

**AN EXPLORATION OF GRADE 10 RURAL HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS' AND  
TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING  
WITHIN LIFE ORIENTATION EDUCATION**

**BY**

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## **DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

I, Qurisha Maharaj, declare that: **An exploration of Grade 10 rural high school learners' and teachers' experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education**, abides by the following rules:

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated is my original work.
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## **SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT**

This dissertation is submitted with/without my approval

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Dr Ncamisile P. Mthiyane (Supervisor)

## **DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I dedicate this dissertation to all the Life Orientation teachers and learners who participated in this study. Without them, this study would not have been possible.

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## ABSTRACT

The current state of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation education in South African high schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> century was explored in this study. In particular, this study was based largely on the experiences of teachers and learners of the status of Career Guidance and Counselling offered in South Africa (with particular emphasis on rural and peri-urban high schools). Conceptualised within the theoretical framework of the Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994), this study aimed to elicit experiences and understandings of teachers and learners about Career Guidance and Counselling in order to explore what can be done to assist millions of young people in South Africa to make informed career decisions. A qualitative methodological approach to research was adopted in conducting this study. The study sample was selected using purposive sampling and consisted of four Life Orientation teachers with teaching experience within the Senior and Further Education and Training (FET) Phases, as well as eight Grade 10 learners. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were used to generate data from the participants in order to explore the experiences and challenges of learning and teaching Career Guidance and Counselling. Data was analysed using Colaizzi's (1978) phenomenological data analysis method in order to accurately depict the experiences of the participants. The conclusions of the study indicate that: most of the learners were unable to provide clear understandings of the term counselling and did not know what the term meant; most teachers do not have the necessary knowledge and skills needed to support learners to make informed subject and career choices; Career Guidance and Counselling within the Life Orientation curriculum seem to not meet the career needs of all learners; and the delivery of the current Life Orientation curriculum within particular contexts is a challenging experience for teachers who participated in this study. However, with appropriate and professional teacher training and a more flexible and adaptable curriculum design, the participants felt that these challenges could be overcome.

Keywords: career; career choice; career counselling; career guidance; rural school; peri-urban school; senior phase and FET phase.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STUDY

<b>CAPS</b>	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
<b>C2005</b>	Curriculum 2005
<b>CGC</b>	Career Guidance and Counselling
<b>DoBE</b>	Department of Basic Education
<b>DoE</b>	Department of Education
<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training
<b>LO</b>	Life Orientation
<b>NED</b>	Natal Education Department
<b>NEP</b>	National Education Policy
<b>NCS</b>	National Curriculum Statement
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>OBE</b>	Outcomes-Based Education
<b>RNCS</b>	Revised National Curriculum Statement
<b>SCCT</b>	Social Cognitive Career Theory
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TITLE PAGE</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>SUPERVISOR’S STATEMENT</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STUDY</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	<b>xii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	<b>xiii</b>
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>xiv</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	<b>1</b>
1.2 Background to the study .....	<b>1</b>
1.3 Problem Statement.....	<b>3</b>
1.4 Motivation for the study.....	<b>5</b>
1.5 Significance of the study.....	<b>6</b>
1.6 Objectives of the study.....	<b>6</b>
1.7 Key Research Questions .....	<b>7</b>
1.8 Clarification of key concepts .....	<b>7</b>
1.8.1 Career.....	<b>7</b>
1.8.2 Career choice .....	<b>8</b>
1.8.3 Career counselling .....	<b>8</b>
1.8.4 Career guidance .....	<b>8</b>
1.8.5 School .....	<b>9</b>
1.8.6 Rural school .....	<b>9</b>
1.8.7 Peri-urban school .....	<b>9</b>
1.8.8 Senior Phase.....	<b>9</b>
1.8.9 FET Phase .....	<b>10</b>
1.9 Delimitations of the study .....	<b>10</b>
1.10 Outline of the chapters in the study .....	<b>11</b>
1.11 Chapter summary .....	<b>12</b>

<b>CHAPTER TWO</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</b> .....	<b>13</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	13
2.2 Early adolescence and aspirations for post-secondary education .....	13
2.3 South African Education prior to, and immediately after, 1994.....	15
2.4 Career education and provision in South Africa: A historical perspective.....	16
2.5 The history of the Life Orientation subject.....	19
2.6 Career Education and Career Guidance and Counselling programmes in the new curriculum in South Africa .....	21
2.7 The role of the teacher as a Life Orientation specialist and Career Guidance Counsellor .....	25
2.8 Career development within a rural community .....	27
2.9 The need for School Guidance and Counselling services in South Africa .....	29
2.10 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework .....	30
2.10.1 Background and Evolution of SCCT .....	31
2.10.2 Key Theoretical Constructs of SCCT .....	32
2.10.3 The application of SCCT in previous studies .....	34
2.10.4 Using SCCT to explore Grade 10 rural high school learners' and teachers' experiences of CGC within Life Orientation education .....	36
2.10.5 Limitations of SCCT.....	38
2.11 Chapter summary .....	38
<b>CHAPTER THREE</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY</b> .....	<b>39</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	39
3.2 Research paradigm.....	39
3.3 Research design .....	41
3.3.1 Research approach .....	42
3.3.2 Case study .....	42
3.3.3 Research context .....	43
3.3.4 Sample and sampling procedures.....	44
3.4 Data generation methods and procedures .....	46
3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews .....	46
3.4.2 Focus-group discussions .....	49
3.5 Data analysis .....	52



3.6 Issues of trustworthiness .....	55
3.7 Ethical considerations .....	57
3.8 Chapter summary .....	58
<b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>59</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	59
4.2 Presentation and discussion of the research findings.....	60
4.2.1 Learners’ understanding of the terms Life Orientation and Career Guidance and Counselling .....	61
4.2.2 The role of Career Guidance and Counselling in learners’ subject choices .....	66
4.2.2.1 The relevance of current career education and guidance provided in South African high schools .....	68
4.2.3 Learners’ perceptions of the topic Careers and Career Choices within the Life Orientation curriculum.....	70
4.2.4 The status and practice of Life Orientation teachers in rural and township high schools.....	71
4.2.5 Teachers’ perceptions of Life Orientation and Careers and Career Choices.....	75
4.2.6 Challenges learners experience in making career decisions .....	77
4.2.7 Challenges teachers experience in implementing Career Guidance and Counselling .....	80
4.2.7.1 Lack of parental involvement and support.....	83
4.2.7.2 Inadequate support received from the school and Department of Education .....	86
4.2.8 Areas within Career Guidance and Counselling that need development in order to meet the career needs of learners .....	87
4.3 Chapter summary .....	89
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>STUDY SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>90</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	90
5.2 Study summary .....	90
5.3 Conclusions.....	91
5.3.1 Learners’ understanding of the terms Life Orientation and Career Guidance and Counselling .....	91
5.3.2 The role of Career Guidance and Counselling in learners’ subject choices .....	92
5.3.2.2 The relevance of current career education and guidance provided in South African	

high schools .....	92
5.3.3 Learners’ perceptions of the topic Careers and Career Choices within the Life Orientation curriculum.....	92
5.3.4 The status and practice of Life Orientation teachers in rural and township high schools.....	92
5.3.5 Teachers’ perceptions of Life Orientation and Careers and Career Choices.....	93
5.3.6 Challenges learners experience in making career decisions .....	93
5.3.7 Challenges teachers experience in implementing Career Guidance and Counselling .....	94
5.3.7.1 Lack of parental involvement and support.....	94
5.3.7.2 Inadequate support received from the school and Department of Education .....	95
5.3.8 Areas within Career Guidance and Counselling that need development in order to meet the career needs of learners .....	95
5.4 Recommendations.....	95
5.4.1 Life Orientation teachers should be qualified and well informed.....	95
5.4.2 Improved resource materials in rural and township high schools.....	96
5.4.3 Internet access and libraries at schools .....	96
5.4.4 Rapport between parents and Life Orientation teachers .....	97
5.4.5 Discussion groups and training for learners.....	97
5.4.6 Initiatives by the school principal and governing body .....	97
5.4.7 Initiatives and support from the Department of Education.....	97
5.5 Implications for further research.....	98
5.6 Chapter summary .....	98
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1.....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2.....</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3.....</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>APPENDIX 4.....</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>APPENDIX 5.....</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>APPENDIX 6.....</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>APPENDIX 7.....</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>APPENDIX 8.....</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>APPENDIX 9.....</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>APPENDIX 10.....</b>	<b>136</b>

**APPENDIX 11.....137**

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1:</b> Developmental patterns of the adolescent.....	14
<b>Figure 2:</b> A comparison of LO and school guidance and counselling services.....	24
<b>Figure 3:</b> How career counselling overlaps with other forms of help.....	30
<b>Figure 4:</b> SCCT model of person, contextual, and experiential factors affecting career-related choice behaviour.....	33
<b>Figure 5:</b> Data analysis of Grade 10 learners' and LO teachers' experiences.....	54

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1:</b> Learning outcomes previously implemented for the Life Orientation curriculum.....	20
<b>Table 2:</b> Themes for Careers and Career Choices in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase.....	22
<b>Table 3:</b> Summary of school contexts.....	44
<b>Table 4:</b> Tabulated presentation of themes and sub-themes.....	60

## LIST OF APPENDICES

<b>Appendix 1:</b> Department of Education Permission Letter.....	115
<b>Appendix 2:</b> Ethical Clearance Certificate.....	116
<b>Appendix 3:</b> Permission from the principals of the selected schools.....	117
<b>Appendix 4:</b> Informed consent form to the teacher participants.....	123
<b>Appendix 5:</b> Permission letter to the parents/ guardians.....	126
<b>Appendix 6:</b> Assent form to the learner participants.....	129
<b>Appendix 7:</b> Semi-structured interview schedule for learners.....	131
<b>Appendix 8:</b> Semi-structured interview schedule for teachers.....	133
<b>Appendix 9:</b> Focus group interview schedule for teachers and learners.....	135
<b>Appendix 10:</b> Editor's Letter.....	136
<b>Appendix 11:</b> Turnitin Report.....	137

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter serves to introduce and explain the aim of the study. The background, problem statement, and the significance of the study are discussed and relevant key concepts pertaining to the study are highlighted. The rationale and motivation of the study are configured from an overview of the needs of learners and the challenges they encounter. It is against this introductory backdrop that this study is set in order to unravel the experiences of South African teachers and learners with regard to Career Guidance and Counselling (CGC) within the Life Orientation (LO) curriculum.

### 1.2 Background to the study

Over the last few decades, career education has increasingly become a topic of interest across multiple fields, with many efforts being made towards CGC amongst high school learners. For instance, in many countries, initiatives to develop and implement life skills education in schools and in other social institutions have been undertaken. The emphasis of these initiatives and programmes has been on the need to focus on skills that will enable learners to succeed in the many roles that they will have to play as citizens in a diverse society, which is increasingly seen as an important element in preparing learners for the World of Work (Nathan & Hill, 2006). In South African high schools, the LO subject is one such initiative that deals with orientation to the World of Work by guiding learners towards informed decisions about further study and career choices (Department of Education, 2007). However, new careers requiring new skills and attitudes are constantly emerging. Consequently, career counselling has to keep abreast of these developments if it is to remain effective and relevant in postmodern society (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2007). Therefore, the responsibility of the LO teacher goes much further than the provision of assistance with initial career choices.

The education system in South Africa during apartheid and before the democratically elected government in 1994 was divided in terms of race and language, and was funded and resourced in ways that favoured only white South Africans (Hlalele, 2012). Consequently, black South Africans had to live and attend schools in townships or rural areas which had limited resources and disadvantaged physical conditions. After the elections in 1994, the

Department of Education (DoE) combined the educational system into a single democratic system whereby all public schools are governed by the same conditions of service and national legislation; receive the same policies; and implement the same curriculum, including rural schools (DoE, 2007). However, this has not been the case for all rural schools. Despite education legislation and school reforms to promote improved performance and quality education, the particular needs of rural learners cannot be met within the overall policy of a single educational system. More specifically, a “one size fits all” approach to CGC implementation makes it possible to overlook and disregard important aspects of the lives and career needs of learners.

Career choices at school are usually enabled by teachers through a school subject known in South African schools as Life Orientation (LO), which is a compulsory subject in the high school curriculum. This subject addresses the following: skills; knowledge; values and attitudes about self, the environment and responsible citizenship; a healthy and productive life; recreation and physical activity; and lastly, career choices (DoE, 2008). Career choices is one of the many topics within the LO curriculum which was introduced as a new topic in the late 1990’s, following the democratic elections. Career guidance is important during adolescence as adolescents begin to engage in self-exploration and potential career options (Witko, Bernes, Magnusson & Bardick, 2009). However, for effective career guidance to be achieved, learners need to be aware of their own abilities, talents and interests (Rashid, Bakar, Asimiran & Tieng, 2009) which can be facilitated through in-school career counselling. This suggests that learners not only require career guidance but also career counselling in order to make informed career decisions. Therefore, career counselling in schools is a key element in helping learners to be aware of the educational requirements for different careers, as well as to discover their interests and inherent aptitudes through psychometric testing (Lazarus & Ihuoma, 2011). This is achieved by understanding that one’s personal attributes and interests shape one’s career. Therefore, the emphasis is on learners undergoing counselling about their informed choices and the development of career opportunities while they are still in secondary school.

There are known career support programmes in South African high schools which are provided as part of the LO subject. For instance, making informed career decisions entails learners choosing school subjects in Grade 9 through the topic “World of Work” within the LO curriculum, which aims to “guide learners in making informed and responsible decisions



about their subject choices, further studies and careers” (Department of Basic Education, 2011, p. 9). In addition, learners in Grade 10 are introduced to the topic “Careers and Career Choices” within LO, which aims to “equip learners with the knowledge, skills, and values to make informed decisions about subject choices, careers, additional and higher education opportunities and the World of Work” (Department of Basic Education, 2011, p. 9). Therefore, only Grade 10 learners were used in this study as participants since these learners had already been introduced to the World of Work and school subject choices in Grade 9 and were more able to communicate about their experiences of CGC within the LO curriculum. Furthermore, in many South African rural high schools, the aim of LO is not always achieved since Grade 9 learners repeatedly complain that they do not know what subjects to choose nor do they have knowledge of their own potential or the possibilities in the World of Work to choose a career path (Abrahams, Jano & van Lill, 2015). It may therefore be concluded that CGC within the LO curriculum does not sufficiently equip rural high school learners to make informed and pertinent career choices, which in turn decreases learners’ aspirations to pursue post-secondary education. It is on this premise that the current study is based.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

In 1997, the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) system was introduced in South Africa in the form of Curriculum 2005 (C2005). C2005 was introduced to South Africa’s post-apartheid education system in an attempt to overcome the curricular divisions of the past (DoE, 2007). However, despite efforts made by teachers to embrace C2005, a range of criticism resulted in curriculum revisions. While the curriculum was being revised, new subjects were introduced which were on par with the principles of the National Curriculum Statement [NCS] (Department of Basic Education, 2011). LO is one of the new compulsory subjects from Grade R to Grade 12 (R-12). One of the purposes of LO is to equip learners with skills, knowledge, attitudes and values to enable them to face life’s challenges in an informed and responsible way so that they become confident learners (DoE, 2007). In accordance with this, CGC within the South African context is a component of LO. However, CGC seems to be beset with problems and complexities as it enters the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Studies by Tebele, Nel and Dlamini (2015) and Jonck (2015) found that South African learners are very keen to be provided with more information about certain careers when it comes to subject choices, as opposed to the basic advice they receive from their LO teachers. Additionally, in a study conducted in a township high school (Magano, 2011), the findings

indicated that South African learners expressed that they needed more engaging conversations rather than direct teaching methods in the LO class. A challenge highlighted by Naude (2014) is that due to the South African government trying to improve the matric pass rate, there is little or no attention given to CGC in high schools. Jonck (2015) cautions that proper career guidance and subject choices in line with learners' future plans, abilities and interests, can contribute to at least making the situation manageable for learners and also serve as a motivating factor to achieve success scholastically. Therefore, it is evident that South African learners seem to be unable to make informed, wise and calculated decisions in terms of career choices and furthering their studies as a result of the inadequate guidance, counselling, and information provided to support them.

In addition, most South African high schools - particularly rural and township schools - do not have Educational Psychologists or registered counsellors. Therefore, the LO curriculum driven by LO teachers expects teachers to be in a position to guide and support learners, while also playing the role of a counsellor regarding careers, personal, emotional and social issues. However, LO teachers who are allocated to teach other subjects do not have enough time for the intervention and counselling that is supposed to be dedicated to LO. Studies (Dabula & Makura, 2013; Watson, McMahon, Foxcroft & Els, 2010) have indicated that in most South African high schools LO is treated as an extra subject and is not given the respect that it deserves, unlike all other subjects. This study, highlights that one of the challenges of the teaching and learning of the LO curriculum is that teachers seem not to have the necessary expertise and knowledge to implement the LO curriculum.

It is important to note, the implementation of the LO curriculum, especially CGC, requires the LO teacher to be aware of the context from which the learner comes from as it influences the teaching of all domains in LO (Prinsloo, 2007). Thus, the problem presented by this study is that CGC within the LO curriculum is not given enough attention in rural or township high schools in order to equip learners in making informed career decisions. Furthermore, I identified and selected this issue as it is not only an area of personal interest, but also an area identified in the literature as being focussed mainly on learners from urban schools. I have also identified a lack of research into the role of career support programmes during career choices - especially in rural schools - by both teachers and learners. A possible reason for this could be that the complexities around CGC within the LO curriculum are often overlooked because they are part of a non-examinable subject.

#### **1.4 Motivation for the study**

New careers are constantly emerging and some existing careers are undergoing change. It is against this background that learners not only require in-depth information about career choices, but also career counselling from their LO teachers in order to meet the demands of a society which is experiencing vast changes in the workplace, and which is rapidly becoming more diverse. Nevertheless, CGC is one of the most neglected areas in the South African school curriculum (Magano, 2011; Tebele, Nel & Dlamini, 2015). As a result, the majority of South African learners leave school with only a vague knowledge of employment opportunities and with little awareness of the most appropriate career options they can pursue (Dabula & Makura, 2013). This is a cause for concern as to whether LO teachers have adequate knowledge regarding the implementation of CGC. A study conducted to determine the factors that influenced students' career choices found that most students entering tertiary institutions in South Africa lacked direction in course selection and provided vague reasoning for their chosen courses of study (Abrahams, Jano & van Lill, 2015). This suggests that within the South African public education system there is presently inadequate provision for career guidance or individual career counselling for learners.

In my experience of teaching for three years at a Skills and Development Training Centre, I have noticed that the majority of students (particularly from rural areas) come to this institution to enrol for a particular course after having gained some other qualification - irrespective of their suitability for the subjects chosen. This has been a cause for concern for me, both personally and professionally. This observation prompted me to enquire more about the reasons behind this phenomenon. Upon further questioning, most students expressed that they were inadequately informed and did not receive any CGC at schools. Consequently, these uninformed students register for any course, not knowing what the requirements and expectations are for them to pursue certain career fields. They then opt to do additional courses that they believe will secure a chance of future employment. These students have also confirmed that this has become a very stressful journey for them and their parents or their families, both emotionally and financially. I therefore decided to explore the possible reasons for this disjunction between the CGC that learners receive in school and their career choices. If LO is intended to guide learners to make informed and responsible decisions about their careers, then it is important to acknowledge how learners experience CGC, as well as to identify the role that LO plays in suggesting or not suggesting a career to high school learners. Therefore, this study focused on how Grade 10 learners' and teachers' experiences

of CGC within the LO curriculum supported or did not support them in the preparation for informed career choices.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The findings generated from this study highlight the growing need for LO teachers to implement and focus more on CGC in high schools. Subsequently, this study has been useful in the recognition of the practice of CGC in rural and township schools and has revealed more information about the challenges LO teachers and learners face on a daily basis. Although South Africa has implemented strategies and policies to increase CGC, they have proved to be mostly unsuccessful because of weak governmental structures to monitor implementation and gaps in policies or legislation which do not sufficiently address the career needs of all learners from different schools (Watson et al., 2010). Therefore, this study addresses these gaps by interviewing LO teachers and learners to elicit their understandings, practices and experiences of CGC within the LO curriculum and also to share their insights about CGC unique to their school environment. Furthermore, this study is significant because the results of this study can be used by LO teachers with an interest in improving the amount of career information and counselling learners receive; curriculum development specialists and textbook writers or authors who prepare LO materials for Grade 9 and 10 classrooms or on career education, guidance and counselling in secondary schools; Department of Education and Higher Education institutions to understand how CGC influence learners in choosing or not choosing a certain career; school governing bodies or principals who have a vested interest in ensuring that CGC delivery is relevant and useful to learners; and national and regional policymakers who design LO curriculum policies for high schools in South Africa.

### **1.6 Objectives of the study**

In relation to the preceding discussion and the problem statement, the objectives of this study are:

- *To explore how Grade 10 learners' and teachers' experience Career Guidance and Counselling within the Life Orientation curriculum;*
- To investigate what information and counselling do learners' receive during subject choice lessons and how is it imparted;
- To examine how does Career Guidance and Counselling assist learners in making informed career choices;

- To investigate the significance and value that teachers and learners attribute to Career Guidance and Counselling in Life Orientation Education;
- To identify the challenges (if any) learners experience in making career decisions; and
- To identify the challenges (if any) teachers experience in implementing Career Guidance and Counselling with learners.

### **1.7 Key Research Questions**

In order to address the aforementioned objectives, this study was guided by the following central research question:

*How do Grade 10 learners and teachers experience Career Guidance and Counselling within the Life Orientation curriculum?*

Several sub-questions were also included in the study, namely:

- What information and counselling do learners receive during subject choice lessons and how is it imparted?
- How does Career Guidance and Counselling assist learners in making informed career choices?
- What significance and value do teachers and learners attribute to Career Guidance and Counselling in Life Orientation Education?
- What challenges (if any) do learners experience in making career decisions?
- What challenges (if any) do teachers experience in implementing Career Guidance Counselling with learners?

### **1.8 Clarification of key concepts**

This section focuses on providing clarity of important concepts that will emerge throughout the research study, all of which address the research questions presented in section 1.7 above.

#### **1.8.1 Career**

A career is defined as the sequence of employment which includes related positions, roles, activities and experiences encountered by a person (Sheath, 2013). On the other hand, a job is defined as duties, responsibilities and tasks that are performed or accomplished by an individual (employee) in exchange for pay (money) [Moè, Pazzaglia & Ronconi, 2010].

### **1.8.2 Career choice**

Choice is considered as the act of choosing or preferring between two or more possibilities (Aarts, Chalker & Weiner, 2014). Career choice, however, is the act of choosing a career path which is often made during adolescence or early adulthood, but is also modified as changes in the self, the world, or work occur during the course of an individual's life (Mutekwe & Modiba, 2012). In this study, career choice is referred to as the ability of high school learners to successfully choose and make informed career decisions.

### **1.8.3 Career counselling**

Counselling is defined by a number of scholars (Bakare, 2015; D'Incau, Conforti, Gangemi, Vettore & Carreri, 2011; McLeod, 2013) as a process that is organised in a series of steps which aims to help individuals cope (deal with or adapt to) better with situations they are facing. Career counselling is the on-going face-to-face interaction performed by individuals who have been trained in the field to assist people in obtaining a clear understanding of themselves (e.g., interests, skills, values and personality traits) and to obtain an equally clear picture of the World of Work in order to make career choices that lead to satisfying work lives (McMahon, Watson, Chetty & Hoelson, 2012). Maree and Maree (2009) add that career counselling refers to services intended to assist individuals (of any age and at any point throughout their lives) to make educational, training and occupational choices, as well as to manage their careers, in turn helping individuals to understand and deal more effectively with their choices and circumstances.

### **1.8.4 Career guidance**

Guidance occurs when an individual provides advice or information to a person with the aim of resolving a problem or difficulty that a person is experiencing (Annala, Korhonen & Penttinen, 2012). Career guidance refers to the provision of a range of career services through which individuals are assisted by applying their knowledge, skills and information in order to make realistic choices and appropriate decisions about future career options (Coetzee & Esterhuizen, 2010; Savickas, Nota, Rossier, Dauwalder, Duarte, Guichard & Van Vianen, 2009; Seabi, 2012). However, Coetzee and Oberholzer (2010) define career guidance as helping individuals to ensure that their career decisions are well-informed and well-thought through in relation to both their aspirations and potential.

### **1.8.5 School**

According to the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996, a school is considered to be either a public or an independent school which enrolls learners in one or more grades, from Grade R to Grade 12. Furthermore, Wentzel and Muenks (2016) define a school as an institution where young people go to learn under the instruction of a teacher.

