population and development planning but failed to address the data at hand.

- (h) Despite the table being so uncommon over the years, even in the recent past exam papers, the item was very accessible to most candidates. Candidates demonstrated a commendable

understanding and requisite skills for presenting data in a statistical table. Generally, they were able to draw a correct structure with rows and columns of course there were some who did not enclose part of their tables with borders, some labelled variables outside the table and others failed to provide the title while others wrote an incomplete title (omitting the years (1971 to 2011). Centres are advised to keep on preparing candidates for different data presentation methods because some candidates were either not mindful of the question at hand or did not know about the table at all because they drew line graphs, histograms and even pie charts.

- 2 (a) The question was fairly done with candidates either finding it accessible at both extremes; those who answered it correctly could recall the types of research as qualitative and quantitative while those who gave wrong responses mostly stated data collection methods like questionnaires, document studies and others. The candidates should be made aware that there is a difference between types of research and data collection methods.
- (b) Generally, the question was accessible as most candidates were able to state the institutions and maybe failed to score maximum marks because they repeated some institutions or wrote names wrongly like Botswana Statistics (refers to data & figures in Botswana) instead of Statistics Botswana(it is a specific name of an entity & should not be altered). However, there were some candidates who could not differentiate between institutions and personnel/ professions/ job titles as they gave answers like Minister of Health, Social workers, Psychologists, therapists etc. It is worth noting that candidates demonstrated diverse knowledge of institutions that deal with mental health as a public issue.
- (c) This year's cohort demonstrated growth in the way they formulated aims because they generally applied the skill starting their aims with the stem: Nonofu wanted to find out: Most common aims written were on causes, effects, solutions, age, and gender. However, there were cases of candidates who wrote leading statements like: Nonofu wanted to find out if alcohol caused depression, the ages that experience depression are 15-20 etc. Centres are encouraged to emphasise correct formulation of research aims and provide more research scenarios to cultivate the skill.
- (d) Contrary to the growth demonstrated in formulating aims, there were isolated incidents where some candidates failed to construct proper findings as they left the key stem: Nonofu found out/ Found out: Some of them started very well with the stem but wrote statements used on aims without providing answers, for example, they wrote: Found out the causes of depression / Found out the effects of depression / Found out the age that is mostly depressed. Generally, a significant number of candidates performed well on this question as they came up with relatable findings to the issue of depression as a 'real public issue'.
- (e) The question was fairly done; most candidates were able to come up with possible causes of depression ranging from traumatic life experiences like loss of loved ones, divorce, losing jobs or failure to find jobs; different forms of abuse, financial problems, use of drugs and others. However, there were some who gave effects of depression or repeated similar reasons leading to loss of marks.
- (f) The question was well done as most candidates were able to recall the problems the researcher may face like extreme weather events, uncooperative respondents and lack of transport. Quite

a number of them repeated the point on uncooperative respondents by stating different ways in which respondents were uncooperative (failure to return questionnaires or losing questionnaires, failure to turn up for appointments, use of offensive language or being rude).

The 2024 candidates just like in the previous years' candidates were writing responses like lack of time, lack of money, obtaining wrong information and Centres are encouraged to emphasise that as a component, problems should be emphasised as those things that are beyond the researcher's control that may hinder their study or data collection. Issues of time and money should be emphasised as the factors that the researcher considers at the planning stage.

- (g) The question was accessible to most candidates as they were able to state the steps especially compile, analyse, conclusion. However, candidates were failing to follow the logical order of the steps resulting in loss of marks. Centres are encouraged to continue to emphasise that the steps should be stated in chronological order and candidates should avoid jumbling them.
- (h) As stated in Section 1, this year it was observed that the quality of responses for questionnaire showed some significant improvement in terms of bio data components (candidates provided two or more components) and quality of questions. However, the candidates were limited in number of questions asked as most provided 3 to 4 questions, statements without use of basic how, who, where, why and what (Effects of depression/age affected by depression) and repetition of questions, for instance:
- What causes depression? / State reasons that led to depression
  - Suggest ways in which depression can be solved / What measures can be taken to reduce cases of depression

Candidates also requested personal information like name and surname under the bio data. Centres should emphasise that the nature of the subject research should be confidential hence such personal details should not be included. A disturbing observation made was that of candidates who either wrote questions only or wrote bio data and questions only, as Examiners of the subject, there was a general agreement that Centres should train candidates on how to design a questionnaire as a standard data collection instrument and emphasise that it should comprise of all components starting with the title, introduction, bio data and questions (number of questions should be guided by the total marks allocated, for instance, this year they were supposed to provide 5 questions).