### **1.8.6 Rural school**

A rural context refers to an area away from the city or town which consists of few homes or other buildings and where the population density is very low (Dinkelman, 2011). According to the Department of Education (2005), a school is defined as rural if it is located within the former homelands (areas that consist of the tribal lands which are controlled by traditional authorities) and the former white commercial farming districts. Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay and Moletsane (2011) however define a rural school as a school that is located away from the urban areas and is unable to provide a sound education for young people because it lacks clean running water, electricity, libraries, laboratories and computers. Consequently, in this study a rural school refers to an unprivileged school that is located within a rural area and lacks basic amenities, infrastructure, learning resources and has unequal access to healthcare, education, electricity and water.

### **1.8.7 Peri-urban school**

Albien and Naidoo (2016) define a peri-urban school as one that is located on the outskirts of a designated city boundary, where both rural and urban characteristics meet each other. Therefore, peri-urbanisation has been characterised by the transformation of the socio-economic structure, from predominantly rural to more urban activities (Albien & Naidoo, 2016). In this study, a peri-urban school refers to a school that is located within a township, which is an underdeveloped urban living area that has both rural and urban characteristics.

### **1.8.8 Senior Phase**

The Senior Phase is one of the phases within the LO curriculum that is provided to only the Grade 7, 8 and 9 high school learners. The Senior Phase consists of five topics that focus on skills, knowledge and values which prepare learners to continue with the LO subject throughout Grade 10, 11 and 12 (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

### **1.8.9 FET Phase**

The Further Education and Training (FET) Phase within the LO curriculum is provided to only the Grade 10, 11 and 12 high school learners and consists of six topics that focus on skills, knowledge and values which prepare learners for the transition from schools to tertiary institutions and the workplace (DoBE, 2011). In this study, Grade 10 learners refer to scholars who are in the tenth year of their schooling period. In South Africa, Grade 10 is also known as standard eight and the average age of learners found in this grade is 15 years.

### **1.9 Delimitations of the study**

Delimitation in research refers to choices and decisions that the researcher makes for the study and the characteristics selected to specify and define the boundaries of the research (Creswell, 2013). The central purpose of this study is to explore the understandings, experiences and practices of CGC in South African rural and township high schools from the perspectives of teachers and learners. Therefore, a delimitation of this study is that the research area was limited to schools only in the Pinetown district, within the KwaZulu-Natal province. For this reason, speculation that the findings of this study are similar to another school or district should be discharged. Furthermore, the sample of this study was not randomly selected from the schools, but rather purposively drawn in order to provide the basis for sample selection. Consequently, the generalizability of the research findings is limited because the sample is not necessarily a representative of a larger population. Another possible delimitation is the fact that this study focused solely on how teachers and learners experience CGC and how learners make informed career decisions. However, a broader scope of questions may have provided more insight into other complex problems, especially when dealing with learners and teachers from rural and township high schools. Additionally, participation in this study was delimited to eight Grade 10 learners and four LO teachers from two high schools who agreed to participate in this study. Data sources which included semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions however added to the narrow scope of the study. Nevertheless, effective CGC in schools could be one of the significant factors in improving career education in South Africa.



### **1.10 Outline of the chapters in the study**

The structure of this research dissertation is organised and presented in the following manner:

#### **Chapter One: Introduction to the study**

Chapter one is an introductory chapter that contextualizes the research and clarifies the motivation for the study. An overview of the needs of the learners; the LO subject and curriculum; and the challenges particular to LO is given as a rationale for the study. This chapter also focuses largely on the aims of the study and provides an outline of the research questions. In addition, the chapter describes the key concepts, delimitations and organisation of the study.

#### **Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

Chapter two consists of an in-depth and relevant literature review from a local as well as an international perspective and provides the theoretical framework underpinning this study. The literature review explores and explains the growing need for CGC in the context of the South African education system. In addition, a discussion of the interface between policy and practice and the role of LO teachers are provided. This chapter forms the backdrop against which the inception and implementation of CGC within the LO curriculum is discussed in ensuing chapters.

#### **Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology**

Chapter three presents a detailed discussion of the research process which includes an overview of the research paradigm and design; the research approach used; the research methodology adopted for the study; an outline of the data collection and analysis methods; as well as the issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations that were addressed in this study.

#### **Chapter Four: Data Presentation and Discussion**

Chapter four presents and discusses the research findings of this study. An extensive use of themes is employed to interpret and discuss the findings in light of the theoretical framework and the relevant literature reviewed. Descriptive quotes and extracts from the one-on-one semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions are provided to add further context to the findings.

## **Chapter Five: Study summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

Chapter five is a concluding chapter that provides a chapter summary and formulates conclusions from the discussions and analysis of this study. Recommendations for further and future research are also provided; perceived implications of the study are highlighted; and the study is concluded.

### **1.11 Chapter summary**

In this chapter, an overview of the study was provided which included the background; the study rationale; the problem statement; and the purpose of the study. The research questions that guided the study were articulated, followed by the study objectives to be met. In addition, this chapter also disclosed the delimitations of the study and it concluded by providing a brief summary of how the study proceeds. The focus of this chapter was to emphasize the need for this study and the urgency of finding possible solutions or offering recommendations for the implementation of CGC that could be put into practice in South African rural and township high schools. For instance, career choice is an obstacle that many learners face on a regular basis and are unable to cope with the consequences. This study therefore aims to deliver meaningful results that will not only benefit the youth of today in making informed career choices, but will at the same time enhance the well-being of many learners by exploring the degree to which CGC within LO needs to be implemented. The next chapter, Chapter Two, provides a review of the existing literature pertaining to this study and the theoretical framework underpinning this research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

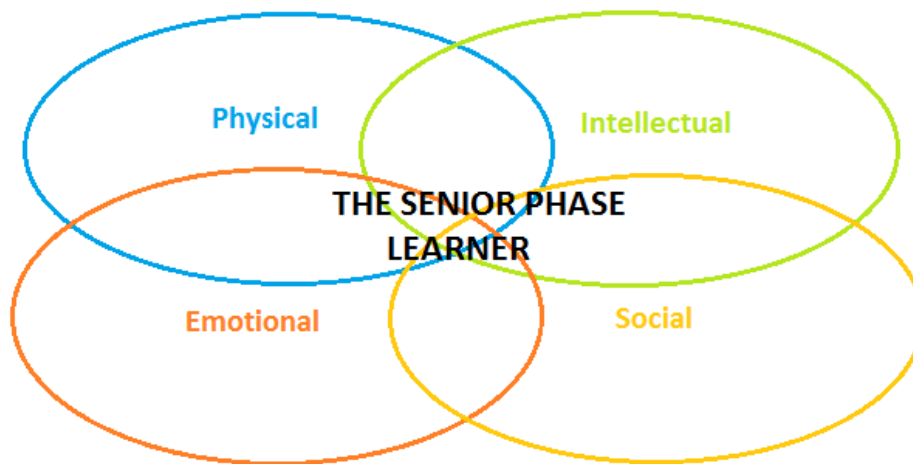
#### **2.1 Introduction**

The literature review in a research study accomplishes several purposes: it shares the findings of other studies that are closely related to the study being reported, and it relates the current knowledge, as well as the theoretical and methodological contributions to the larger on-going dialogue in the literature about a topic - filling in gaps and extending prior studies (Creswell, 2013). It also provides a backdrop for the study, contextualising the topic at hand. In this chapter, an in-depth exploration of Life Orientation (LO) is presented, with a particular focus on the role that Career Guidance and Counselling (CGC) plays in learners' preparedness for subject choices and career decisions. Furthermore, the role of the teacher in effectively implementing the topic Careers and Career Choices as set out by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) will be discussed. Career education will also be reviewed, looking at both local and international initiatives for training both teachers and learners as a means to adequately implement and learn CGC within the LO curriculum, as well as to develop the necessary skills intended for making informed career decisions for life and work in the outside world. Lastly, the theoretical framework upon which this study is based will be introduced, and the context will then be discussed in relation to how career interests and choices are developed.

#### **2.2 Early adolescence and aspirations for post-secondary education**

Schwarz (2016) defines early adolescence as a crucial life stage involving aspects of identity development and decision-making that have potential life-long consequences. Adolescence is therefore a time of rapid change and development in a teenager's life. Adolescents have to achieve balance between academic tasks at school and a social life, coupled with making the transition from secondary school to tertiary education. Moreover, career and subject choices need to be made and this often becomes overwhelming - affecting every aspect of a learner's life. Therefore, the broad aim of this literature review is to critically discuss the effectiveness of LO in addressing secondary school learners' challenges, with specific reference to career choices. According to Hardman (2012), during the stage of adolescence, young people - particularly senior phase secondary school learners - go through puberty, physical and sexual maturation, which in turn affects their self-consciousness and self-identity. At the same time,

adolescents need to make decisions about their future; negotiate society's expectations; and manage many external influences, such as sexual interactions, drugs, alcohol, relationships and peer pressure (Hardman, 2012). In addition to being a time of biological and cognitive change, adolescence is also a period of emotional transition and, in particular, changes in the way individuals view themselves and in their capacity to function independently (Wissing, 2013). Figure 1 below shows the development of the adolescent and the influence of the different dimensions of development.



**Figure 1: Developmental patterns of the adolescent** (Adapted from Pressley & McCormick, 2007, p. 4).

As can be seen in Figure 1, adolescents mature intellectually and undergo all sorts of changes which affect them physically, emotionally and socially, which in turn results in adolescents perceiving themselves in more sophisticated and differentiated ways. Adolescents often have a great deal of emotional energy wrapped up in relationships outside the family. In fact, they may feel more attached or open to talk to a friend or any other individual rather than to their own parents (Wentzel & Muenks, 2016). Similarly, several studies (Bojuwoye & Mbanjwa, 2006; Geldenhuys, Kruger & Moss, 2013; Mudhovozi & Chireshe, 2012; Shumba & Naong, 2012; Hendricks, Savahl, Mathews, Raats, Jaffer, Matzdorff, & Pedro, 2015) show that South African adolescents are easily influenced by their peers because they rely on their friends to provide validation of the career choices they make. Therefore, many adolescents make wrong career choices due to ignorance, inexperience, peer pressure, advice from friends, parents and teachers, or as a result of inadequate CGC (Shumba & Naong, 2012).

### **2.3 South African Education prior to, and immediately after, 1994**

In 1994, South Africa became a democratic country. However, for nearly forty years prior to that, the country operated under the policies of apartheid. The apartheid era led the South African education system to be characterised by racial segregation. Due to the apartheid segregated education system, each of the four race groups - White, Indian, Coloured, and African - had their own Departments of Education, their own schools, and their own curricula (Mouton, Louw & Strydom, 2013). Furthermore, each race group was taught specific subjects that would directly relate to the positions that they would hold in their future (Clark & Worger, 2013). It is also important to note that under apartheid, resources were distributed according to different race groups. The more privileged race groups had better physical resources and school services as well as trained teachers, as opposed to other schools with different racial groups (Mouton, Louw & Strydom, 2013). For instance, during the apartheid years in South Africa, CGC amongst disadvantaged learners was largely absent and, for many, career choices were limited and governed by politics (Abrahams, Jano & van Lill, 2015). Despite South Africa having celebrated 20 years of democracy, this situation has improved only slightly.

In the 1970s, apartheid education began to collapse - although the basic racial divisions and inequalities remained. These education inequalities did not disappear after the introduction of a democracy in South Africa. Consequently, the newly unified Department of Education (DoE) had to address these inequalities and they chose to do this in two consecutive ways. Firstly, they re-distributed teachers so that unprivileged schools, namely non-white schools with high teacher and student ratios and with under-qualified or unqualified teachers, would receive teachers from white schools which had low teacher and student ratios and qualified and well-trained teachers (Chisholm, 2015). However, this plan failed because this initiative required teachers from the white schools to move to rural areas and teach in schools vastly different from their own, which in turn led many of South Africa's best teachers to resign. Subsequently, the structural inequalities of apartheid remained. Furthermore, a second initiative introduced a new curriculum, namely Curriculum 2005 (C2005), named for the year when it was supposed to be fully in place. C2005 is based on principles of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE). This new type of education attempted to replace the emphasis on memorisation of statistics and facts with a focus on learners acquiring knowledge, skills, and attitudes and applying these in a constructive way (Chisholm, 2015; DoE, 1997). The aim of OBE was to prioritize the needs, capabilities, and interests of each learner (DoE, 1997).

Therefore, the learning outcomes for each grade were defined so that teachers, learners, and parents knew what they were working towards.

Apartheid structures increasingly crumbled in the early 1990s, the new democracy gradually came into being and schools became less segregated. The transition to the present form of education has been met with extraordinary difficulties following the implementation of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and CAPS. However, according to Msila (2007) the most pressing concern which has been inadequately dealt with is teacher training in the revised curriculum. Teachers are expected to administer or implement the curriculum using teaching methods in which they were never originally trained. Many teachers have received only one week's training from the DoE - which is inadequate for the task. Not only do some teachers not have the skills necessary to teach according to the principles of OBE, they do not have the knowledge to teach new learning subjects that were introduced into the new curriculum (Ono & Ferreira, 2010).

#### **2.4 Career education and provision in South Africa: A historical perspective**

For most people, career education is usually seen as acquiring knowledge on how to go about making an informed career decision. Similarly, career education is described by many South African scholars as an effective and purposeful process whereby individuals acquire knowledge and attitudes about self and work and the skills by which to identify, choose, plan and prepare for work and other life options potentially constituting a career (Dabula & Makura, 2013; Jonck, 2015; Chireshe, 2012; Maree, 2013). Career education and development is therefore seen as a process rather than an event - a process that continues throughout an individual's life (Watson, 2010; Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2013). Career guidance, on the other hand, refers to systematic programs that are intended to facilitate individual career development and career management (Jonck, 2015; Shumba & Naong, 2012). A major turning point in the lives of adolescents involves the decisions they make while at high school. The importance of this decision-making process is often underestimated. However, it plays a major role in setting a career path that will either close or open opportunities (Coetzee & Beukes, 2010).

Career guidance in South African schools was first undertaken in 1943 (Maree & Maree, 2009; Watson, 2009). Thereafter, in 1967, the National Education Policy (NEP) was the first legislation which made school guidance compulsory in white schools. However, guidance was only introduced into black schools in 1981, following the Soweto student uprisings of 1976 (Maree & Maree, 2009; Watson, 2009). The aim of school guidance was designed to bring learners into contact with the real world in such a way that they are taught life skills and survival techniques which enable them to direct themselves competently within the educational, personal and social spheres and the World of Work (DoE, 1997). This was ideal, and career guidance was seen as an integral part of the school programme. The reality, however, was very different. For instance, in many non-white schools, career guidance was compromised due to the limited number of trained personnel and the allocation of school guidance to teachers whose timetables needed a few extra periods filled (Watson, McMahon, Foxcroft & Els, 2010). This led to guidance periods being replaced by examination subjects that were perceived as more important and having a greater status. This was further complicated by the urban-rural divide. Schools in the rural areas were the least resourced of all; their teachers the most under-qualified; and their learners the most in need of the expansion of their knowledge of the World of Work (DoE, 2005; Hlalele, 2012).

Furthermore, there were also great variations in the provision of career education across various former Departments of Education in South Africa. For example, in KwaZulu-Natal there was no provision for career guidance in many rural schools, even though school guidance was meant to be part of the school curriculum (Dinkelman, 2011). During the mid-1980's, guidance teachers of the former (white) Natal Education Department (NED) conducted developmental career education programmes which catered for Grades eight to twelve and provided lesson plans and other suggestions (Dinkelman, 2011). This teacher's guide was distributed to all former NED schools. In many rural schools, an annual visit by an official briefly trained to administer career tests, was the only provision made to meet the career needs of the learners in rural schools (Ross, 2008). In most cases, although the tests were completed, the results were not available. This fruitless exercise is described by Ross (2008) as a form of social bookkeeping for statistical and research purposes.

A further constraint on career education was the way in which subject selections limited the options available to learners. In South Africa, important educational decisions were, and still are, taken at the end of Grade 9 where subject choices are made. A career or subject choice is without doubt one of the most significant decisions anyone can make. However, at the age of fourteen and fifteen, many high school learners are still at the beginning of the career exploration phase (Campbell, 2007). Therefore, these decisions are often rushed and taken for reasons that are not informed by future career planning. For example, learners may choose a subject because they like a particular teacher or because their friends are choosing a specific subject. In the past, the curriculum available in many South African rural schools was purposely designed to close occupational doors for disadvantaged learners. For instance, the unavailability of important educational disciplines such as Commerce and Science in the rural schools limited the career choices and opportunities for learners (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006). Moreover, teachers who were allocated to implement career guidance would often draw on their own knowledge to inform the contents of their lessons (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006). They had little experience in the industry and of the career world. One of the ways the schools countered this situation was that certain Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) provided teachers with material and training during the latter part of the apartheid years in South Africa (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006). These contributions were very helpful to teachers in some urban areas, but were unfortunately not widespread enough to make a significant impact, especially in the rural areas.

In post-apartheid South Africa, despite the fact that discriminatory legislation has been removed and enabling legislation passed, many South African scholars agree that the issue of career guidance or lack thereof, still remains evident - particularly in previously disadvantaged schools (Abrahams, Jano & van Lill, 2015; Albien & Naidoo, 2016; Bojuwoye & Mbanjwa, 2006; Tebele, Nel & Dlamini, 2015). Nevertheless, a limited number of initiatives have been established, such as the Nelson Mandela Career Guidance Campaign of 2010 which targeted rural students and imparted information on tertiary institutions, courses and training opportunities, as well as financial aid and bursary schemes (Abrahams, Jano & van Lill, 2015).



## **2.5 The history of the Life Orientation subject**

South Africa's advent to a new democracy following years of oppression and exploitation; social problems such as extreme poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, and urgent health problems; coupled with the new global market and rapidly changing economic structure, has led to the creation of the LO subject in schools (Worden, 2011). As mentioned in the previous chapter, in 1997 the DoE and the national government introduced the OBE curriculum for schools which included a new compulsory subject, LO, as well as Life Skills and HIV/AIDS educational programmes (Msila, 2007). The Life Skills and HIV/AIDS programmes were not an official part of the OBE curriculum. Rather, these were additional programmes jointly funded by the South African government and the European Union and were, ideally, supposed to cut across the curriculum (Wallace, 2009). However, the majority of South African schools teach Life Skills and HIV/AIDS only within one subject - LO. The introduction of LO as a subject in the South African curriculum became fundamental to ensure that all learners were treated equally, and that they recognise themselves as worthwhile human beings. LO is intended to, "promote social justice, human rights, and inclusiveness, as well as a healthy environment" (DoE, 2003, p. 5). It aims to achieve this through "equipping learners to engage on personal, psychological, neuro-cognitive, motor, physical, moral, spiritual, cultural, socio-economic and constitutional levels; to respond positively to the demands of the world; to assume responsibilities; and to make the most of life's opportunities" (DoE, 2003, p. 9). Furthermore, according to Pillay (2012), if LO is properly implemented, it has the potential to improve the quality of life of all learners as future citizens by establishing a society based on democratic values, social justice and human rights.

In 1997, when the LO subject was introduced, many teachers who were already teaching in South Africa had never received any formal training in either LO education or Life Skills. To compensate for this, the DoE provided training for one or two teachers per school and they were then expected to train their colleagues at their own schools (DoE, 2007). Consequently, those teachers who received the Life Skills and HIV/AIDS training inevitably became the LO teachers when the new curriculum was officially introduced into South African schools in 2000 (Wallace, 2009). This training was haphazard in its implementation, with many schools not receiving training and, if they did, some of the teachers who were trained were re-deployed or retired. Therefore, some schools were not able to implement LO as a subject or Life Skills and HIV/AIDS education as part of the curriculum in the early years of its

existence (Wallace, 2009). Furthermore, in order to provide holistic support to learners as opposed to providing school psychological services, LO was introduced to equip learners to solve problems and to make informed decisions and choices (DoE, 2007). Before the implementation of the CAPS document, the DoE established four learning outcomes for the LO subject that each learner was expected to achieve. Table 1 below illustrates the four learning outcomes that were previously intended for the LO subject before the revision of the curriculum. However, in the RNCS and CAPS document, there is no longer the provision of learning outcomes within the LO curriculum. Instead, learning outcomes have been substituted with a sequence of compulsory topics that should be covered by the LO teacher within each school term.

<b>LO 1: Personal Well-being</b>	The learner is able to achieve and maintain personal well-being.
<b>LO 2: Citizenship Education</b>	The learner is able to demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the values and rights that underpin the Constitution in order to practise responsible citizenship, and enhance social justice and sustainable living.
<b>LO 3: Recreation and Physical Well-being</b>	The learner is able to explore and engage responsibly in recreation and physical activities, to promote well-being.
<b>LO 4: Careers and Career Choices</b>	The learner is able to demonstrate self-knowledge and the ability to make informed decisions regarding further study, career fields and career pathing.

**Table 1: Learning outcomes previously implemented for the Life Orientation curriculum** (Adapted from DoE, 2007, p. 7)

The official national Department of Education’s policy states that learners must receive education about HIV/AIDS and abstinence in the context of Life Skills education on an on-going basis (DoE, 2007). However, for a long time now, the central part of the LO curriculum is that of HIV/AIDS education, even though Life Skills and HIV/AIDS education should not be presented as an isolated learning content, but should be integrated into the entire curriculum. Therefore, although the national policy on HIV/AIDS education states that HIV/AIDS must be taught throughout the curriculum, a significant proportion of South African schools place all the emphasis of HIV/AIDS education in the LO class (Ahmed, Flisher, Mathews, Mukoma & Jansen, 2009; Geldenhuys, Kruger & Moss, 2013; Jacobs, 2011; Pillay, 2012; Van Deventer, 2008). As a result, other topics within LO are not given enough attention. It is important to note that of these goals and topics to be covered within LO, none address the provision of career guidance and career counselling services in order to deal with the numerous challenges experienced by learners. This raises fundamental questions, namely: Where does dealing or coping with career choices fit into the curriculum

of LO? How does a learner deal emotionally with the decision of choosing a career? What coping mechanisms and assistance does LO provide for dealing with career or subject choices?

## **2.6 Career Education and Career Guidance and Counselling programmes in the new curriculum in South Africa**

With the introduction of LO, guidance and counselling services that were originally offered prior to 1994 in schools throughout South Africa were officially phased out. These services incorporated a number of activities aimed at the vocational and general development of students, namely group guidance which focused on career, educational, social and personal development, as well as life-skills programmes, individual psychometric testing, and counselling (Clark & Worger, 2013). In addition, guidance and counselling was couched within the apartheid educational philosophy of the National Education Policy Act No. 39 of 1967 (Msila, 2007). This act imposed as part of its guidance curriculum that white people should be encouraged to aspire to guard their identity, placing emphasis on self-evaluation rather than self-empowerment. Therefore, guidance and counselling in South African schools was primarily a directing and controlling process, typified by socialisation and social control, rather than by the strengthening of personal and individual qualities (Worden, 2011). Guidance and counselling was simply used to perpetuate the apartheid regime's value system, ultimately providing the youth of South Africa with very little guidance at all. The needs of employers were viewed as being paramount, while the needs of workers were ignored, ultimately providing poor vocational and personal guidance with regard to future career and life opportunities (Watson, 2010).

'I can't decide what to do' is the most common problem presenting with high school learners. Consequently, the South African Department of Basic Education (DoBE) has fortunately realised the critical importance of preparing learners from Grade 7 onwards to obtain and retain a good job. More specifically, Career Guidance and Counselling is a discipline of trained professionals dedicated to providing holistic, contextual, life – span counselling to diverse individuals in multi-cultural contexts (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2007). Career counselling refers to services intended to assist individuals of any age and at any point throughout their lives to make educational, training, and occupational choices and to manage their careers - in turn helping individuals to understand and deal more effectively with their choices and their circumstances (Maree & Maree, 2009; Maree & Westhuizen, 2011;

McMahon et al., 2012; Watson, 2010). Career guidance refers to the provision of a range of career services or programmes through which individuals are assisted to apply their knowledge, skills, and information in order to make realistic choices and appropriate decisions about future options (Coetzee & Esterhuizen, 2010; Savickas, Nota, Rossier, Dauwalder, Duarte, Guichard & Van Vianen, 2009; Tumbo, Couper & Hugo, 2009).

Presently, career guidance in South African high schools resides in the subject LO and it is offered in both the Senior and Further Education and Training (FET) Phases, providing a framework and scope for teachers to address the aims as set out in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Nel, 2014) and to work towards the transformation and development of society through education. As mentioned earlier, the CAPS of 2012 is the latest version of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) in South African education, which guides teachers in terms of the aims of the different subjects. The CAPS document for LO in particular deals with the topics of the World of Work (Senior Phase) and Careers and Career Choices (FET Phase) [DoBE, 2011]. The contents of these documents are all arranged in terms of aims, topics/ study areas and themes. However, the purpose of this study is to explore Grade 10 learners' (FET Phase) experiences of CGC within LO and not the Senior Phase. The aim pertaining to the World of Work and careers according to the CAPS document for the FET Phase is as follows: LO aims to equip learners with knowledge, skills and values to make informed decisions about subject choices, careers, additional and higher education opportunities and the World of Work (DoBE, 2011). In the FET Phase, the topic related to careers is called 'Careers and Career Choices', with themes as specified in Table 2 below.

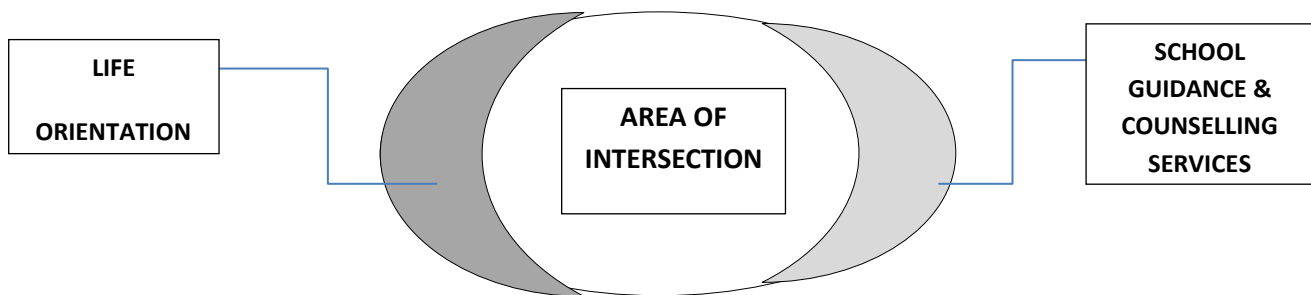
	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Grade 10</b>	<b>Grade 11</b>	<b>Grade 12</b>
<b>4</b>	Careers and Career Choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Subjects, career fields and study choices: decision-making skills</li> <li>▪ Socio-economic factors</li> <li>▪ Diversity of jobs</li> <li>▪ Opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requirements for admission to higher-education institutions</li> <li>▪ Options for financial assistance for further studies</li> <li>▪ Competencies, abilities and ethics required for a career</li> <li>▪ Personal expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Commitment to a decision taken: locate appropriate work or study opportunities in various sources</li> <li>▪ Reasons for and impact of unemployment, and innovative solutions to</li> </ul>

	Topic	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
		within career fields <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Trends and demands in the job market</li> <li>▪ The need for lifelong learning</li> </ul>	in relation to job or career of interest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledge about self in relation to the demands of the World of Work and socio-economic conditions</li> </ul>	counteract unemployment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Core elements of a job contract</li> <li>▪ Refinement of portfolio of plans for life after school</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Themes for Careers and Career Choices in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase** (Adapted from DoE, 2011, p. 11).

The focus of the topic ‘Careers and Career Choices’ is personal and practical issues surrounding careers and career choices where learners are assisted in developing knowledge about themselves and their personal expectations regarding their career of choice, as well as requirements for admission into various fields of study and solutions to counteract financial concerns and possible unemployment (DoBE, 2011). However, although the focus on career and the World of Work is quite clear in the Senior and FET Phases and a number of divergent themes are addressed, none of these phases or topics provides career guidance and career counselling services in any of the grades. This is cause for concern because the previous LO learning outcomes also did not provide these services, nor does the current revised curriculum. Furthermore, creating an interactive climate in the classroom is recognised as a basic and important means of facilitating learning. However, career counselling does not happen in a vacuum. The aim of career counselling is to provide learners with what they need to do in order to make it easier for them, or less difficult for them, to choose a career or plan a career path. It is a process of helping learners to connect their actual capacities, their physical, cognitive, emotional and social strengths and weaknesses to the realities of the World of Work and further study, and the opportunities which might be available to them (Burchardt, 2009). In addition, providing career guidance coupled with career counselling allows learners to acquire the skills of negotiation, social problem solving, and interpersonal responsibility - which in themselves important life skills that prepare them for the World of Work (Chireshe, 2012).

Although LO has replaced school guidance and counselling services, and has been implemented for all learners from Grades 8 to 12, LO and guidance and counselling services are not synonyms. LO, broadly defined, is aimed at the development of self-in-society, which encourages the development of balanced and confident learners who will contribute to a just and democratic society; a productive economy; and an improved quality of life for all in the new South African democracy (Jacobs, 2011). School guidance and counselling services support learners' ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach by applying expertise in mental health, learning, and behaviour, in order to help learners succeed academically, socially, behaviourally, and emotionally (Duchnowski & Kutash, 2011). However, despite the fact that there is a distinction between these two areas, there is simultaneously a common strand across LO and school guidance and counselling services, represented in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2: A comparison of LO and school guidance and counselling services:** the area of intersection represents the many benefits a learner can develop if both are offered at schools.

‘School guidance and counselling services’ is an approach which takes a holistic view of learners; is responsive to their context; and is seen as the assistance given to learners who need help with events and concerns that occur during normal development (Duchnowski & Kutash, 2011). The focus of this study is the exploration of CGC experienced by high school learners, as well as their lack of coping strategies, with a view evaluating the appropriateness of school services in terms of learners’ career needs and the aims of LO in addressing these needs. It is clear therefore, that the importance of the provision of guidance and counselling resources in all South African schools should be reconsidered.

Furthermore, it is a well-known fact that many children in South Africa are not only heads of households, but also face social problems including hunger, poverty, HIV/AIDS, and violence. Therefore, CGC services within the education system can be a driving force to alleviate major social problems related to poverty, HIV/AIDS, and family disintegration -

especially within rural areas. More importantly, these socio-economic problems of necessity can have a devastating influence on academic achievement and future career opportunities (Ahmed et al., 2009). It is also important to note that many South African learners do not come from equal socio-economic backgrounds, gender, race, disability and ethnicity. Consequently, it is critical that career skills and choices are imparted and delivered accordingly, with particular focus on the specific needs of the society and the context within which teaching is taking place. LO does not address the individual needs of learners, instead it attempts to address issues and promote attitudes that are mainly universal. For this reason, the delivery of school guidance and counselling services makes room for meeting the individual and unique needs of all learners from different cultures and ethnicities.

## **2.7 The role of the teacher as a Life Orientation specialist and Career Guidance Counsellor**

“Every day, the fate of millions of children is put in the hands of ordinary people - called teachers. These people are in turn entrusted with the enormous responsibility of teaching, guiding and cultivating these young minds into decent, mature citizens” (Ndlovu, 2010, p. 11). Consequently, the LO teacher is considered as the ultimate key to educational change and the acquisition of essential life and work skills for learners. Teachers do not merely deliver the curriculum - they develop, define, and reinterpret it too. It is what teachers think, believe, and do at the level of the classroom that ultimately shapes the kind of learning that young people receive. However, according to the Education White Paper 4 (DoE, 1998, p. 21), “professional commitment and morale amongst many teachers, administrators and managers are poor”. Similarly, the report of the President’s Education Initiative Research Project (1998) concludes that the most critical challenge facing education in South Africa is the limited conceptual understanding many teachers have of the subjects they teach (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999). This is a result of both the inequalities and distortions of South Africa’s apartheid past, as well as the evolution of modern industrial society which has shifted the way in which information is acquired through rapid global technological advancement.

Career education today is concerned with preparing learners for the choices and transitions which life presents. Therefore, one of the many roles of the LO teacher is to provide information to learners on careers, related workplace activities and admission requirements to institutions of higher learning (Nel, 2014). Their job description entails providing advice and guidance to learners with reference to potential career options as well as assisting learners to

make suitable choices for university or college majors. Amongst other roles, LO teachers help learners apply for university or college admission and financial aid. In order to be able to fulfil their role in CGC, LO teachers need articles, literature or other material regarding careers and related workplace activities; career requirements and admission requirements for higher education; study loan information from various banking institutions and student funds; and job requirements for various positions (DoE, 2008).

Continuous professional development and the updating of current information for LO teachers are vital for them to provide efficient CGC services. The role of LO teachers does not end with career services. They are also required to help learners identify, understand and deal with social, personal and behavioural issues (Maree & In Di, 2015). Their role includes that of a counsellor as they provide preventative and developmental counselling, including coping and life skills. In the absence of LO, learners who are unsure about which career to choose or to pursue are likely to consult other sources, such as brochures from universities and colleges (Bantwini & King-McKenzie, 2011). The provision of accurate and current information about specific careers to high school learners is essential as these may impact upon a person's career choice and prevent incorrect career choices being made (Bantwini & King-McKenzie, 2011). Furthermore, each learner is different as they do not share the same interests. Their personality traits differ; they have vastly different life experiences; their self-concepts and feelings of self-worth differ; and they have different physical and emotional attributes (Rogers, Creed & Glendon, 2008). Therefore, these interrelated factors will co-determine the ways in which their careers are shaped, emphasising the continued need for individuals to have counselling about the choice and development of their career.

The rate of change is escalating to such an extent that many new opportunities will appear on the career horizon, and many more will disappear. The world population has grown exponentially. It is projected to reach nine billion in 2050, with the rise in the rate of unemployment exacerbating the problem of finding a suitable career (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2013). Despite this, the LO teacher does appear to play a critical role in ensuring that progress and development in the career of the learner is achieved in the LO classroom. LO teachers therefore need to be flexible and adaptable when designing and implementing lesson plans for CGC. They also need to understand the economic and global contexts that underpin the curriculum because these impact on the interpretation, definition, and perception of their role (Nel, 2014). Without an understanding of how culture, experience, readiness, and



context influence how people grow, learn, and develop, it is difficult for LO teachers to make good judgements about how to deal with specific events in the classroom. They need to possess the qualities of role models, counsellors and compassionate leaders because it is their role to lead and guide the youth of this country in developing the skills and values necessary for life and careers in the outside world, which includes making morally responsible decisions (Moeini, 2008). Thus, in order for LO teachers to fulfil their role, it is essential that adequate training be received.

## **2.8 Career development within a rural community**

Facilitating the process of appropriate career or subject choices is the main aim of LO at secondary school level (Department of Basic Education, 2011). However, in South Africa, career choices for many high school learners are accidental, rushed decisions, imposed by external forces or by circumstances. As a result, rural high school learners are found to be more likely than their urban counterparts to leave school early (DoE, 2006). Optimal career choices should be the result of a continuous process of conscious decision, self-discovery, and alignment to the World of Work (Chireshe, 2012). This is possible when LO teachers implement career counselling services in order to prepare learners for future occupations, as well as make them aware of their career choices and aspirations in line with their abilities in various subjects.

In accordance with international trends that incorporate CGC into the core curriculum, CGC within the South African context is a component of the NCS as part of LO. In countries such as Canada, career planning involves taking compulsory career and life management courses in high school and seeking information from school guidance counsellors (Witko et al., 2009). There is cause for concern regarding whether the LO curriculum in South Africa makes provision to guide and prepare learners for subject and career choices or provides adequate information to learners because it is part of a non-examinable subject. For instance, three recent quantitative South African studies (Jonck, 2015; Naude, 2014 & Chireshe, 2012) found that rural learners would have chosen a better subject combination if they had received better or more information regarding admission requirements and subject values. Moreover, seventy-five percent of South African rural school learners indicated that CGC should be given more attention, especially in secondary schools, while a further sixty percent of South African rural school leavers indicated that they did not receive CGC when they were in school.

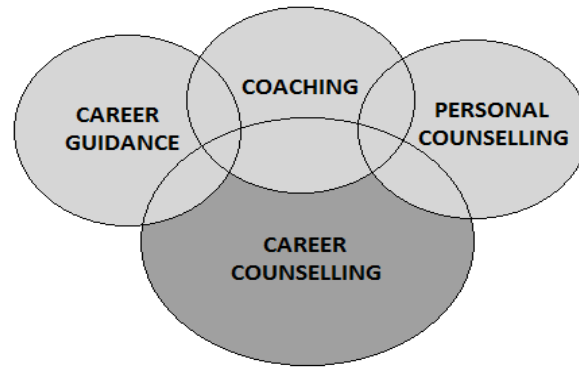
Furthermore, Dabula and Makura (2013) contend that the discontinuation of higher and standard grade subjects in South Africa resulted in the abolishment of subject choice opportunities for learners, leading to inferior subject choices and limited career opportunities. Therefore, it is clear from the literature that not enough is done to prepare learners for life after school and CGC programmes within LO are supposed to facilitate learners' development in educational, personal, social and career domains. Thus the proposed study will explore the experiences of learners and teachers in order to outline any complexities of CGC within LO. It is important to acknowledge that very few studies (Chireshe, 2012; Jonck, 2015; Shumba & Naong, 2012) have been conducted to explore CGC or test out school CGC practices in the context of South Africa, whilst those that were conducted mostly focused on urban areas. This study seeks to give not only learners but also teachers from a rural community a platform to provide their insights on CGC within LO, which will provide the views of individuals from different backgrounds, languages, and religions within the South African context.

Van Deventer (2008) found that LO teachers often felt that they have not received the necessary training to present LO effectively. This in turn results in the majority of learners leaving school with only a vague knowledge of employment opportunities and little insight about the most appropriate career direction for their abilities, interests, and personality. In an exploratory study conducted by Tebele, Nel & Dlamini (2015), eighty percent of South African learners from a rural high school indicated that they do not receive any career counselling within LO, neither did they know what career counselling is. This then explains why learners in urban schools were found to have higher positive attitudes towards CGC than in rural schools (Eyo, Joshua & Esuong, 2010). More specifically, some studies (Bojuwoye & Mbanjwa, 2006; Mudhovozi & Chireshe, 2012) found that career choices of adolescents from disadvantaged schools are negatively impacted by a lack of finance, the lack of career information, poor academic performance, and unsatisfactory or no career counselling services. This is a significant finding. However, the proposed study will not only be focusing on learners' experiences, but also teachers from two high schools. Thus this study creates a platform for the perspectives of rural and township learners and teachers in South Africa.

## **2.9 The need for School Guidance and Counselling services in South Africa**

A number of studies report on the prevalence of mental health problems in children (Ahmed et al., 2009; Geldenhuys, Kruger & Moss, 2013; Jacobs, 2011; Pillay, 2012; Van Deventer, 2008). This translates to at least two or three students with serious emotional problems in every classroom. Mental health is not only the absence of mental illness, but includes having the skills needed to deal with life's challenges. Learners do not learn at their best when experiencing mental illness, or when overwhelmed by life's stressors, such as career choices. Emotional and behavioural health problems represent significant barriers to academic success and adolescents with emotional disturbances have the highest failure rates, with fifty percent of these learners dropping out of high school (Schulze & Steyn, 2007). It is clear therefore that there is a great need for school guidance and counselling services in South Africa. Schools with guidance and counselling services are able to provide a range of mental health services, such as assisting learners with depression, stress, anxiety, individual therapy or counselling, and prevention activities particularly related to career and future decisions (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006). Although some of these issues are covered in LO, it does not provide learners with the necessary skills and resources of coping and dealing with emotional stressors attached to these issues.

The adolescent stage is associated with many bodily and emotional changes. There is an increase in conflicting emotions, shortened attention span, irritability, and impulsiveness (Pressley & McCormick, 2007). All these emotions are difficult for the adolescent who does not know how to handle them. All these mixed emotions, which are often foreign to the adolescent, can impact negatively on their school progress. LO does not acknowledge or provide topics in addressing the manifestation of these emotions, which often leads to rushed decisions. Above all, teachers do not possess the necessary skills in handling emotions in an educational context. In summary, effective school guidance and counselling services and effective school counsellors are crucial in order to successfully impact all learners. Moreover, what LO fails to take into account is how the identities of learners influence their behaviours, and by solely teaching and focusing mainly on life skills and HIV/AIDS, LO does not equip the learner to emotionally deal with major life challenges such as career decisions. Life Skills and HIV/AIDS interventions in schools appear not to incorporate interventions for coping and dealing with emotional problems, thus leading to the ineffectiveness of the subject LO (Burchardt, 2009). The following diagram illustrates the many benefits and forms of help a learner can receive if career counselling is provided in schools.



**Figure 3: How career counselling overlaps with other forms of help** (Adapted from Nathan & Hill, 2006, p. 3).

### **2.10 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

The purpose of this section is to present the theoretical and conceptual framework and a theory of career choice behaviour employed by this study. A theoretical framework is a structure that guides the research study by relying on a formal theory and is constructed by using an established and coherent explanation of certain phenomena and relationships (Verschuren, Doorewaard & Mellion, 2010). A conceptual framework, on the other hand, is the researcher's understanding of how the research problem will best be explored; the specific direction the research will have to take; and the relationship between the different variables in the study (Locke, Spirduso & Silverman, 2013). This is best summarized by Biggam (2015), who categorized a conceptual framework as a system of concepts, assumptions, and beliefs that support and guide the research plan. Furthermore, all researchers bring a set of assumptions and beliefs to a study; therefore research is inherently filtered through the researcher's ontological and epistemological beliefs (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault, 2015). Consequently, the need to clarify a researcher's inquiry lens is crucial because his/her theoretical orientation guides and influences the entire research process, including the formation of questions and the collection and interpretation of data. This study is therefore grounded in Lent, Brown and Hackett's (1994) Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT).

### **2.10.1 Background and Evolution of SCCT**

SCCT is derived principally from Albert Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory and was first applied to career choice by Betz and Hackett (1981). Thereafter, it was further developed to Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) by Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994). Social Cognitive Theory provides a framework to explain human behavioural changes and decisions that are influenced by personal and social environmental factors, in addition to attributes of one's own behaviour (Bandura, 1986). SCCT proposes that career interests, goals, and choices are related to self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994). In formulating SCCT, the researchers (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994) attempted to adapt, elaborate, and extend aspects of Bandura's theory that seemed most relevant to the processes of interest information, career selection, and performance, in suggesting certain theoretical paths and connections that do not follow directly from the general social cognitive theory. In doing so, the SCCT attempts to use social cognitive mechanisms to explain why people become interested in different academic and vocational domains; why they experience success or failure; and why they eventually choose particular academic or career behaviours (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2013). Therefore, SCCT was developed to explain how individuals form career interests, set vocational goals, persist in work environments, and attain job satisfaction.

In addition, SCCT is linked to two branches of career inquiry that have evolved from Bandura's general framework, namely Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory (1979) of career decision making and the application of the self-efficacy construct to women's career development by Hackett and Betz (1981). Conceptually, SCCT is most closely aligned with Hackett and Betz's position, although it also builds on the major conceptual foundation of Krumboltz's theory. Part of SCCT's purpose is to update and extend these earlier branches of inquiry by constructing closer ties to advances in Social Cognitive Theory and its empirical base in both career and non-career domains (Lent & Brown, 2008). For example, SCCT shares Krumboltz's emphasis on the learning experiences (direct and vicarious) that shape people's occupational interests, values, and choices (Krumboltz, 2009). Similarly, SCCT follows Krumboltz's and other theorists' lead in acknowledging the influence of genetic factors, special abilities, and environmental conditions on career decisions. However, the two positions diverge on a number of key points: for example, Krumboltz's theory traces its roots to Social Learning Theory which is an earlier version of Bandura's position, whereas SCCT stems more directly from Social Cognitive Theory, reflecting an increased emphasis on

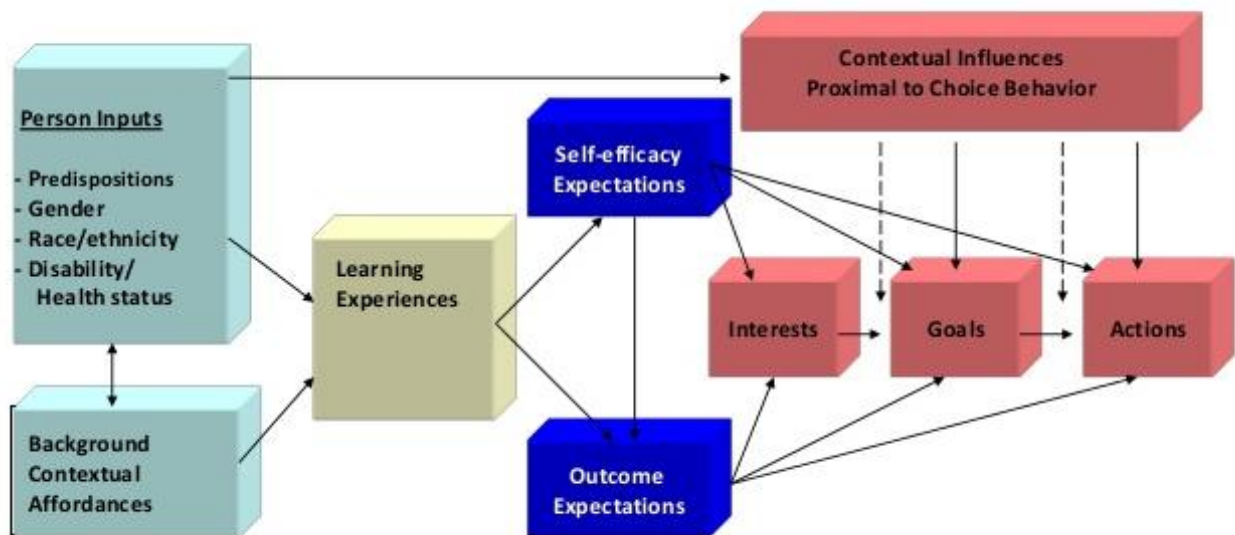
cognitive, self-regulatory, and motivational processes that extend beyond basic issues of learning and conditioning (Lent & Brown, 2008). Although both positions acknowledge the impact of reinforcement history on career behaviour, SCCT is more concerned with the specific cognitive mediators through which learning experiences guide career behaviour; with the manner in which variables such as interests, abilities, and values interrelate; and with the specific theoretical paths by which personal and contextual factors influence career outcomes (Lent & Fouad, 2011).

### **2.10.2 Key Theoretical Constructs of SCCT**

SCCT highlights the role of three social cognitive variables in career development that influences an individual's career choice: self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2013). The first construct of SCCT is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is best defined as a person's judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute specific behaviours or courses of action required to attain designated types of performances (Schwarzer, 2014). According to SCCT, self-efficacy helps determine an individual's thought patterns, choice in activities, and environment, as well as emotional reactions when confronted by obstacles (Lent & Brown, 2008). The second construct of SCCT is outcome expectations. Outcome expectations are defined as an individual's imagined consequences of performing particular behaviours (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2013). Therefore, it is when an individual wants to achieve or do something in order to get a certain outcome. However, sometimes it is opposite, and the individual may want to do something but is curious about what the outcome will be. There are several classes of outcome expectations, namely the anticipation of physical (e.g. monetary), social (e.g. approval), and self-evaluative (e.g. self-satisfaction) outcomes (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2013). These behaviours may affect career and educational behaviour. The third construct of SCCT is personal goals. Personal goals can be defined as the will to perform a particular activity or achieve a particular outcome (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2013). Setting goals is an important part of the three constructs. When an individual sets a goal, they are organizing and guiding their behaviour for a particular outcome they desire. There are two facets of personal goals: choice content goals, and performance goals (Lent & Fouad, 2011). A choice content goal is the type of activity, career, or educational decision an individual would like to pursue. Whereas, a performance goal is the level or quality the individual would like to reach in the particular activity. These two types of goals are a factor for personal goal setting for individual decision making. The three constructs of the SCCT interlock when an individual makes career or educational decisions.

SCCT is a more recent theoretical approach in career counselling literature (Dik, Duffy & Eldridge, 2009; Morris, Shoffner & Newsome, 2009; Thompson & Dahling, 2012) that is used for studying academic and career development.

SCCT was developed in an effort to offer a unifying framework that integrates common pieces or elements from various career theories. It attempts to address the diverse issues related to career development and to explain central, dynamic processes and mechanisms through which career and academic interests develop; career related choices are forged and enacted; and performance outcomes are achieved (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2002). Self-efficacy is found to promote favourable outcome expectations in the career development of adolescents (Rogers, Creed & Glendon, 2008). In addition, both self-efficacy and outcome expectations were found to reinforce and foster the career interests and goals of individuals. Figure 4 below attempts to explain how these three constructs are shaped by factors such as race, gender, social support, and perceived and systemic career barriers. It illustrates the interplay amongst personal, environmental, and behavioural influences on interest development, career choice and development - which lends itself well to this study.



**Figure 4: SCCT model of personal, contextual, and experiential factors affecting career-related choice behaviour.** (Adapted from Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2002, p. 269)

As can be seen in Figure 4, SCCT describes career development as a complex interaction between an individual, their behaviour and the environment. Therefore, the present study aimed to apply the SCCT and explore the interplay of the learners, their environment, and their behaviour as they intend to choose career paths. Furthermore, a variety of environmental and personal variables directly influence and/or moderate career choice processes and behaviour - for example, how interests turn into goals and goals to actions (Soldner, Rowan-Kenyon, Inkelas, Garvey & Robbins, 2012). These processes are intimately and reciprocally connected to contextual or environmental variables such as socioeconomic status, social support, family influences, and barriers, as well as cognitive personal variables (e.g. self-efficacy and outcome expectations) and other personal characteristics such as ethnicity and gender (Soldner et al., 2012). SCCT also explains that if an individual perceives fewer barriers, the likelihood of success reinforces the career choice - but if the barriers are viewed as significant, there is a weaker interest and choice actions (Alexander, Holmner, Lotriet, Matthee, Pieterse, Naidoo & Jordaan, 2011).

### **2.10.3 The application of SCCT in previous studies**

SCCT has often been applied to the maths, art, and science domains (Atadero, Rambo-Hernandez & Balgopal, 2015; Byars-Winston & Fouad, 2008; Lent, Lopez, Lopez & Sheu, 2008; Lent, Sheu, Gloster & Wilkins, 2010). Limited studies have utilised SCCT as a framework for understanding career choices, particularly with samples of learners within a South African context. For example, a longitudinal study conducted to investigate the predictors of career choice actions, career planning, and career exploration using SCCT as a framework found that Australian high schools learners enrolled in Grades 10, 11 and 12 indicated a strong support of self-efficacy and goals predicting career planning and exploration, personality, contextual influences and biographic variables to choice actions (Rogers, Creed & Glendon, 2008). These findings suggest that students who are confident with making career decisions and who are motivated to set goals are likely to do more career planning, and students with high levels of career decision confidence are likely to engage in more career exploration (Rogers, Creed & Glendon, 2008). In order to test whether the SCCT is able to predict American engineering college students' interests and major choice goals, Inda, Rodríguez and Peña (2013) conducted research and found that the SCCT produced a good fit to the data and the findings showed that women have less self-efficacy beliefs and interest than men. Women were more likely to perceive support, especially from peers and family, while men were more likely to perceive family barriers than women.



In addition, the use of SCCT to investigate the relationship between specific parental behaviours and the career development of young American adolescents revealed that parental behaviours do relate to the career development of students, with parental behaviours tending to relate more to career decision-making self-efficacy than to career maturity (Keller & Whiston, 2008). Another study guided by the SCCT in exploring the psychological predictors of career planning amongst active American athletes revealed that conscientious individuals are more likely to plan for their future career because they set higher goals and are more confident in their capacity to plan their future careers (Demulier, Le Scanff & Stephan, 2013). In Fabian, Beveridge and Ethridge's (2009) study, the use of SCCT in understanding work and career barriers for American people with disabilities found that gender, prior work history, and educational background were related to perceptions of career barriers. Lastly, in order to investigate the career development of college students' persistence decisions through the lens of SCCT, Wright, Jenkins-Guarnieri and Murdock (2012) found that first year college students' self-efficacy may be an important cognitive variable in college students' persistence decisions and their academic success - which offers additional information about their early career development and is valuable for career counsellors to consider.

SCCT has been inspired and influenced by a number of key developments in vocational psychology, other psychological and counselling domains, and the cognitive sciences. Despite the popularity of this theory, SCCT has never been applied to a group of individuals focusing primarily on CGC. Therefore, SCCT will be used in the current study because it differs from the majority of existing career theories in its dynamic nature; through its focus upon the role of the self-system and the individual's beliefs; and the influence of the social and economic contexts that are addressed (Lent, Sheu, Schmidt, Brenner, Gloster & Lyons, 2005). This study used SCCT as a guiding theoretical framework to explain the personal experiences and institutional factors which influence learners' development of career interest and career choices. Self-efficacy within the scope of SCCT is considered a key variable in helping to understand this phenomenon. Additionally, the generalisability of the findings of previous studies that used SCCT were limited due to the sample consisting mostly of Australian students from predominately white and middle socio-economic backgrounds, emphasising the need for more diverse ethnic and socio-economic high school samples in order to assist in predicting behavioural influences on career development. Accordingly, this study adopted the SCCT in order to explain the manner in which South African rural high school learners develop and elaborate on career and academic interests, select and pursue

choices based on interests, and perform and persist in their occupational and educational pursuits.

#### **2.10.4 Using SCCT to explore Grade 10 rural high school learners' and teachers' experiences of CGC within Life Orientation education**

Research has shown that South Africa needs to adopt theories of career development and counselling that acknowledge and take into consideration the country's unique circumstances, that is, the socio-cultural and socio-economic context (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006; Hlalele, 2012; Maree & Maree, 2009; Nathan & Hill, 2006). The assumptions of western models do not, as highlighted earlier, necessarily hold true for individuals within the South African context. Many young South African people do not have access to adequate educational, social and economic resources. As a result, many individuals do not have the financial stability to ensure a smooth path through school and into tertiary education because most citizens live in poverty in South Africa. Therefore, SCCT is used to explain career behaviour within the South African context. The concepts of SCCT include self-efficacy expectations; outcome expectations; and goals. These three mechanisms are interlocking and affect one another bi-directionally, implying that while the environment influences individuals' behaviour and personal attributes, the same behaviour and personal attributes also influence the environment (Morris, Shoffner & Newsome, 2009). In the same way, personal attributes may influence behaviour and behaviour can lead to change in personal attributes. This view portrays the idea that people actively shape their environment (the environment shapes them too) and they are therefore not passive recipients of their environment. Self-efficacy in SCCT emphasizes that people who believe that they will be successful at a task will be more likely to attempt it and perform better than those who have the same capabilities and skills but lack the belief that they will succeed (Lent & Fouad, 2011). Outcome expectations emphasizes that individuals are more likely to attempt behaviours when they feel that such behaviours will lead to desirable or positive outcomes, and goals help individuals to organise and plan their actions and behaviour (Lent & Fouad, 2011).

SCCT sees people as providing direction to their lives. According to SCCT, if people have positive self-efficacy and outcome expectations, they will develop interests in those particular areas (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2013). Therefore, people will be interested in activities in which they feel secure and confident and where they believe they will succeed as a result of their participation. According to Lent, Lopez, Lopez and Sheu (2008) individuals' interests

are tied to their learning experiences. Interests will therefore change through a person's lifespan, depending on the learning experiences the individual may have had. SCCT explains the career choice process as flowing from goals and activities that develop out of interests. People will therefore pursue a career and set career goals in fields in which they are interested. When individuals perform career-related activities, their self-efficacy and outcome expectations are either strengthened or weakened depending on their level of performance (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2013). This in turn forms a feedback system to determine the kind of career that person will pursue. There are, however, also cases where career choices are made that are not congruent with the individual's interests. In this case, career choices are made based on self-efficacy and outcome expectations for jobs that are available (Abrahams, Jano & van Lill, 2015). This is true of the South African context. Oftentimes, jobs are scarce and people are forced to choose certain careers because they are the only breadwinners in their family. Due to the lack of financial resources and scarcity of jobs, individuals tend to pursue jobs that are not relative to their interests (Bojuwoye & Mbanjwa, 2006; Tebele, Nel & Dlamini, 2015).

SCCT and the environment play a role in the career choices made by individuals. During the apartheid era, Africans, Indians and Coloureds were restricted by law from acquiring jobs that were reserved for whites. As a result, they were not free to pursue occupations that interested them. They could not develop their career interests into career-related goals and activities (Clark & Worger, 2013). Thus the environment and specific variables such as race and gender played a fundamental role in the career choices made. Today, legislation has changed profoundly and previously disadvantaged individuals in South Africa are free to develop their career interests by pursuing careers of their choice. There are government initiatives in place for the advancement of previously disadvantaged individuals, women, and people with disabilities at the workplace. Furthermore, education structures are being improved to expose previously disadvantaged adolescents to many different fields so that they can be exposed to new material and decide on careers that best suit them and interest them (Msila, 2007). SCCT is a very useful theory in understanding career behaviour within the South African context, especially that of the youth. It takes into consideration the socio-cultural context of learning and does not assume that individuals follow the same route to career development (Thompson & Dahling, 2012). Furthermore, the theory takes variables such as gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status into consideration when explaining career development and choices made. SCCT emphasises on the influence of the environment

or context on the individual's career development. However, it is important that more research on SCCT is conducted in South Africa to substantiate its usefulness within this unique country.

### **2.10.5 Limitations of SCCT**

This study is an enquiry into the experiences of CGC within LO, focusing largely on Grade 10 learners' and teachers' perspectives. Therefore, this study requires an exploratory method that will allow for the interpretation of social phenomena. Consequently, an interpretive approach located within the theoretical perspective of SCCT is adopted. However, it is important to note some of the limitations of SCCT that require further investigation. Firstly, the context in which SCCT is developed cannot be generalised to the South African context. Additionally, SCCT theorises that personal factors contribute to the development of career interests and goals. However, parent support is also a large factor in an individual's development. This factor has rarely been researched in relation to SCCT constructs. Limited literature has been found applying SCCT to high school learners' career choices because SCCT has mainly been applied to the science and engineering fields. SCCT also relies excessively on self-reports, such as self-efficacy expectations, and neglects maturation and changes over the lifespan of individuals. Lastly, psychological factors such as motivation, conflict, and emotion which contribute to an individual's career choice are given no attention within SCCT.

### **2.11 Chapter summary**

Literature reviewed for this study indicates that LO teachers have an important role to play in the career choices of learners. Career advising or counselling requires such teachers to have adequate knowledge of the careers they advise on and to be well versed with their current practices, roles and opportunities. From the literature, it is evident that these factors are lacking in LO teachers. In this chapter, a review of pertinent literature was provided, as well as a theoretical framework described for the exploration of CGC within LO. Therefore, the information provided in this chapter puts this study into context. From this review the global context and historical perspective, it has become easier to identify the gaps that exist within the provision of CGC in South Africa. This study aims to highlight these gaps and address it. The following chapter, Chapter Three, will provide a discussion on the research paradigm; research design; research methodology; and data analysis methods employed in this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the research design and methodology utilised in this study. The chapter therefore provides a description and explanation of the research paradigm and design employed for this study in order to answer the research questions presented in chapter one; the most appropriate data generation methods and their justification to the study; sample and sampling methods; and data analysis methods. Furthermore, relevant issues of trustworthiness together with the significant ethical considerations that relate to the participants' rights pertaining to this study are outlined. The chapter concludes with a summary of the important aspects that were discussed.

#### **3.2 Research paradigm**

The term paradigm, an idea made famous by Thomas Kuhn (1962), is intended to reflect a particular worldview or basic belief system that guides the researcher in organizing a framework for theory and research in order to seek answers (Neuman, 2006). However, there are many definitions of a paradigm and these vary amongst different researchers. For instance, Creswell (2013) describes a paradigm as a set of basic beliefs that represents a worldview that clearly defines for the researcher, the nature of the world, the individual's place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its components. Punch (2013) defines a paradigm as a collection of values and beliefs that results in the formation of a framework of reference for a group of people in order to make sense of the world. Therefore, identifying the paradigm or worldview of each participant in this study enabled me to understand how the conceptions of teachers' and learners' experiences towards Career Guidance and Counselling (CGC) within the Life Orientation (LO) curriculum are constructed and mediated in context.

Punch and Oancea (2014) identify four types of paradigms, namely positivist/post-positivist, interpretivist/social constructivist, critical theory/emancipatory and pragmatism/postmodernism. This study was guided by the interpretivist paradigm, which is consistent with the qualitative research approach. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2013), the interpretivist paradigm places emphasis on the understanding of individuals'

interpretations of their world. Consequently, the interpretivist paradigm fosters particular ways of asking questions and particular ways of thinking through problems and is made up of the following major dimensions: ontology, epistemology and methodology (Niewenhuis, 2010) which are further discussed in detail below.

The interpretivist paradigm was preferred for this study because ontologically, interpretivists believe that reality is multiple and relative, whereby different individuals experience and understand the same objective reality in very different ways and have their own, often very different, reasons for acting in the world (Mack, 2010). Similarly, I believe that the reality studied (Grade 10 learners' and teachers' experiences of CGC) consisting of the learners' and teachers' subjective experiences of CGC within the LO curriculum cannot be a shared one. The experiences that teachers have and their beliefs about the best ways to teach learners on CGC within the LO curriculum might not be perceived as the same by learners. Subsequently, in this study the participants added their own understanding as to how they viewed their experiences within their school. Therefore, bringing teachers and learners together from two different schools to voice their perceptions seemed to yield best understandings of the phenomenon.

Epistemologically, interpretivists believe that knowledge is subjective and constructed through dialogue or discussions because it is created by making sense or giving meaning to events, occurrences and experiences (Mack, 2010). The key belief is that research cannot be objectively viewed from an external stance; the researcher needs to position him/herself internally to observe the phenomena through the lens of the participants; and the researcher in this paradigm has to understand, enlighten and decipher the social reality of the different participants (Check & Schutt, 2011). For example, epistemology addresses how individuals come to know their reality, what is considered to be knowledge and what is the relationship between knowledge and the possessor of that knowledge (Mack, 2010). In this study, epistemology is interpretive in nature because it is subjective and context dependent. Each participant provided knowledge about CGC and LO which was different because this knowledge was based on the individual's unique experiences of this phenomena. The context of the study itself which is two high schools in the Pinetown District also affected the knowledge which was produced. According to Niewenhuis (2010), both ontological and epistemological positions invariably inform the methodological and methods choices.

Methodologically, interpretivists focus primarily on subjective human experience, allowing for a rich detailed understanding of the participants within their specific contexts (Check & Schutt, 2011). They further indicate that methodology allows for the understanding of how to go about studying what is known. An interpretivist researcher, as Creswell (2013) argues often gets involved in the events or activities of the research subject to observe and identify the common patterns shared by the research subjects. Therefore, in attempting to understand the experiences of CGC within LO amongst teachers and learners, the methodology of the study was based upon direct engagement using semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. I aimed to explain the subjective reasons and meanings that lay behind the interactions in the LO classroom during CGC lessons.

Moreover, it is important to note that the interpretivist paradigm has some limitations. The first is that it does not aim to employ scientific measurement techniques, nor does it intend to generalise the findings of the selected case to other contexts (Flick, 2015). The ontological assumption is subjective and not objective, however, Punch and Oancea (2014) argues that researchers who position themselves within the interpretivist paradigm tend to take an objective standpoint when they analyse the data that was generated. For the purposes of this study, the interpretivist paradigm was an appropriate paradigm as the intention of the research was to explore the direct experiences of the learners and teachers in order to gain a deeper insight into the role of CGC within the LO curriculum. Consequently, the interpretivist paradigm was chosen for this study because the ontology, epistemology and methodology of this study are all found within this paradigm which was appropriate to the research design.

### **3.3 Research design**

The research design, as described by Merriam and Tisdell (2015) can be seen as the structure or plan which, along with the research paradigm, guides the research process. Furthermore, the research design describes the connection between the research paradigm, research methodology, and methods of data collection (Smith, 2015). The following sections provide insight into the research approach, methods and procedures that have been employed in order to seek answers of the research problem as described in this study.

### **3.3.1 Research approach**

This study was conducted using a qualitative research approach. Since the aim of this study was to gain an understanding of the experiences of teachers and learners in their natural settings, this approach was deemed suitable, considering Merriam and Tisdell's (2015) opinion that a qualitative research approach is more concerned about understanding and describing behaviours, perspectives, feelings, and experiences in depth, and the quality and complexity of a situation through a holistic framework. In addition, a qualitative approach allows participants the freedom to express the uniqueness of their own experience (Smith, 2015). Therefore, the use of a qualitative approach in this study allowed for an understanding of the experiences of the teachers and learners through my interactions with them, listening to descriptions of their challenges and experiences of CGC in their own words and in the natural setting in which they occur. In contrast, a quantitative research approach is a formal systematic approach which incorporates numerical data to obtain information about the world (Smith, 2015), and does not contribute to a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the subject matter from the individual's experience, as qualitative studies do. A qualitative approach is aligned with the interpretive paradigm within which this study is positioned, as it matches with the ontological and epistemological assumptions outlined earlier.

### **3.3.2 Case Study**

According to Hancock and Algozzine (2015), a case study is an intensive investigation of a single unit. Similarly, Baxter and Jack (2008) define a qualitative case study as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon, event, process or social group. Case studies are not a methodological choice, but a choice of what is to be learnt. A case study, therefore, is defined by the researcher's interest in specific cases, and not by the methods of inquiry that are used (Niewenhuis, 2010). No matter what methods are chosen, the focus is on the case. For example, in this study, the focus was on a particular situation (subject and career choices) with particular learners and teachers (Grade 10 learners and LO teachers) in a particular situation (CGC within the LO class). A case study emphasizes processes rather than outcomes or products; context rather than a specific variable; discovery rather than deduction; and experimentation (Creswell, 2013). In this study, I was interested in the understanding, experience and practice of the research problem relating to the implementation of CGC within the LO curriculum. The use of a case study in this study brought about new understandings and experiences, as well as confirmed and extended what is known. A case study design was therefore found to employ the best methodologies to



address the research problem, enabling me to bring about new understandings of how adequately CGC enables learners to make informed subject or career choices. This insight into case studies motivates why I have selected a case study as the research design because it seemed to be the most appropriate means to understand the phenomenon of the study and gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of CGC within LO. Although only two schools participated in this study, they are representatives of the larger communities and the results provide a rich and holistic account of the experiences in the teaching and learning of CGC within the LO subject.

### **3.3.3 Research context**

The study was conducted in two high schools within the Pinetown District. One of the schools is a rural school, while the other is considered as a peri-urban school. Both of the schools are English-medium schools. These two schools were selected for this study because they represent two different contextual types of schools, namely a rural school and a peri-urban school and consist of learners from diverse backgrounds. Additionally, these two schools were selected in order to provide a better understanding of whether CGC within the LO curriculum is adequately equipping all South African learners to make informed career choices regardless of whether they attend an urban, township or rural high school.

#### **Precious Gems High School**

This school is a peri-urban school located within a township area in the Pinetown District. Learners from around the area and disadvantaged areas enrol in this school. It therefore has learners of diverse backgrounds, but a higher percentage of learners and teachers are Black. The school has only two LO teachers, who also teach other subjects.

#### **Jewels Secondary School**

Jewels Secondary School is a rural school located near Pinetown. The school also has learners from varying backgrounds, but a larger percentage of learners are from disadvantaged areas and all learners and teachers are Black. This school has two LO teachers, who also teach other subjects and one of which is the Deputy Principal of the school.

The following table provides a summary of both the school contexts in which the research participants of this study teach and learn CGC within LO.

**Table 3: Summary of school contexts**

Context	Language of teaching	Language of learners	Number of learners	Number of LO teachers	Socio-economic status
Precious Gems High School	English and IsiZulu	English and IsiZulu	±600	2	Low-Middle
Jewels Secondary School	IsiZulu and some English	Mostly IsiZulu	±700	2	Very Low

### 3.3.4 Sample and sampling procedures

A sample is a selection of a group of people, considered to be representative of the larger population the study intends to cover (Suri, 2011). Based on this, four learners and two teachers from each of the schools described above comprise the sample for this study. This specific number of participants was selected because the aim of the study was not to generalise the findings, but to have an in-depth understanding of the experiences which teachers and learners encounter (Atkins & Wallace, 2012). Sampling on the other hand is the process of selecting cases to participate in the research in order to provide clarity, insight and understanding about issues or relationships in the social world (Neuman, 2006). According to Punch (2013), there are many different types of sampling strategies that exist for qualitative and quantitative research, namely convenience, quota, purposive or judgemental, snowball, random, systematic, stratified, cluster, and random-digit dialling (RDD) sampling. However, this study utilised purposive sampling method.

Purposive sampling is a sampling procedure commonly used in qualitative research. It involves selecting a small group or a number of individuals as research participants according to the needs of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). For instance, I involved participants who were knowledgeable and could provide a richness of information about the phenomenon of the study. The use of purposive sampling in this study was most appropriate because it allowed for the selection of teachers and learners who are in the best position to describe their experiences and challenges with regards to CGC, since they experience it first-hand. Obtaining the information from any other source would have resulted in receiving second-

hand opinions on the subject matter, which could have contradicted the qualitative nature of the study. In view of these reasons the two high schools were purposively selected for this study because the teachers and learners from these schools are much more aware and knowledgeable about the practices of CGC within the rural and township school environment and can potentially provide information about the reasons as to why learners struggle to make informed career choices. In addition, the reason for the two schools being selected was to compare data from two different sites to investigate if there were recurring themes in different schools. The schools, teachers and learners involved in this study were therefore purposively sampled. The following section presents the details of the participants in this study.

### **Profile of participants**

**Learners:** A total number of eight Grade 10 learners were recruited to participate in this study, that is, four learners from each of the two schools. In order to recruit these learners for the purpose of this study, I approached the LO teachers in each school who have taught these learners from Grade 9 to assist in recommending four learners (two male and two female) in their class who are either able to express themselves clearly, experiencing difficulties making career choices or are undecided about their career path. The average age of the participating learners was fifteen years, as per the required age for Grade 10 according to the Department of Education. The learners represented both sexes equally in order to eliminate gender bias and inequality by providing an opportunity and platform for the perspectives of male and female learners. In accordance with the geographical race distribution within the demarcated areas of the schools, learners were predominantly of African origin and IsiZulu speaking. However, the participating learners were able to converse and express themselves well in English. Furthermore, only Grade 10 learners were chosen as participants for this study because these learners have already been introduced to the topic ‘World of Work’ and school subject choices in Grade 9 (DoE, 2011). Grade 10 learners were therefore best suited to articulate their experiences of CGC in LO as it related to the phenomenon that was explored. Rural learners were deemed as most appropriate for the intentions of this study because these learners were found to be more likely than those in urban areas to leave the education system at an early stage (DoE, 2006).

**Teachers:** A total number of four teachers with LO teaching experience in the Senior and Further Education and Training (FET) phases were recruited to participate in this study. This included two LO teachers from each of the participating schools. Two teachers rather than one were deliberately chosen from each school in order to provide a more varied perspective of the topic; provide a greater amount of data from each school; and to correlate the responses from each site. In order to recruit these LO teachers, I approached the principals of each school for assistance by asking them to recommend two LO teachers with teaching experience in the Senior and FET phases. The inclusion of LO teachers from the Senior and FET phases provided an opportunity for all LO teachers to share their experiences of CGC within LO. In addition, LO teachers were included in this study because they are the ones who teach CGC within LO and are in a better position to assess learners' performance and verify if learners have successfully or unsuccessfully achieved all the aims of the topic Careers and Career Choices within the LO subject.

### **3.4 Data generation methods and procedures**

While data generation is defined as a series of interrelated activities designed to gather information in order to answer emerging research questions (Atkins & Wallace, 2012); methodology refers to the strategies, plans of action, processes or designs foundational to the choice and implementation of specific methods, as well as the linking of the selection and implementation to the desired outcomes (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault, 2015). The interpretivist framework, as well as the qualitative nature of this study, informed the data generation methods used. These were semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The use of two different methods to collect data in this study ensured that sufficient information was obtained with regards to LO teachers' and learners' experiences of CGC in peri-urban and rural schools, respectively, in the KwaZulu-Natal Province. The following sections will therefore elaborate on how two different methods were used to generate data from each participant.

#### **3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews**

An interview is defined as a process between two or more people where a series of questions is asked by an interviewer in order to gather information about a specific subject, experience or view (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). A qualitative research interview, on the other hand, varies a great deal in the approach taken by the interviewer and is used to contribute to

a body of knowledge that is conceptual and theoretical and is based on the meanings that life experiences hold for the participants (Turner, 2010). According to Galletta and Cross (2013), there are three fundamental types of qualitative research interviews: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. However, in this study, semi-structured interviews were used.

A semi-structured interview is a form of interview which contains a list of topics or questions that are drawn up prior to the interview, but is non-structured in the sense that the interviewer is free to formulate other questions in light of the participants' responses and is able to probe interesting and important areas which arise for a given situation (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault, 2015). Consequently, in this study, I used semi-structured interviews by administering a set of predetermined open-ended questions using interview schedules that I developed (see Appendix 7). However, the interviews were guided by the schedule rather than dictated by it. The purpose of using semi-structured interview schedules was not only to follow up ideas and probe responses from the participants, but also to ask important questions and outline pertinent issues with regards to CGC within LO. This method of data collection was well-suited to the qualitative research design within the interpretivist framework, as it entailed direct interaction with the participants of the study (Smith, 2015).

Semi-structured interviews have a number of advantages over unstructured and structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are well suited to explore attitudes, values, beliefs and motives as they provide the opportunity to evaluate the validity of the participants' answers by observing non-verbal indicators, which is particularly useful when discussing sensitive issues, while also ensuring that the participant is unable to receive assistance from others while formulating a response (Galletta & Cross, 2013). As compared to an unstructured interview, a semi-structured interview avoids the looseness and inconsistency of gathering information in order to keep the multiplicity of interpersonal variables involved in a two-way conversation to a minimum (Turner, 2010). Therefore, responses of semi-structured interviews are far more easily compared, obtained and analysed; no topic areas are missed or fleetingly covered; and there is a reduction of interpersonal bias (Turner, 2010). The use of semi-structured interviews in this study allowed participants to discuss their opinions, views and experiences in their own words. In contrast, semi-structured interviews have a broad framework for questioning, which means that similar issues are discussed with a number of different people, but there remains sufficient flexibility to explore the issues in depth, as well as to follow up on responses provided by the participant (Punch & Oancea, 2014). This

allowed the formulation of the interview questions to be directly related to the aims of this study; for questions to be asked with appropriate probing; and allowed me to interview different participants while gaining rich and in-depth experiences. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews are seen as easier and quicker for participants to answer, with fewer irrelevant or confused answers to questions, and participants who are less articulate or less literate are not disadvantaged (Neuman, 2006). For instance, semi-structured interviews in this study allowed me to elicit information about CGC practices from less literate learners who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In addition, interviews were used in this study to obtain credible and trustworthy data from the teachers and learners. As a result, I approached each participant at their school, where the interview was conducted. Interviews were conducted once confirmation of the arrangements and permission was obtained from the principals to see the participants. Each participant chose a day and time that was convenient to them for the interview. Interviews took place in a quiet area within each of the two schools and each interview lasted for no longer than 45 minutes. I briefed each of the participants about the purpose of the interview before commencing and explained to them that an audio tape recorder was to be used during the interview session. The interviews were recorded for transcription and analysis purposes. I used the interview schedules to record ideas when teachers and learners were giving their responses on their experiences and understanding of CGC within LO.

Semi-structured interviews in qualitative research, like others, have some limitations that must be noted. For instance, the researcher has to always keep in mind each theoretical perspective whilst responding to the participants' responses, which can be problematic (Atkins & Wallace, 2012). Semi-structured interviews also do not allow participants to speak freely as they are mostly guided by the interviewer as opposed to unstructured interviews. The interviewer will therefore never know what the participants' real intentions are, and what the true meaning of their words might be (Diefenbach, 2009). However, this limitation was overcome in this study because along with semi-structured interviews I also used focus group discussions which allowed participants the opportunity to speak freely if they could not do so in the one-on-one semi-structured interviews. According to Low (2012), semi-structured interviews can sometimes lead to the interviewer suggesting ideas that the participant would not otherwise have; leave participants with no opinion or knowledge but to answer anyway; participants can sometimes get frustrated because their desired answer is not a choice; and at

times the misinterpretation of a question can go unnoticed. In order to overcome this limitation, the use of prompts, probing and rephrasing of questions allowed me to steer the interviews for desirable responses from participants. In addition, the interviews concluded with a time allocated to the participants to ask any questions or to make any comments that they were unable to make during the interview.

### **3.4.2 Focus group discussions**

A focus group discussion according to Check and Schutt (2011) is used to gain information relating to how people think; to explain perceptions of an event, idea or experience; and when there is a desire to understand a human experience in greater detail and with many perspectives. More importantly, focus group discussions present an opportunity to collect data from a group of people who share certain characteristics through the medium of a group interview and allow participants to respond to questions and probes by the interviewer (Atkins & Wallace, 2012). According to Creswell (2013), focus group discussions typically consist of four to six groups with six to eight participants in each group, and generally last about 90 minutes long. However, in this study, focus group discussions were conducted with two groups consisting of six members in each group (four learners and two teachers) from each of the participating schools, and lasted for no longer than one hour. For the intentions of this study, learners and teachers were put into a group setting with the purpose of triggering thoughts and ideas amongst them that would have not emerged during the one-on-one semi-structured interviews. The focus group discussions, like the one-on-one semi-structured interviews, were facilitated by prepared semi-structured questions in the form of an interview schedule, which was posed to the groups in order to access the data (see Appendix 9). The use of an interview schedule afforded me with an opportunity to ask all participants similar questions, while facilitating a meaningful conversation that can potentially benefit both of us (Galletta & Cross, 2013). It therefore provides guidelines as to what topics and issues need to be explored, while allowing the researcher to deviate if relevant information arises during the interview, or to clarify any uncertainties (Gibbs, 2012).

In addition, Grade 10 learners and LO teachers were invited to participate in the focus group discussions on subject and career choices. As part of the consent process, all of the participants were informed in writing about the intentions of this study before the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews and again at the start of the interviews. Confidentiality, voluntary participation and anonymity were always assured during the audio-

recordings of the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. In this study, during the focus group discussion, learners and teachers shared their experiences on the topic Careers and Career Choices and on making informed subject and career choices within the LO subject. The verbal data collected were tape recorded and later transcribed into written texts before being processed for data analysis. The aim of using focus group discussions in this study was to gather teachers and learners together for a group view on the experiences of CGC within LO in order to obtain multiple perspectives about CGC in an emotive and interactive way that only focus group discussions could achieve. Therefore, the use of focus group discussions served as a rich source of data generation, providing access to the learners' and teachers' own knowledge on subject and career choices.

According to DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006), Check and Schutt (2011) and Gibbs (2012) focus group discussions should be conducted by interviewing research participants in a quiet environment, free from disturbances and where participants feel safe. Therefore, in this study focus group discussions were held in a specific room away from disturbances, within each of the two schools, where the learners and teachers felt comfortable. In preparing and carrying out the focus group discussions and one-on-one semi-structured interviews, I followed Galleta and Cross's (2013, p.121) steps before commencing with each interview:

- An appointment was made with each participant for a day and time that was convenient and suited them.
- I selected and created a room in a quiet area away from disturbances that was conducive to conversation.
- The chairs were arranged according to the requirements of the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions to enhance face-to-face interviewing and group discussions.
- The tape recorder was prepared and tested.
- A jug of water was available for participants.

I followed these steps when commencing with each interview:

- Each participant was thanked for their time and willingness to be part of the study.
- Every participant was reminded about the assent form or informed consent agreement.
- I explained that the interview was to be semi-structured and that probing of questions would be determined by the information given by the participant.



- I asked permission from the participants to record the interviews and group discussions.

The nature of focus group discussions is in both their strengths and their weaknesses. Focus group discussions occur in unnatural settings yet they are very focused on a particular issue and, therefore, can yield insights that might not otherwise have been available in a straightforward interview (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008). In this study, focus group discussions were used to obtain in-depth information from teachers and learners about their experiences of CGC within their school context and the impact this has on the implementation of the LO curriculum. According to Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston (2013), although focus group discussions are economical to use in the sense that they produce large amounts of data in a short period of time, they also tend to produce less data than interviews with the same number of individuals on a one-to-one basis would. In an attempt to address this potential shortcoming, many of the questions from the semi-structured interviews in this study were expanded upon in the focus groups. Therefore, the semi-structured interviews served as a starting point for the use of other methodologies such as focus groups in this study. Furthermore, weaknesses of focus group discussions include: the restriction of closed questions; difficulties managing and recording a group of people; unexpected conflicts, power struggles and other group dynamics may inhibit discussion; shy individuals may be intimidated by more assertive individuals; some people are excluded from the discussion; and the collection of a vast body of data makes data capturing, categorisation and analysis time consuming and difficult (Onwuegbuzie, Dickinson, Leech & Zoran, 2009). However, focus group discussions in this study was useful to obtain detailed information about personal and group feelings, perceptions and opinions; it saved time as I was able to obtain group responses by including teachers and learners rather than separating them; it provided a broader range of information; and offered me an opportunity to seek clarification. Thus, both semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were an important means of obtaining direct responses from the participants about their understandings, conceptions, beliefs and attitudes about CGC within LO.

### 3.5 Data analysis

Boeije (2010) defines qualitative data analysis as an inductive process of organizing the collected data into categories or themes and then identifying patterns amongst those categories or themes. According to Grbich (2007) and Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault (2015) the process of data analysis should be on-going and non-linear, meaning that it should not just involve following straight steps, but going back and forth during the process of analysis. In this qualitative study, the purpose of data analysis was to organise, provide structure to, and elicit meaning from the research data. Based on this, the phenomenology method of data analysis was employed for this study.

According to Rankin and Brown (2016), there are different approaches to data analysis within the schools of phenomenology. The three frequently used methods for descriptive phenomenology are the methods of Colaizzi (1978), Giorgi (1970), and Van Kaam (1966). The Colaizzi's (1978) method of phenomenology was applied in this study in order to explore the experiences of rural and township high school learners and teachers, with specific reference to CGC. Many scholars, such as Bailey and Tuohy (2009); Kooken, Baylor and Schwend (2014); Lockie and Van Lanen (2008); and Rankin and Brown (2016), have used Colaizzi's (1978) method as a theory of analysis and explain that the method allows researchers to use a structured approach to data analysis and expands their understanding of the meanings within the responses of the participants. In addition, Colaizzi's procedural analysis is seen as a well-established and proven method that has been used extensively in qualitative research literature (De Wet, 2011). Therefore, Colaizzi's (1978) data analysis method appeared to be appropriate for this study because it focuses on finding the essence and meaning of the experiences of the participants. As a result, it allowed me to understand the data and identify significant statements from the teachers and learners, which in turn were converted into formulated meanings.

The following procedural steps represent Colaizzi's (1978, p.294) method for phenomenological data analysis that was used in this study:

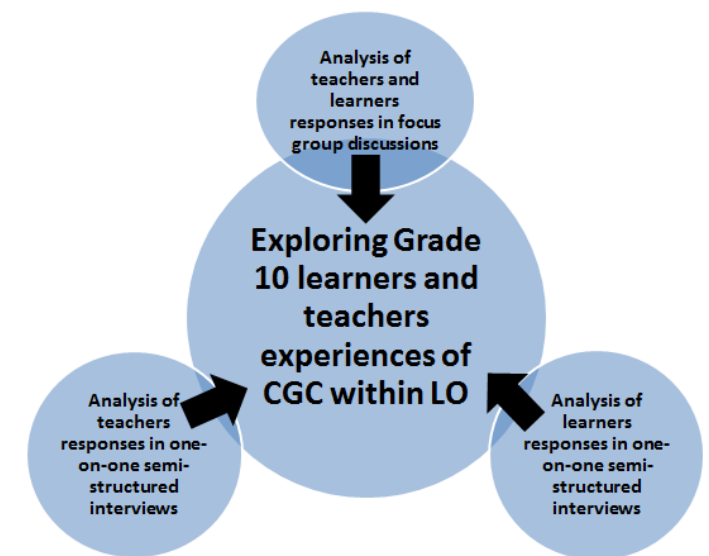
- Transcribe all the data collected, read and re-read each transcript from the interviews to get a general sense of the whole ideas presented;
- Extract significant statements and phrases from each transcript pertaining to the phenomenon being studied;
- Formulate meanings from the significant statements;

- Organise the meanings into themes, clusters, or theme categories;
- Establish a coded system to highlight specific themes or categories to perform a preliminary analysis;
- Write a rich and exhaustive description of the phenomenon; and
- Validate the findings with the participants and compare the descriptive results with their experiences.

The raw data, collected by means of semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, needed to be processed before being analysed. The aim of processing data is to see what is similar and which things go together and which do not (Atkins & Wallace, 2012). Therefore, data analysis started immediately after the data collection and processing were completed. Guided by Colaizzi's (1978) steps mentioned above, I began the data analysis by transcribing all the tape recordings to written texts and then started examining the raw data by interpreting it in order to get a general sense of the linkages between the research objectives and the outcomes with reference to the research questions. In doing so, I briefly read and analysed the teachers' and learners' responses from the reviewed interview transcriptions. Thereafter, the responses from the interviews and discussions were read and re-read, and related ideas were selected and reduced to make sense of the data.

Furthermore, I formulated meanings and compared the learners' experiences and conceptions of CGC within LO to subject and career choices and looked at how teachers integrate their knowledge of CGC into teaching in their classrooms. I also outlined and examined the text from participant's responses from the semi-structured interview and focus group discussion transcripts in order to discover the core ideas or hidden ideas on how participants view CGC in LO classrooms. Those core ideas were then interpreted in order to give answers to the research questions. Participants' responses were compared by sorting and sifting where I searched for types, similar patterns, or ideas so that the data could be analysed inductively for the emerging themes. Following this step, different codes were generated and categorized into different themes, such that they answered the research questions guiding the study, keeping in mind that a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set (Boeije, 2010). As a result, the themes were reviewed - so that themes which seemed alike were merged and those that seemed to have contrasting ideas were collapsed.

In addition, a final refinement of themes was done so that there was a clear understanding of the idea contained in each, which were thereafter named. This done, I began the process of reporting the findings, based on the themes generated. The focus group responses were then transcribed and coded. The main issues and themes around each question were then coded and placed under the same headings as the learners' and teachers' responses of the one-on-one semi-structured interviews to allow for further comparison. The following radial diagram illustrates and summarizes how the data analysis was done in order to elicit the teachers' and learners' experiences of CGC within the LO curriculum.



**Figure 5: Data analysis of Grade ten learners' and LO teachers' experiences**

The process of data collection can be an intense experience, especially if the topic that one has chosen has to do with human experiences. Consequently, there is a growing recognition that undertaking qualitative research can pose some challenges for researchers, and transcribing interviews is one of them (Gibbs, 2012). The following discusses some of the challenges experienced in transcribing the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions that were conducted in this study amongst teachers and learners in order to understand their perspectives on CGC. The major challenge of transcribing the semi-structured interviews and focus group responses was the difficulty of listening and transcribing the audio tapes simultaneously into written form. Therefore, it is imperative to maintain a high quality of tape-recordings which can prevent difficulties later in the research process. This can be achieved by taking into consideration excessive background noise, weak batteries, and placement of the recorder, which can benefit the quality of the recorded interviews (Neuman, 2006). Transcribing the interviews and discussions into written form

was very time consuming as it took several hours to ensure that the transcriptions demonstrate the participants' responses in a comprehensive and meaningful manner. It is therefore important to ensure that the audio tapes are transcribed into written form as soon as possible after the interview is conducted in order to avoid time lost and omitting useful information. In addition, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions as methods of data collection were selected in order to provide a detailed analysis and to strengthen trustworthiness which is further discussed in the following section.

### **3.6 Issues of trustworthiness**

The truthfulness of the results in this study can be verified by applying a procedure called triangulation. The basic idea underpinning the concept of triangulation is that the phenomenon under study can be understood best when approached with a variety or combination of research methods (Punch, 2013). According to Verschuren, Doorewaard and Mellion (2010), triangulation is a powerful strategy for enhancing the quality of research, particularly credibility, and is deemed to be one of the best ways to strengthen validity and reliability. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2013, p.196) articulate that “there are a number of different ways that one can triangulate data, that is, either through the use of several researchers or evaluators (investigator triangulation); through the use of multiple perspectives (theory triangulation); or using multiple methods to study a single problem (methodological triangulation)”. In this study, methodological triangulation was employed by the use of two different sources or methods, namely in-depth semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, in order to corroborate the findings. The use of different methods such as focus group discussions strengthened the findings and verified the information that was collected in the semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, there are four criteria that should be considered by qualitative researchers in pursuit of a trustworthy study, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013). The following discusses how I adhered to these constructs to ensure trustworthiness in this study.

Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault (2015) explain that the credibility of one's research determines the usefulness of the data obtained. Therefore, the notion of credibility in qualitative research deals with the extent to which the findings from the study measure reality (Stake, 2010). Based on this, to ensure credibility in this study, I firstly familiarised myself with the participants by building a rapport with them at the beginning of each interview and group session by presenting to them an informed consent and assent form which explained in detail

the essence of the study and their right to voluntary participation and withdrawal. The data collected accurately depicted the experiences of the participants because I included direct quotations from the transcripts in the presentation of the findings and offered each participant the opportunity to read over their transcripts to ensure they were accurate before moving on to the data analysis stage.

According to Anderson (2010), dependability seeks means for taking into account both factors of instability and factors of phenomenal or design induced changes. This means taking note of the changes in data and those made by the researcher during the process of data analysis. Therefore, I stated in clear terms the methods used for data collection, and the method and general design of the study at the beginning of this chapter. Dependability was also achieved in this study by keeping all transcripts, notes, and audiotapes in a lockable cabinet in my supervisor's office. Names and other identifying information are kept in a secured place, but separate to the transcripts. Schools and names of participants are disguised in all research data to provide anonymity.

According to Klein and Olbrecht (2011), transferability implies the extent to which the findings from a particular study can be applied to wider situations. However, since qualitative studies consider only a small population, it is difficult to say that the findings can be applied to wider situations. In view of this, earlier in this chapter I provided details of the context, sample and sampling procedures, data collection and analysis of the study. The following chapter includes direct quotes from the transcribed text, in order to add to the richness of the findings presented. I also stated, as part of the limitations of this study, that its findings may not be generalised to other situations.

Confirmability of qualitative research means ensuring that the findings reflect the experiences of the participants and not the prejudices or bias of the researcher (Sargeant, 2012). In doing so, I ensured that I put aside my opinion in the analysis of the data by reading the transcripts over and over again, such that I became familiar with the ideas therein, which is evident in the description of the data analysis process, presented earlier in this chapter. Lastly, I employed two different methods and sample groups to ensure that triangulation occurred and to allow for cross-checking of the data by varying the sources of data collection, in that the participants were from two different contextual types of schools, rural and peri-urban.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

Stake (2010) refers to ethics as the rules or set of principles with which researchers need to comply. Therefore, I have anticipated any ethical issues that could have arisen during the qualitative research process. First and foremost, the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the participants (Gibbs, 2012). In order to ensure that the ethical considerations were met, ethical clearance for this study was first obtained from the Ethical Higher Degrees Committee at the University of KwaZulu-Natal where I am registered as a Masters student (see Appendix 2). Thereafter, permission letters and informed consent forms were sought from the principals as gatekeepers of the two schools (see Appendix 3). Permission was also sought from the KwaZulu-Natal province Department of Basic Education (see Appendix 1), participant teachers and parents of learner participants. However, learner participants who are minors were given assent forms which clearly stated the objectives of the study and requested their permission to participate in the study (see Appendix 6). The use of assent forms was included in this study because the learner participants were younger than 18 years and were permitted to participate with parental notification.

The methodology used to analyse data was phenomenology, which solicits sensitive and deep answers to questions while extracting meaning from statements and opinions (Creswell, 2013). The reputation and position of the participants in this study was never compromised. In acknowledging that their verbatim responses could be visible since the findings of the study could be shared with other people, organizations and in a written report, confidentiality was ensured by using pseudonyms for the school teachers and learners. Therefore, the following safeguards were used to protect the participant's rights as set out in Oliver (2010):

- A request for written consent by the governing body or principal of each school was obtained at various levels;
- Participants were advised in writing of the voluntary nature of their participation and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. They were also advised that, at any time during the interview or discussion, they could decline to answer any question;
- The research objectives were clearly described in writing and articulated to the participants;
- A written consent form was obtained from each participant, parents or legal guardians and assent forms from minors;

- All participants was informed in writing of the data collection instruments used namely, audio-recordings;
- Confidentiality and anonymity was maintained throughout the study by assuring participants that they will not be identified with the data they provide and the name of schools will be replaced with pseudonyms;
- Provisions was made for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the participants and participants were assured that they would suffer no physical or psychological harm as a result of participation;
- Written transcriptions and interpretations of the data were made available to the participants in order for them to verify their responses;
- The participants' rights, interests and wishes were considered first when choices were made regarding reporting the data; and
- An electronic copy of this dissertation in the form of a compact disc (CD) was given to the participating schools as a sign of appreciation and reference of the findings.

### **3.8 Chapter summary**

In this chapter, I explained the research design and methodology, and the processes used to collect data in order to answer the research questions for this study. An interpretivist paradigm was selected as the grounding for the qualitative research design in order to explore learners' and teachers' subjective experiences of CGC within the LO curriculum in their specific context. The research methodology was explained, data verification issues and strategies were discussed, as well as the ethical considerations that were made during the process of this research study explained. The following chapter will present the findings of the research and the interpretation and analysis of the data collected.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of this study according to the main themes that emerged. The results and the analysis of the data will therefore be presented and discussed according to identified themes and subthemes of the experiences of teachers and learners of Career Guidance and Counselling (CGC) within the Life Orientation (LO) curriculum. The intention of this study was to obtain information from two selected high schools, namely a peri-urban and rural school within the KwaZulu-Natal province. The discussion of the data is based on the themes and sub-themes identified through data analysis within the context of the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter Two. According to Taylor, Bogdan, and DeVault (2015), the researcher should enable the reader to follow the thinking that led to the reported themes. This implies that the reader needs to be provided with sufficient and precise details from the participants' voices. In order to achieve this, themes and sub-themes developed will be discussed, supported by verbatim quotes from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions conducted with both teachers and learners. To remind the reader, the central and key research questions of this study are restated below:

- How do Grade 10 learners and teachers experience Career Guidance and Counselling within the Life Orientation curriculum?
- What information and counselling do learners receive during subject choice lessons and how is it imparted?
- How does Career Guidance and Counselling assist learners in making informed career choices?
- What significance and value do teachers and learners attribute to Career Guidance and Counselling in Life Orientation Education?
- What challenges (if any) do learners experience in making career decisions?
- What challenges (if any) do teachers experience in implementing Career Guidance and Counselling with learners?

The data generated from the semi-structured interviews involved two teachers and four learners from each of the two schools. The focus group discussions included both teachers and learners who participated in the semi-structured interviews at each school.

#### 4.2 Presentation and discussion of the research findings

This section reports the experiences and perceptions of participants that emerged from the in-depth one-on-one semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions during the data generation process. The research findings are presented according to the themes and sub-themes and are illustrated in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Tabulated presentation of themes and sub-themes**

<b>THEME</b>	4.2.1 Learners' understanding of the terms Life Orientation and Career Guidance and Counselling
<b>THEME</b>	4.2.2 The role of Career Guidance and Counselling in learners' subject choices
<b>SUB-THEME</b>	4.2.2.1 The relevance of current career education and guidance provided in South African high schools
<b>THEME</b>	4.2.3 Learners' perceptions of the topic Careers and Career Choices within the Life Orientation curriculum
<b>THEME</b>	4.2.4 The status and practice of Life Orientation teachers in rural and township high schools
<b>THEME</b>	4.2.5 Teachers' perceptions of Life Orientation and Careers and Career Choices
<b>THEME</b>	4.2.6 Challenges learners experience in making career decisions
<b>THEME</b>	4.2.7 Challenges teachers experience in implementing Career Guidance and Counselling
<b>SUB-THEME</b>	4.2.7.1 Lack of parental involvement and support
<b>SUB-THEME</b>	4.2.7.2 Inadequate support received from the school and Department of Education
<b>THEME</b>	4.2.8 Areas within Career Guidance and Counselling that need development in order to meet the career needs of learners

The following presents the data of this study under each theme that developed from an examination and study of the interview transcripts and will be subsequently discussed according to the sub-themes. Comparisons between the contexts will be made within the discussion of the themes.

#### **4.2.1 Learners' understanding of the terms Life Orientation and Career Guidance and Counselling**

Data generated from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions indicated that the majority of the learners involved in the study possessed similar understandings of the subject Life Orientation. However, the responses from the learners seemed to suggest that they do not clearly understand the purpose and content of LO. The participants described LO as a subject that teaches learners how to look after themselves and to prepare them for life after school. Topaz, a learner of Jewels Secondary School (rural) described his understanding of the LO subject as follows:

*Life Orientation is a wonderful subject, it teaches us more about life, careers, and also about the life we want to lead in the future...*

(Topaz, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

Emerald, a learner from Precious Gems High School (peri-urban) described LO as a subject focusing largely on the anatomy of the human body. Pearl from Precious Gems High School also shared the similar sentiments. They both mentioned that LO involves the teaching and learning of the human body and life in general. Emerald said this:

*I think LO is great for us because we do not know a lot about life and our bodies, so it helps us know more information about our body parts and allows us to get help.*

(Emerald, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

Similarly, Crystal, a learner from Jewels Secondary School echoed Emerald's and Pearl's understandings of LO and stated this:

*LO is a natural subject that teaches us about our bodies and life.*

(Crystal, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

In trying to explore if participants from the two selected schools understood the purpose of LO, responses from the focus group discussions depicted vague answers about the purpose and content of LO and were far from what the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (2011) mentions about the intentions of LO. This is what Pearl had to say:

*The purpose of LO is to teach us about how to live our lives and to guide us in order to meet our life expectations.*

(Pearl, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

Ruby however pointed out that the purpose and content of LO is mainly about the teaching and learning of sexuality amongst other things. She articulated this:

*The purpose of LO is to teach us about sexuality and other things and it is also a subject where we can speak in English because in other subjects we do not talk much English.*

(Ruby, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

Ruby's response was supported by Jade from Jewels Secondary School who indicated that the purpose of LO is to allow learners the opportunity to learn and talk in English. Jade stated this:

*The purpose of LO is to allow learners to learn and talk in English about themselves and for them to express themselves in the classroom.*

(Jade, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

In the one-on-one semi-structured interviews, all learner participants were asked to differentiate between the terms career, guidance, and counselling. The responses from the interviews revealed that the participants within each school had similar definitions of what they thought a career is. However, all participants from the two selected schools were confident and easily described the term 'career' as compared to the terms 'guidance' and 'counselling'. In one school, 'career' was similarly defined by learner participants as a choice one makes about what they want to be and to become in life. In another school, participants defined the term 'career' as a future goal one makes after completing school. Pearl from Precious Gems High School defined the term career as follows:

*A career is a choice that you have to make and choose where you want your life to be and what you want to become in a period of time.*

(Pearl, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

Likewise, Ruby and Sapphire, learners from Precious Gems High School referred to the term 'career' as a vision and something you want to do in life. Ruby stated this:

*A career is a right everyone has on what he or she wants to become and do in life, like choosing the best career for you.*

(Ruby, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

The learner participants from Jewels Secondary School shared similar opinions in defining the term 'career'. They, however, believed that a 'career' is a goal and involves something you do when you finish school. Opal from Jewels Secondary School articulated this:

*A career is a long-term goal that you decide from Grade seven and it is what you want to do and become in the future.*

(Opal, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

Similarly, Jade from Jewels Secondary School defined a career as something that you only acquire after finishing school and stated this:

*A career is something that when you finish school you want to do, something you can carry on with.*

(Jade, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

Most of the learner participants from Jewels Secondary School and Precious Gems High School were unable to define the terms 'guidance' and 'counselling'. When probed, the participants expressed that they have not been taught the terms guidance and counselling in school or in LO, and were not provided with any counselling. However, a few participants from the selected schools did try to define the terms 'guidance' and 'counselling'. Their responses suggest that they were unable to clearly define or provide an understanding of the terms 'guidance' and 'counselling'. They defined guidance as a term used to describe how

individuals treat themselves in order to succeed in life; to show emotions to people around you; and when someone is looking out for you and always expecting the best from you. Emerald from Precious Gems High School stated this:

*I think guidance is about how we can treat ourselves and how we can do things right to succeed in life.*

(Emerald, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

Significantly, in the focus group discussion, Pearl from Precious Gems High School was one of the participants that indicated that guidance is meant to help learners when they choose their subjects in order to understand the subjects and what they want to become. Similarly, an attempt made by Jade from Jewels Secondary School to define the term ‘guidance’ suggested that only a few learners seemed to understand the term ‘guidance’. Jade stated this:

*Guidance is when a person guides you for your career when you already know your career choice and you should have guidance and counselling.*

(Jade, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

Most of the participants, however, failed to define the term ‘counselling’ and mentioned that they did not receive any counselling in school nor did they learn about it in LO. This was evident from the responses at both the selected schools. Opal stated this:

*I haven’t been taught about counselling. I was only taught and know about career choices. No counselling was provided.*

(Opal, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

In analysing the responses and views from all the learner participants, the findings in this theme indicated that all the participants had a vague understanding of the subject LO. This suggests that learners at the selected schools are unable to clearly define, depict, assign meaning to and describe LO which gives me an impression of how this subject is understood in rural and township schools. They all seemed to understand that LO prepares a learner for life after school, however, when probed about the purpose of LO their responses were not in line with the Department of Education’s (2007) description of LO. Life Orientation is seen as a mandatory subject for all learners in the Senior and FET phase that offers possibilities for

equipping learners in South Africa to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which all equip them with confidence and to become responsible citizens (DoE, 2007). According to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (2011), LO aims to achieve this through equipping learners to engage on personal, psychological, neuro-cognitive, motor, physical, moral, spiritual, cultural, socio-economic and constitutional levels; to respond positively to the demands of the world; to assume responsibilities; and to make the most of life's opportunities. The results also indicated that learner participants from both the selected schools had similar conceptualisations of LO. This was confirmed by the lack of knowledge and understanding of LO by the participants who indicated that LO is a subject that allows them to learn and talk about themselves in English. Literature tallies with the responses of the participants in this study with regard to the understanding of LO. For example, Jacob's (2011) study found that learners described LO vaguely or tried to give a summary of LO; the responses were broad; and they had an ill-defined idea of LO. This could possibly mean that learners themselves are not clear on the purpose and content of LO. In addition, the responses of the participants suggest that learners do not have a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the subject LO. The same was observed in the responses from the focus group discussions with participants from both the selected schools where their responses to understanding the purpose of LO suggested that learners were unable to provide adequate and knowledgeable responses about the purpose and content of LO

The participants were able to describe and seemed to understand the term 'career'. They interpreted the term 'career' as a goal or choice that is based on what an individual wants to become in life or in the future. According to Sheath (2013), the term 'career' involves a sequence of employment - related positions, roles, activities and experiences encountered by a person. The definitions of the term 'career' provided by literature are therefore not aligned with the responses on 'career' from the participants. However, the descriptions of the term 'career' by the participants are strongly aligned to what is called 'career choice'. Career choice is the act of choosing a career path which is often done during the course of an individual's life (Mutekwe & Modiba, 2012). Therefore, the interpretations of the term 'career' by the participants strongly correlate with the definition of career choice. This finding suggests that learners are unable to differentiate between the terms 'career' and 'career choice', which clearly have different meanings. In my opinion, the understanding of these terms is crucial to learners because these concepts provide learners with the knowledge needed to evaluate and successfully select a career. The findings in this theme therefore

suggest that despite learners being in Grade 10, they are unable to clearly define and describe the term ‘guidance’. More specifically, they are unaware of the meaning of the term ‘counselling’ and indicated that they did not receive any counselling. These findings concur with the findings of Naude (2014) and Chireshe’s (2012) study in which sixty percent of South African school leavers indicated that they did not receive CGC when they were in school. Similarly, in an exploratory study conducted by Tebele, Nel and Dlamini (2015), eighty percent of South African learners from a rural high school indicated that they do not receive any career counselling within LO and did not know what career counselling was. This therefore explains why learners in urban schools were found to have higher positive attitudes towards CGC as compared to rural schools (Eyo, Joshua & Esuong, 2010). In this study, learner participants at Precious Gems High School and Jewels Secondary School poorly defined guidance and did not know what counselling was.

#### **4.2.2 The role of Career Guidance and Counselling in learners’ subject choices**

Data generated from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions indicated that the majority of learner participants from Precious Gems High School and Jewels Secondary School are currently doing subjects that they did not choose for themselves but which were rather chosen for them by other people. Furthermore, all of the participating learners from Precious Gems High School were found to be doing the exact same subjects, namely Accounting, Business Studies and Economics. Upon probing, learners indicated that they are doing these specific subjects because their teachers or family members chose for them. Ruby, a learner from Precious Gems High School stated this:

*I didn’t choose my subjects, it was chosen for me by my teacher. I have no choice but to be an Accountant now because I am doing these subjects but I really wanted to become a Policewoman and work in correctional services.*

(Ruby, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

Similarly, Topaz from Jewels Secondary School shared a similar experience with Ruby from Precious Gems High School. Topaz mentioned this:

*I do not like doing Geography, Life Science, and Agricultural Science. I am only doing it because my uncle said I should choose and do these subjects.*

(Topaz, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)



A career or subject choice is without doubt one of the most significant decisions anyone can make. The responses from the interviews were significantly similar at both the schools, which seems to indicate that most learners are doing subjects that were chosen for them by either their teachers or family members. This finding could be explained through Bojuwoye and Mbanjwa's (2006) and Mudhovozi and Chireshe's (2012) studies which found that career choices of adolescents from disadvantaged schools are negatively impacted by a lack of career information; poor academic performance; and unsatisfactory or no career counselling services. According to Lent, Lopez, Lopez and Sheu (2008) individuals' interests are tied to their learning experiences, which changes through a person's lifespan and depend on the learning experiences the individual may have. As a result, Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) explains the career choice process as flowing from goals and activities that develop out of interests. For example, learners will pursue a career and set career goals in fields in which they are interested, depending on their learning experiences. However, it seemed that the learner participants in this study did not pursue careers in which they were interested in due to negative or poor learning experiences, lack of career information and no career counselling provided. They were also not provided with the opportunity to explore their interests or career choice which should have been addressed within the LO curriculum. Instead, their teachers or family members chose subjects for them. A possible reason for this could be the fact that their teachers or family members felt that the participants were not equipped with the necessary skills needed in order to make informed career decisions. In my opinion, if there are no positive learning experiences and provision of CGC, this could potentially be a huge obstacle to the process of learning as well as job satisfaction in the future. It should therefore be addressed as soon as possible.

In addition, educational decisions are taken at the end of Grade 9 when subject choices have to be made. It was therefore clear to me that the learners in this study did not choose their own subjects and were uncertain about subject choices. In fact, they need more professionals to visit the schools to tell them more about the new subjects. According to Alexander, Seabi and Bischof (2010), rural schools pose their own special problems in terms of accessibility, poor economic conditions, and little support for prolonged education owing to economic pressures. This suggests that challenges with regards to the learning and teaching of CGC are given less priority. As a result, learners in rural schools seem to be not as fortunate as learners in urban schools. The findings also imply that the participants within schools in the low

socio-economic areas, such as Jewels Secondary School in this study, lack knowledge to make informed subject choices because of inadequate CGC.

#### **4.2.2.1 The relevance of current career education and guidance provided in South African high schools**

The responses from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions indicate many different causes of learners not being able to make informed career decisions within both the schools. Lack of career information, no guidance and counselling, no materials provided other than what is taught in the LO subject emerged as the most common contributing factors. Jade from Jewels Secondary School stated this:

*I did not receive any career information on how to make career decisions or subject choices. I did not even know if I was choosing the right career for myself. My teacher only instructed me to complete the subject choice forms and once I was done she would check if I have completed it correctly or not.*

(Jade, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

Similarly, learners not being able to successfully make career choices due to the lack of career information in Grade 9 to assist them in selecting appropriate subjects for their career choice, as well as subject choice forms being handed and completed without any guidance by teachers was also evident in Precious Gems High School. Sapphire from Precious Gems High School stated this:

*I was not given any information or guidance during subject choices, instead my teacher told me to choose the subjects I think I will do well in, so my teacher only gave us the forms to fill out.*

(Sapphire, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

Most of the learners' responses in the focus group discussions further indicated that the topic 'World of Work' in Grade 9 did not equip them to choose the necessary subjects which would have probably led them to their desired career choice. Opal from Jewels Secondary School mentioned this:

*The topic World of Work in Grade 9 wasn't valuable to me because when I was choosing my subjects I was so confused which subjects to take for my career choice. The topic also did not provide the help I needed and eventually I had to change my subjects and my career as well.*

(Opal, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

Likewise, Pearl from Precious Gems High School indicated this:

*World of Work in LO as well as my LO teacher did not provide sufficient information and did not assist me in choosing subjects. I would have chosen different subjects if I received proper career information and guidance.*

(Pearl, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

The aim of career counselling is to provide learners with what they need to do in order to make it easier for them or less difficult for them to choose a career or plan a career path (McMahon et al., 2012). In this study, the majority of learner participants were of the view that the above causes were interlinked and jointly contributed to the lack of provision of CGC at the participating schools. For instance, the participants were instructed by their LO teachers to choose subjects or lessons they can understand and the subjects they think they will do well in. The provision of career guidance coupled with career counselling allows learners to acquire skills of negotiation, social problem solving, and interpersonal responsibility - which are in themselves important life skills that prepare them for the World of Work (Chireshe, 2012). However, learner participants from both the selected schools mentioned that they were not provided with any CGC to assist them in career or subject choices and if they were, they would have probably done different subjects. This finding is consistent with three recent quantitative South African studies (Jonck, 2015; Naude, 2014 & Chireshe, 2012) which found that learners would have chosen a better subject combination if they had received better or more information regarding admission requirements and subject values. In answering the research question: how does CGC assist learners in making informed career choices? Data clearly revealed that the learner participants from both the selected schools were not assisted by the CGC they received within the LO curriculum in making career choices. Therefore, the findings in this sub-theme suggest that a lack of CGC can impact and impinge on a learner's effectiveness in making an informed career decision. This

sub-theme examined the relevance and the usage of the CGC provided within the LO curriculum, as viewed by the participants who received it.

#### **4.2.3 Learners' perceptions of the topic Careers and Career Choices within the Life Orientation curriculum**

The responses from the semi-structured interviews indicated that the majority of the learner participants shared similar opinions and revealed that they do not enjoy any aspects of the topic Careers and Career choices. However, two learners indicated that they enjoy goal-setting and decision-making within the topic Careers and Career Choices. Ruby from Precious Gems High School stated this:

*I enjoy goal-setting in Careers and Career Choices because it teaches us how to set goals and aim for what we want in the future.*

(Ruby, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

In addition, learners indicated that they do work in Careers and Career Choices that is not related to their career goals. For example, the LO teacher discusses and teaches about careers that are not relevant or useful to them or their careers. More specifically, the majority of the learners felt very strongly about aspects of Careers and Career Choices that LO teachers should teach, but they do not. Emerald from Precious Gems High School and Jade from Jewels Secondary School shared similar experiences about what they thought of the topic Careers and Career Choices within the LO subject. Emerald from Precious Gems High School mentioned this:

*I do not enjoy the topic Careers and Career Choices because I want my LO teacher to have methods or materials to use when he teaches us Careers and Career choices, because when we want to know more about our career he is unable to answer with more information. He should provide information on the importance of choosing a career, how to make decisions with regards to careers, and how to know if we have chosen the right career for ourselves and where will the career take us.*

(Emerald, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

Likewise, Topaz from Jewels Secondary School shared his experience on the topic Careers and Career Choices. Topaz stated this:

*I am disappointed with this topic because I want my LO teacher to teach and focus on Careers and Career choices in one full period of LO and not move from topic to topic without providing the opportunity for questions. The teacher should question each learner or allow us to share our doubts about our choices rather than talking as a class about Careers and Career choices.*

(Topaz, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

The focus of the topic Careers and Career Choices is on personal and practical issues surrounding careers and career choices, where learners are assisted in developing knowledge about themselves and their personal expectations regarding their careers of choice - as well as requirements for admission into various fields of study and solutions to counteract financial concerns and possible unemployment (DoBE, 2011). The responses of the experiences of learners of Careers and Career Choices in this study seemed to be more influenced by the LO teacher and the implementation of the topic Careers and Career Choices within the LO curriculum. Therefore, learners from both the selected schools seemed to have negative experiences and dislike the topic Careers and Career Choices because their challenges of choosing certain careers were not addressed in the LO classroom. As a result, they were unable to develop knowledge about themselves and their personal expectations regarding their career choices. Furthermore, the responses from the learner participants seemed to indicate different challenges faced by learners in successfully choosing a career. There was a general consensus amongst the learner participants that some of the challenges included lack of career information, allocation of time, lack of resources and materials used. These challenges highlighted by most of the participants seemed to hinder the career choices of learners, and therefore result in negative learning experiences.

#### **4.2.4 The status and practice of Life Orientation teachers in rural and township high schools**

The responses from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions indicate that the majority of LO teachers that participated in this study from both the selected schools were not specialised teachers for LO. This finding came to light when participants mentioned that they were assigned to teach LO by the school. Most of the teacher participants also

mentioned that they were teaching other subjects apart from LO. Mr Blue from Jewels Secondary School stated this:

*I am not specialised in LO, in fact the school assigned me to teach LO by giving me the lesson plans. Prior to this, I was teaching only two subjects namely, IsiZulu and Economic Management Science (EMS) and now I currently teach three subjects.*

(Mr Blue, a teacher from Jewels Secondary School)

The majority of the teachers' responses in the focus group discussions at both the selected schools indicated the necessity for LO teachers to possess effective career guidance training. For instance, they believed that teachers who are assigned to teach LO should be knowledgeable about resources and career information since finding a job in South Africa has increasingly become a challenge for many school leavers. They further stated the importance of LO teachers motivating learners by stimulating their career aspirations. Mrs Green from Precious Gems High School stated this:

*If a teacher is assigned to teach LO, they not only have to deliver the curriculum but need to be specialised and equipped to implement the curriculum effectively, provide guidance and counselling services to learners, as well as encourage learners to have positive career aspirations- especially in a rural school where learners face many challenges other than making career choices.*

(Mrs Green, a teacher from Precious Gems High School)

The responses from the semi-structured interviews regarding the role and work of LO teachers indicated that the majority of the teacher participants had varying opinions. Administrative duties, planning, and teaching; implementing the LO curriculum; performing several roles; and attending to learners with special needs were highlighted as the role and work of LO teachers, raised by the teacher participants. Mr Blue from Jewels Secondary School stated this:

*The role of the LO teacher is to perform several roles in the classroom and the work involved is not simplistic.*

(Mr Blue, a teacher from Jewels Secondary School)

Another participant, Mr Grey from Precious Gems High School, mentioned this:

*In my opinion, the work of the LO teacher is to teach in class and not try to be other things, like a social worker or psychologist.*

(Mr Grey, a teacher from Precious Gems High School)

Additionally, the responses of majority of the teachers indicated that they are not equipped with the necessary skills needed to effectively teach all the topics in the LO curriculum because they are burdened with the teaching of multiple subjects, and massive loads of administration, including learners' portfolios. Mrs Pink from Jewels Secondary School stated this:

*A subject such as LO requires someone who is a specialist in the field and someone who can dedicate their time and expertise to the subject, without having the responsibility of focusing and teaching more than one subject.*

(Mrs Pink, a teacher from Jewels Secondary School)

A specialist teacher in LO is defined as a teacher who teaches mostly LO and has been specifically trained for the LO subject (Jonck, 2015). The participants in this study, however, are not specialised teachers and do not mainly teach LO, nor were they trained to implement the LO curriculum. As mentioned in Watson, McMahon, Foxcroft and Els (2010) study, teachers who are involved in teaching more than one subject are more likely to show a lack of interest in one of the subjects they teach, especially if LO is added because the teacher has space on their timetable. This was found to be the case in this study, especially since the majority of LO teachers from both the selected schools were teaching other subjects which were regarded as their specialist areas. This finding therefore indicates that the LO teachers at Precious Gems High School and Jewels Secondary School are unable to produce positive teaching and an interest in the subject LO since it was forced upon them by the school. In light of all the social problems experienced by learners from rural high schools mentioned in Chapter Two, it is quite easy for learners to drop out of school. Similarly, Pillay (2012) and Van Deventer (2008) found that LO teachers need to have knowledge about the current social problems that their learners are facing and they require the necessary skills in order to provide counselling support for learners. I support the views based on Alexander, Seabi and Bischof (2010) and Bojuwoye and Mbanjwa (2006) studies which found that learners from

disadvantaged schools were able to overcome their adverse environmental conditions by clinging to their hopes of a good future and by focusing on doing well in their school work in order to achieve their career goals. This, they believed, would take them out of their negative circumstances. However, based on the findings of this study, LO teachers should be equipped to provide career guidance and counselling to learners. Consequently, teachers that are assigned to teach LO should possess the necessary skills and knowledge required to motivate and counsel learners to work towards positive career aspirations in life in order for them to overcome their negative circumstances.

Upon further analysis of the data, it was evident that the role of LO teachers does not end with career services. They are also required to help learners identify, understand and deal with social, personal and behavioural issues. This is also confirmed in Maree and In Di (2015) and Helleve, Flisher, Onya, Mũkoma and Klepp (2011) as they highlight that the role of LO teachers has changed and there are new demands that are expected from them in order to construct a learning environment in such a way that it effectively challenges and enables learners to achieve real competence as productive, questioning and self-actualising citizens and requires LO teachers to pay more attention to the external factors that disrupt the learner's daily life. The responses generated and presented above indicate that the majority of participants in this study do not understand the role and work of the LO teacher. This suggests that LO teachers at both the selected schools are unaware of the numerous expectations of LO teachers in effectively implementing the LO curriculum. Upon probing, the participants indicated that the reason they are unaware of the expectations is because LO is allocated to any teacher due to a shortage of LO teachers in the school; too many class-groups per grade; frequent changes of prerequisites; and new and temporary teachers are given LO to teach because it is seen as a subject that is not difficult to teach. Therefore, the participants in this study could not clearly describe the role and work of the LO teacher. This finding corresponds with the Education White Paper 4 (DoE, 1998) which states that professional commitment and morale amongst many teachers, administrators and managers is poor. Similarly, the report of the President's Education Initiative Research Project (1998) concludes that the most critical challenge facing education in South Africa is the limited conceptual understanding that many teachers have of the subjects they teach (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999). This is a result of both the inequalities and distortions of South Africa's apartheid past, as well as the evolution of modern industrial society which has shifted the way in which information is acquired through rapid global technological advancement. This



is confirmed in Watson, McMahon, Foxcroft and Els (2010) study, in which career guidance in many non-white schools was compromised due to the limited number of trained personnel and the allocation of school guidance to teachers whose timetables needed a few extra periods filled. This finding is corroborated by this study because knowledge, qualifications or experience seemed not to be a requirement for appointing LO teachers in the selected schools because none of the participants in this study were qualified or trained to teach LO. Rather, the subject was assigned to them once the other ‘more important’ and examinable subjects had been allocated by the school management. As can be seen by the findings of this study, the majority of LO teachers from Precious Gems High School and Jewels Secondary School seemed to be negative towards the LO subject because it is regarded as an add-on to their personal workloads. A lack of commitment towards the LO subject is also evident amongst these teachers. This finding tallies with the results of Dabula and Makura’s (2013) study which found that allowing any available teacher to teach LO could lead to the subject not being consolidated due to new or other teachers being involved in the teaching of LO constantly.

#### **4.2.5 Teachers’ perceptions of Life Orientation and Careers and Career Choices**

The responses of teachers from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with regard to the policies, procedures, assessments and standards within LO were viewed as fair but transparent, whereas the procedures and standards were considered to be higher order and not explicit enough. Teacher participants from Precious Gems High School and Jewels Secondary School shared similar opinions. Mr Blue stated this:

*Assessment standards are mostly higher order for our rural learners. Most of them do not understand English very well, so the type of questions or assessments that are in the LO curriculum are difficult for our learners to understand and achieve.*

(Mr Blue, a teacher from Jewels Secondary School)

Another participant, Mrs Green articulated this:

*It is not fair because being in a township school we are unable to meet the expectations of the policies, procedures and assessment within LO because of a lack of resources and materials needed, as well as the policies are not transparent and does not provide explicit guidelines.*

(Mrs Green, a teacher from Precious Gems High School)

In addition, the majority of the participants indicated in the focus group discussions that the LO curriculum has changed since their first appointment as a teacher. These changes include dealing with social issues, counselling of learners, implementing more group work, and physical education or activities. Mrs Pink from Jewels Secondary School stated this:

*LO has changed very much since my first appointment as a teacher because now most of the activities in the LO curriculum are physical activities and involve practical's and group work.*

(Mrs Pink, a teacher from Jewels Secondary School)

The responses from the semi-structured interviews revealed that teachers from both the selected schools do not do any kinds of activities with learners during Careers and Career Choices lessons, nor do they provide guidance within the LO subject. The majority of teachers described that they only follow the syllabus and aims for each topic within LO. Mr Grey mentioned this:

*I don't do any activities in class. The only thing I do is teach the aims of each topic and follow the LO syllabus.*

(Mr Grey, a teacher from Precious Gems High School)

In analysing the data, most of the participants indicated that the topic Careers and Career Choices is very helpful to learners as it helps them to discover themselves and determine what is their desired career. It also helps them to have knowledge about different careers. However, these responses from the teachers do not correspond with the perceptions of the learners in this study on the topic Careers and Career Choices, which they described as not being helpful to them. Teachers from both the selected schools shared their opinions about the policies, assessments and standards for learners within the LO curriculum. However, from these findings it was evident that there are similarities in the way participants believe the standards, policies, and assessments of the LO subject are unfavourable to their specific school context, therefore emphasizing the need for the LO curriculum to take into consideration the needs of learners from rural and township schools and to be delivered to

learners according to their specific contexts. This may require, as Brophy (2013) believes, ‘readjustments in the curriculum’ in order to ensure that the learning outcomes of the LO curriculum are context-appropriate. In accordance with the research findings of this study, the teachers perceive their learners’ needs and circumstances as being context-specific. The introduction of LO as a subject in the South African school curriculum became fundamental to ensure that all learners were treated equally and that they recognise themselves as worthwhile human beings. However, in my opinion the findings of this study suggest otherwise, which defeats the purpose of LO in treating all learners equally because the LO curriculum does not meet the needs of all learners by not being context-appropriate.

#### **4.2.6 Challenges learners experience in making career decisions**

The responses generated from the semi-structured interviews indicate that there is no support provided for learners with regard to CGC, other than what is offered in the LO subject at both the selected schools. In the focus group discussions, the majority of learners indicated that they receive no CGC from their LO teacher and they are only given basic advice about careers in general as a class discussion. Sapphire from Precious Gems High School stated this:

*I receive no Career Guidance and Counselling from my LO teacher. She only tells us to be careful when choosing our careers but she doesn't help me choose them or explain the challenges I will face along the way. The LO teacher should ask each learner rather than talk as a class about careers.*

(Sapphire, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

The support requested from learners for making informed career decisions included the opportunity to participate in work experience relevant to their career interests; visits to expos; participation in pre-tertiary programmes; visits by university staff, motivational speakers or students to speak at assemblies; and the provision of CGC services. Pearl and Crystal provided similar responses about the kinds of support they would like each of their school to offer in order to assist them in successfully choosing a career. Crystal from Jewels Secondary School stated this:

*It would be nice if people can come to our school and inform us more about careers and career choices and talk to us individually about our career choice. I want my school to call students from universities to address us and motivate us to do well and*

*inform us about the subjects they chose and the careers they are pursuing and the requirements for university if you want to do a certain career.*

(Crystal, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

Opal from Jewels Secondary School offered a very different suggestion to assist learners in making career decisions when she stated this:

*We need a library at our school because we want to read books about our career choice to get more information because our LO teacher doesn't provide the opportunity to ask questions or provide information relating to our specific career. We also need internet to assist us in knowing more about our careers.*

(Opal, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

Ruby from Precious Gems High School eloquently summed it up when she mentioned this:

*I want my school to have a career counselor to who we can go to and get advice when we want to because in the LO class I cannot talk to my teacher because she is busy teaching the whole class.*

(Ruby, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

The majority of learner participants from both Precious Gems High School and Jewels Secondary School indicated that they wanted to have more information or pamphlets on the different types of careers available, which would assist them in learning more about their careers. The types of information requested by the learners that could be useful to them during subject and career choices included the watching of DVDs or videos on careers, access to technology or the internet made available to email companies with enquiries, access to career websites, and the provision of experiential learning. Crystal from Jewels Secondary School mentioned this:

*I receive very little information about my career choice in LO. I want to know more, so if the school or teacher can provide me with pamphlets or internet I can learn more about my career before I end up doing something I do not like.*

(Crystal, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

In addition, from the responses generated in the focus group discussions, most of the learners at both the selected schools seemed to have an idea of a particular career but no understanding of the other possible choices within their fields of interest. Consequently, they felt that they may not be choosing the best option but they did not know what the other options were. The majority of learners also indicated that except for LO, there is nothing being done at school to assist learners in making career choices and that they do not engage in any activities in class or out of class that are related to the topic ‘Careers and Career Choices’ within LO in Grade 10. Pearl, a learner from Precious Gems High School, stated:

*I don't know much about my career choice or about the other options that I have because we mostly do Physical Education (PE) at school, especially during LO lessons.*

(Pearl, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

In analysing the responses generated, some of the suggestions mentioned above can, in my opinion, be more readily investigated by the school management or authorities. It was evident from the findings of this study that information and resources were lacking at the two participating schools. As a result, the LO subject for learners of the two schools seemed not to address the majority of concerns and challenges relating to learners’ career choices. It is therefore my opinion that the suggestions of the learners remind LO teachers and school management to actively enforce the LO curriculum and key strategies to reduce the challenges of learners. If these two processes coupled with the suggestions proposed by the learners are adhered to, learners will be able to make successful career decisions. Similarly, SCCT emphasizes that individuals are more likely to attempt behaviours when they feel that such behaviours will lead to desirable or positive outcomes, which will help them organise and plan their actions and behaviour. Therefore, if schools actively engage with teachers to create an appropriate and conducive learning environment through the provision of resources; career guidance and career counselling; curriculum change; specific time allocation for guidance and counselling; and teacher re-enforcement, this could prove effective in reducing the career challenges of learners in rural and township schools. This is confirmed in Duchnowski and Kutash (2011) study, which stipulates that unlike LO, school guidance and counselling services is an approach which takes a holistic view of learners; is responsive to their context; and is seen as the assistance given to learners who need help with events and concerns that occur during normal development.

In the focus group discussions, participants suggested that in order to go about learning and teaching this compulsory topic Careers and Career Choices within LO, they need individual counselling about their career choices, more content information in the LO textbooks around careers, more explanations and time spent on the topic Careers and Career Choices. They also indicated that they need LO teachers to be more supportive and approachable and require workshops to be conducted based on different careers so that they could understand what is available and what each career requires. In Geldenhuys, Kruger and Moss (2013) study, LO teachers from urban or private schools made use of a wide range of media resources and took their learners outside the classroom for games and activities during Careers and Career Choices lessons, so learners derive many enriching experiences. Unfortunately, this is not the case for learners from disadvantaged schools. Learners in this study indicated that they hardly ever left their LO classroom, except for PE. This is confirmed with the teacher Mr Grey who stated that he does not do any activities in or out of the LO class. He only teaches the LO syllabus. It seems that because there are so few resources available in the participating schools, the teachers lack commitment and are demotivated and are unable to provide enriching learning experiences for learners. They, therefore end up only delivering the curriculum. Consequently, these interrelated factors co-determine the ways in which learners' careers are shaped, emphasising the continued need for individuals to have counselling about the choice and development of their careers. These findings tally with the findings of Theron and Dalzell's (2006) quantitative study on the specific LO needs of learners in South Africa which found that learners ranked and prioritised career choices and information as very important compared to other topics taught within the LO curriculum. Learners in this study come from disadvantaged backgrounds and lack financial aid to pursue their career choices and attend college. However, it was clear from their responses that most of the learner participants are motivated and are doing what it takes to pursue their careers and to attend college, which is an example of meeting personal goals from the SCCT constructs of the theoretical framework of this study.

#### **4.2.7 Challenges teachers experience in implementing Career Guidance and Counselling**

The responses generated from the semi-structured interviews involving the challenges teachers encounter when teaching Careers and Career Choices within LO were: assessment; lack of learning support materials and equipment; time constraints; large class sizes; lack of support received from the Department of Education; general implementation difficulties; and the confusion between guidance and LO. These challenges highlighted by most of the

participants seem to hinder the successful implementation of CGC at both the selected schools. Mrs Pink from Jewels Secondary School mentioned this:

*It is difficult to provide individual attention to each learner with regards to their career because of the large class sizes. We also do not receive any support or guidance from the Department of Education to assist us in allocating time and providing us with the training and materials needed to help learners.*

(Mrs Pink, a teacher from Jewels Secondary School)

The majority of teachers from both the selected schools mentioned the kinds of challenges they have seen learners face when making subject choices or informed career decisions. Responses indicated a lack of knowledge, rushed decisions, and misguidance. Mrs Green from Precious Gems High School stated:

*I have seen many learners doing subjects that they do not like or want to do but chose them because a particular subject teacher told them to. They end up doing wrong subjects that do not match their desired career choice and this makes teaching Careers and Career Choices difficult to implement especially if learners have preconceived ideas of certain careers.*

(Mrs Green, a teacher from Precious Gems High School)

Another teacher participant, Mr Blue stated:

*I think socio-economic factors within the topic Careers and Career Choices are unnecessary and difficult for learners to understand, as well as for me to teach. The main challenge I face with learners is that they find it difficult to choose a career due to lack of knowledge and because of time constraints and lack of resources, I am unable to provide the information needed and most of the learners' end up completing high school without choosing a career and end up sitting at home.*

(Mr Blue, a teacher from Jewels Secondary School)

In analysing the responses from the semi-structured interviews, the findings corroborate with the responses from the focus group discussions in demonstrating the challenges experienced by teachers in implementing the topic Careers and Career Choices. This was indication of the practice of LO in the reality of the classroom situation at both the selected schools. The findings in this study highlight pertinent issues that may have an impact on the status and practice of LO in South African rural and township schools. Matters such as transmission teaching; difficulties teachers expressed with assessment; the lack of learning support materials and other resources; large classes; and lack of time may all contribute to implementation difficulties in LO. Previously, schools in the rural areas were the least resourced of all, their teachers the most under-qualified and their learners the most in need of the expansion of their knowledge of the World of Work (DoE, 2005; Hlalele, 2012). This suggests that although South Africa is a democratic country, the inequalities of the apartheid era still remain evident amongst rural schools. Moreover, socio-economic factors within the topic Careers and Career Choices within the LO curriculum were considered unnecessary and complicated for learners to understand, as well as difficult to teach.

The findings of this study are not a unique phenomenon as Coetzee and Oberholzer (2010), Nel (2014), and Pillay (2012) studies found that teachers lack clarity about curriculum innovation; they lack skills and knowledge; face the unavailability of instructional materials; there is an incompatibility of organisational arrangements and lack of motivation, and factors that restrict LO curriculum implementation. Poverty is also seen as a problem not only affecting the teaching of LO, but all subjects. Many rural schools such as Jewels Secondary School in this study are without water, electricity, sufficient classrooms and furniture, and learners are hungry, with some not having eaten for two to four days according to their teachers. The theoretical framework SCCT used in this study acknowledges the influence of environmental conditions on career decisions of learners. For example, SCCT emphasizes that choice or goals are sometimes influenced more directly and potently by environmental variables than they are by interests (Rogers, Creed & Glendon, 2008). As a result, interests are only expected to exert their greatest impact on career choices under supportive environmental conditions, which enable learners to pursue their interests. Simply put, SCCT explains that interests will be a more potent predictor of the career choices learners make under supportive rather than under restrictive environmental conditions. Assessment difficulties (which were not further researched within the confines of this study to identify the exact nature of the difficulties) were indicated by both the Senior and FET Phase teachers,



concurring with the findings of Mathews, Boon, Flisher and Schaalma (2006) whereby LO teachers indicated a need for training, particularly in assessment. Overly large classes were also found to be a challenge for teaching in this study, especially in LO because it requires dealing with personal development. Smaller classes were preferred by teachers in order to give all learners the opportunity to demonstrate skills learnt and to provide individual attention to learners.

#### **4.2.7.1 Lack of parental involvement and support**

The responses from the participants in the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions indicated that parental involvement is one of the main challenges that teachers experience with learners. According to the responses of the teachers, parents are not as involved in their children's schooling as they should be because most of them feel that the school should cater to all the needs of the learners without having to involve the parents. Mr Blue from Jewels Secondary School stated this:

*Getting parents involved with regards to learners in general is really a nightmare because parents believe that if their children are here at school they are our responsibility. They don't want to take responsibility for the problems their children are facing. So when it comes to career choice of learners, parents don't have time to get involved because they feel it's the teacher's duty.*

(Mr Blue, a teacher from Jewels Secondary School)

Another participant, Mrs Green gave an example of the attitude amongst parents when she stated this:

*We have a situation at the moment where we have a parent we have smsed, we have written to, and we've phoned. We have literally done everything we can and they still haven't come to school to discuss their child's future.*

(Mrs Green, a teacher from Precious Gems High School)

Aside from the fact that parents do not seem to be as involved in school as they should be, some of the teachers also have to battle with changing the perception of parents on the career path they have chosen for their children. Mrs Pink from Jewels Secondary School mentioned this:

*Some parents have preconceived ideas about what career they want their child to follow and this becomes a problem when we as teachers try to explain why their child cannot follow a certain career based on his or her current performance in certain school subjects, as well as the differences in their abilities and interests.*

(Mrs Pink, a teacher from Jewels Secondary School)

The majority of teachers also reported that parents seem to be uninvolved in communicating with their children. Mr Grey from Precious Gems High School reported this:

*Learners find it difficult to communicate with their parents, especially about career decisions, because they do not have time for all these things because they spend most of their time trying to make ends meet and provide for their families.*

(Mr Grey, a teacher from Precious Gems High School)

The responses generated from the focus group discussions indicated that all the participating learners approached friends, family, neighbours, and subject teachers to discuss their career choices, rather than their LO teachers. Sapphire from Precious Gems High School stated this:

*I don't approach my LO teacher for career advice because my LO teacher doesn't allow me to ask questions in the classroom. I go elsewhere to investigate about it. There are a lot of questions we want to ask and when she teaches, it doesn't relate to my career choice.*

(Sapphire, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

Furthermore, the majority of learners reported that their parents' approval influenced their career choice. Opal from Jewels Secondary School stated this:

*My parents want me to become a Pilot but I want to become an Ecologist. I had to change my subject from agriculture to physics because of this.*

(Opal, a learner from Jewels Secondary School)

Another participant, Emerald from Precious Gems High School stated this:

*My parents want me to become a doctor. They say if I become a doctor I will be a great person and they will give me whatever I want, but I want to be a teacher not a doctor.*

(Emerald, a learner from Precious Gems High School)

In analysing the data, parental approval was considered as very strong by most of the learner participants who believed that their parents influenced their career choices and that they are pursuing subjects for careers that their parents want them to do. This corresponds with the responses of the teachers which indicate that although parents want their children to pursue certain career fields, they are not as actively involved in the career decisions of the learner as they should be. Therefore, the greater influencers were parents than LO teachers, friends and family. Upon further analysis, the findings indicate that learners do not approach their LO teachers to discuss their career planning or career choices. Instead, they mentioned that they approached people who they felt more comfortable talking to, particularly around subject selection and career planning. Friends, family, neighbours and subject teachers were considered approachable by the learner participants. LO teachers had no influence and were not approached at all for career advice by any of the participants in this study.

SCCT applies to the findings of parental involvement in this study as it indicates that contextual or environmental variables such as socio-economic status, social support, family and barriers influence the career choices of individuals (Soldner et al., 2012). This is confirmed in Alexander, Holmner, Lotriet, Mathee, Pieterse, Naidoo and Jordaan (2011) study, which found that SCCT explains that if an individual perceives fewer barriers, the likelihood of success reinforces the career choice - but if the barriers are viewed as significant, there is a weaker interest and choice actions. At age fifteen, many learners are still at the beginning of the career exploration phase. Their decisions are often taken for reasons that are not informed by future career planning. For example, most of the learner participants indicated that they were doing subjects because of their parents or family members. Therefore, this was considered to be the strongest influence on career decision-making by most of the participants in this study. This finding is supported by Sugahara, Boland and Cilloni (2008) study, which found that the influence of friends and family members or relatives stood out as the information source most-used by the largest proportion

of students. In this study, career choices of learners are not congruent with their interests but are based on the SCCT constructs (self-efficacy and outcome expectations) for jobs that are available. This is relevant to the South African context because jobs are scarce and learners are forced to pursue certain careers because their families consider them to be the only breadwinners in the family. Thus, teachers who participated in this study suggested that parents have the most influence on the career decision-making processes of their children. Therefore, parents need to have a stronger partnership with the school to ensure that their children are educated and guided through this complex process.

#### **4.2.7.2 Inadequate support received from the school and Department of Education**

The responses generated from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions indicate that teachers are challenged by a lack of support received from the school and Department of Education (DoE). They mentioned that they do not get as much support as needed, probably because the DoE has too many things to attend to and as such does not give LO and CGC much attention. Mr Grey from Precious Gems High School stated this:

*We need more support from the school and Department of Education, especially when it comes to providing learners with career information and guidance, as I said, I do understand that they have backlogs but definitely, they need to be able to help us somehow.*

(Mr Grey, a teacher from Precious Gems High School)

Furthermore, the majority of teachers reported that the DoE is not as responsive as it should be to the issue of CGC service provision in rural and township schools. Mrs Pink from Jewels Secondary School stated this:

*We get no support from the school and no training from DoE in order for us to meet the needs of the diverse learners and be equipped enough to provide Guidance and Counselling to learners. We only get booklets that explain what is expected of us as LO teachers, but no support or training is provided.*

(Mrs Pink, a teacher from Jewels Secondary School)

Most of the teachers from both the selected schools indicated that no training has been provided by the school or the DoE with regards to CGC. Since it is a specialised field, participants felt that they are not equipped to successfully implement CGC for learners. Mrs Green from Precious Gems High School stated this:

*I am trained as a teacher I haven't been trained as a career counsellor. However, I did do a module on psychology but this is not enough to equip me to provide career guidance and counselling to learners.*

(Mrs Green, a teacher from Precious Gems High School)

In analysing the words of the teachers, it appears that there is little or no provision for CGC at both the selected schools. Furthermore, the majority of teachers feel that they are inadequately equipped to provide CGC to learners. These findings concur with the findings of Van Deventer (2008) that LO teachers often felt that they have not received the necessary training to present LO effectively, which in turn results in the majority of learners leaving school with only a vague knowledge of employment opportunities and little insight as to the most appropriate career direction for their abilities, interests, and personality. In my opinion, the fact that the DoE does not appoint or assign LO teachers as school counsellors but pays them as teachers explains why teachers have many responsibilities and workloads from LO and other subjects. In addition, teachers also mentioned that the DoE was supposed to create an avenue for LO teachers from schools that fall within the same area to meet and discuss issues peculiar to them, so that they can learn from one another but this is not happening according to the teachers in this study. The findings of this study also indicate the desperate need for more training in the area of career education as well as more flexibility in curriculum delivery, as the participants feel unequipped to prepare their learners for careers and work opportunities.

#### **4.2.8 Areas within Career Guidance and Counselling that need development in order to meet the career needs of learners**

The teachers' responses from the semi-structured interview and focus group discussions from both the selected schools indicated that they are unable to meet the career needs of learners. The recommendations proposed by the teachers to meet the career needs of learners from rural and township schools included the reduction of class sizes and LO teacher's workloads; skills development of LO teachers; the provision of resources and materials; continuous

reinforcement of CGC with the learners themselves as well as their parents; effective and comprehensive guidelines and monitoring procedures for LO teachers; and possible re-introduction of school counsellors. Mrs Pink from Jewels Secondary School stated this:

*I would highly recommend that the DoE or school provide teacher workshops and training to assist us as LO teachers to provide CGC to learners so we can meet the diverse career needs of our rural learners.*

(Mrs Pink, a teacher from Jewels Secondary School)

Mr Grey from Precious Gems High School added to the suggestions when he stated this:

*I think that learners desperately need someone who they can approach and talk to, someone who is equipped to assist them because as LO teachers we do not have the capabilities to do so since we have other responsibilities and teach other subjects as well.*

(Mr Grey, a teacher from Precious Gems High School)

The specific support and needs that learners require when it comes to career choices were expressed by the participants in the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The responses were corroborated between the two selected schools, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The specific career needs of learners from the two schools were highlighted by the teacher participants. These included: parental guidance, counselling, career guidance, and awareness. Teachers further indicated that rural and township learners require skills to adapt to the cultural and socio-economic environment in which they live. Upon probing, they further emphasised the need for learners to be taught about careers at an early age, as well as the provision of counselling services where learners can approach someone who is equipped in order to assist them in making informed career decisions. Therefore, teacher participants indicated the need for LO specialists; intensive training for LO teachers to successfully implement the LO curriculum; provision of regular workshops; clear instructional guidelines; resources; and continuous in-service training and methodology on teaching LO in a rural or township high school.

In my opinion, some of the suggestions provided by the teachers can only be addressed by the Department of Education and government. These suggestions are informative, valid and deserve to be investigated by the Department of Education while others can be addressed by the school management. Furthermore, the suggestion of continually revisiting and enforcing CGC and other relevant strategies could be instrumental in reducing the challenges of career decisions of learners. The theoretical framework of SCCT could also be instrumental in reducing the challenges and meeting the career needs of learners by exposing them to more information and CGC services, which they can in turn benefit from. For instance, the implementation of CGC could cause learners to exhibit positive behaviours through motivation, goal orientation and self-efficacy. The provision of CGC services could subsequently lead to teachers becoming more acquainted with the expectations of the LO curriculum and the needs of learners from rural or township high schools.

### **4.3 Chapter summary**

In this chapter, the results of this study were discussed and integrated with findings related to relevant literature in order to answer the research questions and the theoretical framework underpinning this study. The findings suggested that the challenges of teachers and learners in teaching and learning CGC in schools are increasing. The findings further suggested that the causes of learners not being able to make informed career decisions are wide ranging and are a result of factors from within and outside the school. This study proposed innovative and informative methods to reduce the challenges of learners in order to meet their career needs within their specific school community. Consequently, extracts and quotes from the raw data collected were presented. In the following chapter, the study is concluded with a summary of the study and the formulation of recommendations based on these findings.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **STUDY SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter presented and discussed the findings of this study. The focus of this chapter is to conclude this research study by providing a summary of the study, concluding statements, recommendations and implications. The summary of the study provides an outline of the main focus areas in each chapter from Chapters One to Four. The conclusions emerged after interpreting, analysing and evaluating the data. These conclusions are linked to the research questions of the study as stated in Chapter One. After reviewing the findings from Chapter Four and the subsequent conclusions that have been formulated, relevant and significant recommendations are made.

#### **5.2 Study summary**

The focus of this research study was to explore the experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling (CGC) amongst teachers and learners in South African rural and township high schools.

Chapter One introduced the study by providing the background and purpose of the study. I mentioned the reasons for undertaking this study by presenting the problem statement, rationale and significance of the study. This study was undertaken to increase the amount of information and CGC that learners receive in rural and township high schools. Chapter One also provided the objectives, key research questions, delimitations, and key concepts used in the study, as well as the organisation of the entire study.

Chapter Two served as the literature backdrop, theoretical and conceptual framework, and the foundation against which the findings of this study were evaluated. The literature review included relevant information regarding career education in South Africa, the Life Orientation (LO) subject, challenges in the practice of CGC in rural schools, as well as the relevance and growing need for CGC which have been found both locally and globally to have an impact on career and subject choices. Additionally, Chapter Two described in detail the theoretical framework of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT).



Chapter Three described the research design and methodology of the study. This study was underpinned by the interpretive paradigm and adopted a qualitative research approach. The research design employed was a case study of two high schools in the Pinetown District. The sampling method utilised was purposive sampling. The data generation methods used in this study included semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Chapter Three also discussed the relevant ethical considerations and issues of trustworthiness.

Chapter Four presented, analysed and discussed the research findings derived from the data generation methods explained in Chapter Three. This chapter was structured according to themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data in order to answer the research questions. The findings indicated that most learners had a fairly good understanding of the term ‘career’ but were unable to define the terms ‘guidance’ and ‘counselling’; the challenges of rural and township learners and teachers are increasing; there were varied causes of learners not being able to make informed career decisions; and teachers were not able to meet the career needs of learners. Furthermore, participants provided various ways to reduce the lack of CGC received in rural and township high schools.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

This section provides the conclusions that emerged and which were informed by the key research questions and the findings of this study.

#### **5.3.1 Learners’ understanding of the terms Life Orientation and Career Guidance and Counselling**

The findings suggest that all the participating learners possessed a poor and unclear understanding of the LO subject. Each participant shared different yet poor descriptions and understandings of LO. The findings also indicate that the learners from rural and township high schools are not clear on the purpose and content of LO as they did not portray a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the LO subject. The findings of the study seem to suggest that despite learners being in Grade 10, they were unable to clearly define and describe the term ‘guidance’. More significantly, they were unaware of the meaning of the term ‘counselling’ and indicated that they did not receive CGC in their school.

### **5.3.2 The role of Career Guidance and Counselling in learners' subject choices**

The findings of the study indicate that learners were having great difficulty choosing subjects or following a career path of their choice because most of them are doing subjects that were chosen for them by either their teachers or family members. It was therefore evident from the findings that the learners in this study did not choose their own subjects and were uncertain about subject choices. From these findings, the lack of knowledge to make informed subject or career choices seem to be increasing amongst learners in rural and township high schools.

#### **5.3.2.2 The relevance of current career education and guidance provided in South African high schools**

The research findings suggest that the subject LO does not provide learners with what they need in order to make it easier or less difficult for them to choose a career or plan a career path. Some of the causes included learners being instructed by their LO teachers to choose subjects or lessons they can understand or subjects they think they will do well in. As a result, learners felt that if they were provided with CGC they would probably have done different subjects.

### **5.3.3 Learners' perceptions of the topic Careers and Career Choices within the Life Orientation curriculum**

The findings of the experiences of Careers and Career Choices of learners in this study seem to be more influenced by the LO teacher and how the topic Careers and Career Choices within the LO curriculum is implemented. Most of the learners from both the schools appear to have had negative experiences and dislike the topic Careers and Career Choices because their challenges of choosing certain careers were not addressed in the LO classroom. Some of the major causes of these negative experiences included the lack of information provided, allocation of time, and materials used.

### **5.3.4 The status and practice of Life Orientation teachers in rural and township high schools**

The findings suggest that most of the participating teachers in this study were not specialised teachers and were not trained to implement the LO curriculum. This finding was found to be the case in both the selected schools because most of the LO teachers were teaching other subjects which were regarded as their specialist areas. This finding indicates that the LO teachers were unable to produce positive teaching and show an interest in the subject LO

since it was forced upon them by the school management. Furthermore, the findings generated seem to indicate that the majority of teachers in this study do not understand the role and work of the LO teacher and were unaware of the numerous expectations of the LO teacher in effectively implementing the LO curriculum. In their opinion, the allocation of LO to any teacher due to a shortage of LO teachers in the schools, too many class-groups per grade, frequent changes of prerequisites, and new and temporary teachers make it extremely difficult to effectively implement the LO curriculum. I noticed that the teachers therefore could not clearly describe the role and work of the LO teacher. Teachers consistently mentioned that knowledge, qualifications or experience seemed not to be a requirement for appointing LO teachers in the selected schools because none of them were qualified or trained to teach LO. Rather, the subject was assigned to them once the other more important and examinable subjects had been allocated. In my opinion, the LO teachers from this study seemed to have had negative attitudes towards the LO subject and showed a lack of commitment, which could be due to the fact that LO is regarded as an add-on to their personal workloads.

### **5.3.5 Teachers' perceptions of Life Orientation and Careers and Career Choices**

The findings indicate that teachers believed that the topic Careers and Career Choices is very helpful to learners as it helps them to discover themselves and determine what their desired career is. It also helps them to acquire knowledge about different careers. These findings however do not correspond with the perceptions of the learners in this study on the topic Careers and Career Choices, which they described as not being helpful to them. Most of the teachers shared similar opinions about the policies, assessments and standards for learners within the LO curriculum by mentioning that the LO subject is unfavourable to their specific school contexts. Teachers constantly mentioned the need for the LO curriculum to take into consideration the needs of learners from rural and township schools and to be delivered to learners according to their specific contexts.

### **5.3.6 Challenges learners experience in making career decisions**

The research findings show a wide range of different suggestions provided by learners in order to make informed career decisions. The focus area of these suggestions involved more information and resources; LO teachers to be equipped to provide career guidance and counselling to learners; and to motivate and counsel learners to work towards positive career aspirations in life in order for them to overcome their negative circumstances. The research

findings also indicate that learners require individual counselling about their careers; more content and information in the LO textbooks around careers; more explanations and time spent on the topic Careers and Career Choices; and for LO teachers to be more supportive and approachable. Learners emphasised that they require workshops based on different careers so that they can understand what is available and what each career requires. The findings indicate that because there are so few resources available in the selected schools, the teachers lack commitment and are demotivated and in turn are unable to provide enriching learning experiences for learners because they merely deliver the curriculum.

### **5.3.7 Challenges teachers experience in implementing Career Guidance and Counselling**

The findings of the study indicate that the challenges teachers experience in implementing CGC include transmission teaching; difficulties teachers experience with assessment; lack of learning support materials and other resources; large classes; and lack of time which contributes to the underlying causes of inadequate CGC provided in schools. Teachers mentioned that socio-economic factors within the topic Careers and Career Choices within the LO curriculum were considered as unnecessary and complicated for learners to understand and difficult to teach. Overly large classes were found to be a major challenge for teaching and implementing CGC, especially in LO, because it requires dealing with personal development. Smaller classes were preferred by the teachers in order to give all learners the opportunity to demonstrate skills learnt and to provide individual attention to learners.

#### **5.3.7.1 Lack of parental involvement and support**

The findings of this study suggest that parental approval was considered to be very strong amongst the learners, as they emphasised that their parents influenced their career choices and that they were pursuing subjects for careers that their parents want them to pursue. Similarly, most of the teachers indicated that parents influence their children to pursue certain career fields. However, they are not as actively involved in the career decisions of the learner as they should be. In the opinion of learners, the findings indicate that they do not approach their LO teachers to discuss their career planning or career choices. Instead they mentioned that they approached people who they felt more comfortable talking to, particularly around subject selection and career planning. This included friends, family, neighbours and subject teachers. LO teachers seem to have had no influence and were not approached at all for career advice by any of the learners in this study. Most of the learners further emphasised that they were doing subjects because of their parents or family members.

### **5.3.7.2 Inadequate support received from the school and Department of Education**

The findings of the study indicate that there is little or no provision for CGC at both the selected schools. The majority of teachers feel that they are inadequately equipped to provide CGC to learners. Most of the teachers mentioned that the Department of Education (DoE) was supposed to create an avenue for LO teachers from schools that fall within the same area to meet and discuss issues peculiar to them, so that they can learn from one another, but this is not happening. The findings of this study therefore indicate the desperate need for more training in the area of career education, as well as more flexibility in curriculum delivery, as the participants feel ill-equipped to prepare their learners for careers and work opportunities.

### **5.3.8 Areas within Career Guidance and Counselling that need development in order to meet the career needs of learners**

The research findings indicate a wide variety of recommendations provided by teachers in order to meet the career needs of learners. The central ideas underpinning these recommendations involved parental guidance, counselling, career guidance, and awareness. Participants further emphasised that learners need to be taught about careers at an early age, with the provision of career counselling where learners can approach someone who is equipped in order to assist them in making informed career decisions. Most of the teachers recommended that LO specialists; intensive training for LO teachers to successfully implement the LO curriculum; provision of regular workshops; clear instructional guidelines; resources; continuous in-service training; and methodology on teaching LO is needed in a rural or township high school. In my opinion, some of the recommendations provided by the teachers can only be addressed by the DoE and government. I think that the recommendation of continually revisiting and enforcing CGC and other relevant strategies could be instrumental in reducing the challenges of career decisions of learners.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

This section provides recommendations that are informed by the conclusions mentioned above and are presented with specific reference to the LO teachers, learners, parents, governing body and the school, as well as the DoE.

### **5.4.1 Life Orientation teachers should be qualified and well informed**

LO teachers have an important role to play in the career choices of high school learners. Therefore, they need to be qualified and equipped to provide career counselling services to

learners and to have accurate information about the different careers and admission requirements to institutions of higher learning in order to provide career guidance. In this study, none of the LO teachers were qualified to teach the LO subject and implement CGC. Furthermore, little emphasis is given to the importance of LO as a subject in rural and township schools. This viewpoint needs to change dramatically to ensure that learners are equipped with skills and knowledge to set future goals, especially regarding subject and career choices. Teachers need to be provided with accredited training courses where attendance should be compulsory and where facilitators need to visit schools on a regular basis to ensure that standards are kept in order to make sure that teachers are well trained and informed to implement the LO subject while providing CGC services. More time should be spent on the clarification and understanding of concepts and terminology within LO, which teachers are expected to become familiar with and to apply during the delivery of the curriculum.

#### **5.4.2 Improved resource materials in rural and township high schools**

It is recommended that the number of resource materials provided to rural and township high schools must increase. Suitable worksheets should also be forwarded to schools in the form of questionnaires with the resource materials. Learners should be able to do ability or talent, personality and interest assessments before they select a career under the supervision of their LO teacher. I further recommend that thorough information should be forwarded to rural and township high schools based on the changes of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), however taking into consideration the needs of learners from a specific context.

#### **5.4.3 Internet access and libraries at schools**

Although internet access was not addressed in this study, the findings indicated that none of the schools in this study had access to computers or the internet and have no libraries. I would therefore recommend that thorough investigations on the internet should be done by learners on new and existing careers. Learners should keep abreast of technology and the global trends in the World of Work. Rural and township high schools should be equipped to facilitate this necessity in all subjects, but especially in LO, in order for the learners to be more empowered and equipped to make well informed subject and career choices.

#### **5.4.4 Rapport between parents and Life Orientation teachers**

The lack of resource materials at schools and learners not having adequate knowledge to make informed subject and career choices indicates that there is an increasingly urgent need for teachers and parents to communicate with each other more frequently about the future of learners. Parents should have the opportunity to conduct regular interviews with teachers after personal assessments have been done in order to have a better understanding of suitable careers for their children, as well as subjects to accommodate those specific careers.

#### **5.4.5 Discussion groups and training for learners**

Discussion groups for learners is seen as a phenomenon or trend that is effective in teaching practices in order to meet the needs of diverse learners in schools (Edwards, Carr & Siegel, 2006). In these discussions, career topics can be dealt with under the guidance of the LO teacher or a specialist. It is also recommended that adequate training be provided to Grade 9 learners so that they are thoroughly informed of new developments with regards to subject choices and the latest careers.

#### **5.4.6 Initiatives by the school principal and governing body**

School principals and management teams should be part of the entire LO subject for teachers. This will ensure that they are empowered to manage the entire curriculum and are familiar with the expectations of the LO teacher and learner. Furthermore, principals should advertise posts for LO teachers and appoint the most suitable teacher with the necessary qualifications and teaching experience pertaining to the LO subject and the implementation of CGC. The teaching of LO should not be allocated to just any available teacher, or to a teacher with extra time and space on the school timetable. Specialist knowledge of the topics World of Work and Careers and Career Choices within LO is required. In addition, principals should be encouraged to maintain the same LO teacher or team of teachers for a few consecutive years. This will ensure that the LO subject stabilises, that teachers grow in their knowledge and understanding of the LO subject and would be able to address the challenges experienced in previous years.

#### **5.4.7 Initiatives and support from the Department of Education**

The DoE needs to ensure that all rural and township high schools are staffed with suitably trained teachers in LO and CGC, as well as adequately resourced. In order to achieve this, the DoE should review the current situation in schools and engage in more intensive workshops

to promote the whole school policy approach to the LO curriculum. The DoE should also devise a proper monitoring system that will help in checking the progress of the implementation of LO and more specifically CGC in schools. The DoE should provide regular in-service training workshops for teachers on career education and counselling of learners. The training of LO teachers and learner representatives as counsellors to assist learners with coping strategies in career or subject choices should be priority. Furthermore, the DoE should encourage partnerships in education between the school and psychological services such as educational psychologists in order to reinstate the delivery of school psychological services by providing guidance and counselling at schools. The LO curriculum on career education needs to begin from primary school with age appropriate career content.

### **5.5 Implications for further research**

- A larger study of the experiences of CGC within rural or township high schools is recommended to elicit the perspectives of more learners and teachers in order to provide more information and a greater insight into CGC practices within schools.
- Research could also be conducted into how to effectively introduce CGC services into rural or township high schools for learners, as well as create partnerships between teachers, parents, principals and governing body members.
- Further research could be conducted to explore the reasons for the CGC experiences and challenges learners faced.
- I recommend further research to be conducted on the attitudes of LO teachers towards learners be undertaken.

### **5.6 Chapter summary**

This chapter has concluded this study and has revealed that although LO has the potential to make an enormous beneficial difference to the lives of learners in South Africa, optimal LO implementation in rural and township high schools is not yet evident. Hence, the status and practice of LO in rural and township high schools requires urgent improvement. Issues such as a lack of specifically trained LO teachers, the allocation of LO responsibilities to non-LO teachers, the lack of knowledge and skills for implementing LO and CGC contribute to a subject grappling to establish itself were discussed. In the event of LO continuing without the necessary interventions, such as the recommendations given in this chapter, this subject may not achieve its aims and its status could decline further. In addition, it may have a minimal impact on the lives of South African learners.



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## APPENDIX 1

### Department of Education Permission Letter



education

Department:  
Education  
**PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

Enquiries: Phindile Duma

Tel: 033 392 1004

Ref.:2/4/8/874

Miss Q Maharaj  
82 Drewstead Road  
Reservoir Hills  
Durban  
4091

Dear Miss Maharaj


#### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **“AN EXPLORATION OF GRADE TEN RURAL HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS AND LEARNERS EXPERIENCES OF CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING WITH LIFE ORIENTATION EDUCATION”**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 August 2016 to 01 December 2017.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Dick Ndlovu High School

Zwelinjani Secondary School

  
Adv. MB Masuku  
Acting Head of Department: Education  
Date: 04 August 2016

#### KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa ...dedicated to service and performance  
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004 **beyond the call of duty**  
EMAIL ADDRESS: [kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za) / [Phindile.Duma@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:Phindile.Duma@kzndoe.gov.za)  
CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: [WWW.kzneducation.gov.za](http://WWW.kzneducation.gov.za)

## APPENDIX 2

### Ethical Clearance Certificate



22 August 2016

Ms Qurisha Maharaj 210521361  
School of Education  
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Maharaj

Protocol reference number: HSS/1300/016M

Project Title: An exploration of Grade ten rural high school teachers and learners experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education

**Full Approval – Expedited Application**

In response to your application received 17 August 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....  
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)  
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Dr NP Mthiyane  
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza  
Cc School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo & Ms B Bhengu

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Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/83504657 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za) / [snymahm@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:snymahm@ukzn.ac.za) / [mphunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mphunp@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

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### APPENDIX 3

#### Permission from the principals of the selected schools

School of Education  
College of Humanities  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Edgewood Campus  
05 August 2016

Attention: The Principal: Mr S.I Bhengu  
Dick Ndlovu High School  
P.O Box 1366  
KwaNdengezi  
Pinetown  
3600

Dear Sir

#### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

My name is Qurisha Maharaj, a Masters student in the School of Education (Educational Psychology) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). I am required to conduct research as part of my degree fulfilment. Please be informed that I have sought the necessary permission in advance from the KwaZulu- Natal Department of Education and has been granted (see copy attached). I therefore kindly seek permission to conduct research in your school. The title of my study is: **An exploration of Grade ten rural high school learners and teachers experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education.**

This study aims to explore how Grade ten learners and teachers experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation curriculum support or not support both teachers and learners for preparations of informed career choices. The planned study will focus on four Grade ten learners and two Life Orientation teachers from the Senior and Further Education and Training (FET) Phase. The study will involve the use of semi-structured interviews with each of the participating learners and teachers and focus group discussions with both the learners and teachers. Participants will be interviewed for no longer than 45 minutes and the focus group discussions will take about an hour long. The interviews will be voice-recorded with the participant's permission.

**PLEASE TAKE NOTE THAT:**

There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research project. Their identities will not be divulged under any circumstance(s), during and after the reporting process but instead, fictitious names will be used to represent their name. All their responses in the interviews and focus group discussions will be treated with strict confidentiality. Participation is voluntary; therefore, participants will be aware that they are free to withdraw at any time they so wish without incurring any negative or undesirable consequence(s) or penalty on their part. The interviews will be voice-recorded to assist me in concentrating on the actual interview. All the participants will be contacted on time about the interviews and will be scheduled at a time convenient to all participants.

Should you have any questions about this study or its procedures, now or in the future, please contact me, my supervisor or the research office at the following contact details:

<b>RESEARCHER</b>	<b>SUPERVISOR</b>	<b>RESEARCH OFFICE</b>
Miss Qurisha Maharaj	Dr Ncamisile P. Mthiyane	Mr P. Mohun
Tel: 031 - 262 5412 Cell: 0721830905 E-mail: qurishamaharaj@gmail.com	Tel: 031 - 260 3424 Cell: 0825474113 E-mail: mthiyanen1@ukzn.ac.za	Tel: 031 - 260 4557  E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

Research tools are attached herewith for your perusal.

Your anticipated positive response in this regard is highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Miss Q. Maharaj

## DECLARATION

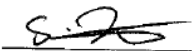
I STHEMBISO INNOCENT SHENJA..... (Full name of the Principal) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: ***An exploration of Grade ten rural high school teachers and learners experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education.***

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily that Miss Maharaj can conduct her research in my school, working with some learners and some teachers as her participants.

I understand that participants are at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time should they so desire.

Signature of Principal: 

Date: 5/8/2016

Signature of Witness (SGB person): 

Date: 05/08/2016

KZN DEPT. OF EDUCATION & CULTURE  
DICK NELSON HIGH SCHOOL  
P. O. BOX 1368  
PINETOWN 3600  
TEL. 031 - 706 6001

1000 902 1100 TOLL  
FREE NUMBERS  
S.A. 021 234 1111  
TECHNICAL SUPPORT: 0800 400 000  
PINETOWN 031 202 2000

School of Education  
College of Humanities  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Edgewood Campus  
05 August 2016

Attention: The Principal: Mr N.M Gumede  
Zwelinjani Secondary School  
P.O Box 45  
Nagina  
3604

Dear Sir

### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

My name is Qurisha Maharaj, a Masters student in the School of Education (Educational Psychology) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). I am required to conduct research as part of my degree fulfilment. Please be informed that I have sought the necessary permission in advance from the KwaZulu- Natal Department of Education and has been granted (see copy attached). I therefore kindly seek permission to conduct research in your school. The title of my study is: **An exploration of Grade ten rural high school learners and teachers experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education.**

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**PLEASE TAKE NOTE THAT:**

There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research project. Their identities will not be divulged under any circumstance(s), during and after the reporting process but instead, fictitious names will be used to represent their name. All their responses in the interviews and focus group discussions will be treated with strict confidentiality. Participation is voluntary; therefore, participants will be aware that they are free to withdraw at any time they so wish without incurring any negative or undesirable consequence(s) or penalty on their part. The interviews will be voice-recorded to assist me in concentrating on the actual interview. All the participants will be contacted on time about the interviews and will be scheduled at a time convenient to all participants.

Should you have any questions about this study or its procedures, now or in the future, please contact me, my supervisor or the research office at the following contact details:

<b>RESEARCHER</b>	<b>SUPERVISOR</b>	<b>RESEARCH OFFICE</b>
Miss Qurisha Maharaj	Dr Ncamisile P. Mthiyane	Mr P. Mohun
Tel: 031 - 262 5412 Cell: 0721830905 E-mail: qurishamaharaj@gmail.com	Tel: 031 - 260 3424 Cell: 0825474113 E-mail: mthiyanen1@ukzn.ac.za	Tel: 031 - 260 4557  E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

Research tools are attached herewith for your perusal.

Your anticipated positive response in this regard is highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

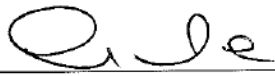
Miss Q. Maharaj

## DECLARATION

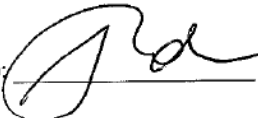
I Gumeđe N.M..... (Full name of the Principal) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: *An exploration of Grade ten rural high school teachers and learners experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education.*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily that Miss Maharaj can conduct her research in my school, working with some learners and some teachers as her participants.

I understand that participants are at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time should they so desire.

Signature of Principal: 

Date: 08-08-2016

Signature of Witness (SGB person): 

Date: 05-08-16

**ZWELINJANI SECONDARY  
SCHOOL  
P.O. BOX 45  
NAGINA, 3604  
PRINCIPAL : GUMEĐE N.M**



## APPENDIX 4

### Informed consent form to the teacher participants

School of Education  
College of Humanities  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Edgewood Campus

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam

### **REQUEST FOR THE TEACHER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

My name is Qurisha Maharaj, a Masters student in the School of Education (Educational Psychology) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). I am required to conduct research as part of my degree fulfilment. Please be informed that I have sought the necessary permission in advance from the KwaZulu- Natal Department of Education and has been granted (see copy attached). I therefore kindly request you to participate in the study on a voluntary basis. The title of my study is: **An exploration of Grade ten rural high school learners and teachers experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education.**

This study aims to explore how Grade ten learners and teachers experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation curriculum support or not support both teachers and learners for preparations of informed career choices. The planned study will focus on four Grade ten learners and two Life Orientation teachers from the Senior and Further Education and Training (FET) Phase. The study will involve the use of semi-structured interviews with each of the participating learners and teachers and focus group discussions with both the learners and teachers. Participants will be interviewed for no longer than 45 minutes and the focus group discussions will take about an hour long. The interviews will be voice-recorded with the participant's permission.

**PLEASE TAKE NOTE THAT:**

There will be no financial benefits that you may accrue as a result of your participation in this research project. Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstance(s), during and after the reporting process but instead, fictitious names will be used to represent your name. All of your responses in the interviews and focus group discussions will be treated with strict confidentiality. Participation is voluntary; therefore, you are free to withdraw at any time you so wish without incurring any negative or undesirable consequence(s) or penalty on your part. The interviews will be voice-recorded to assist me in concentrating on the actual interview. All the participants will be contacted on time about the interviews and will be scheduled at a time convenient to all participants.

Should you have any questions about this study or its procedures, now or in the future, please contact me, my supervisor or the research office at the following contact details:

<b>RESEARCHER</b>	<b>SUPERVISOR</b>	<b>RESEARCH OFFICE</b>
Miss Qurisha Maharaj	Dr Ncamisile P. Mthiyane	Mr P. Mohun
Tel: 031 - 262 5412 Cell: 0721830905 E-mail: qurishamaharaj@gmail.com	Tel: 031 - 260 3424 Cell: 0825474113 E-mail: mthiyanen1@ukzn.ac.za	Tel: 031 - 260 4557  E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

Your anticipated positive response in this regard is highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Miss Q. Maharaj

## DECLARATION

I ..... (Full names of the participant) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: *An exploration of Grade ten rural high school learners and teachers experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education.*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study while permitting the researcher to audio-tape our interview session.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time should I so desire.

Signature of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Thanking you in advance

## APPENDIX 5

### Permission letter to the parents/ guardians

School of Education  
College of Humanities  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Edgewood Campus

Dear Parent/ Guardian

#### **INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR THE PARENT**

My name is Qurisha Maharaj. I am a Masters student studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Education (Edgewood Campus). As part of my degree requirements, I am required to conduct research. I have identified your child as one of my potential research participants. I therefore kindly seek your permission for your child to be part of my research project. My study title is: *An exploration of Grade ten rural high school learners and teachers experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education.*

#### **PLEASE NOTE THAT:**

- His/her confidentiality is guaranteed as his/her inputs will not be attributed to him/her in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 45 minutes and may be split depending on his/her preference.
- Any information given by him/her cannot be used against him/her, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- He/she has a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research and he/she will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- The research aims at exploring experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation with learners in Grade ten.
- His/her involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.

- If you are consenting (he/she is willing to be interviewed), please indicate (by ticking as applicable with an X) whether you are or you are not willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

	<b>Willing</b>	<b>Not willing</b>
Audio equipment		

Should you have any questions about this study or its procedures, now or in the future, please contact me, my supervisor or the research office at the following contact details:

<b>RESEARCHER</b>	<b>SUPERVISOR</b>	<b>RESEARCH OFFICE</b>
Miss Qurisha Maharaj	Dr Ncamisile P. Mthiyane	Mr P. Mohun
Tel: 031 - 262 5412 Cell: 0721830905 E-mail: qurishamaharaj@gmail.com	Tel: 031 - 260 3424 Cell: 0825474113 E-mail: mthiyane1@ukzn.ac.za	Tel: 031 - 260 4557  E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for allowing your child to contribute to this research.

Yours sincerely

Miss Q. Maharaj

## DECLARATION

I..... (full names of parent/ guardian), the parent/ guardian of ..... (full names and surname of the learner), hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent that my child participates in the research project. In addition, I consent/not consent to the interview being voice-recorded.

I understand that he/she is at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should he/she so desire.

Signature of the parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 6

### Assent form to the learner participants

My name is Qurisha Maharaj; I am a student at the University of KwaZulu- Natal (Edgewood Campus). I am doing a study on the experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation. I would like you to take part in the study and your participation will be voluntarily.

If you agree to be in the study I will ask you questions and with the permission of your parents/ guardian tape record all our interviews and group discussions. I will be asking you about your experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation and the challenges (if any) that you have encountered when choosing subjects and a career path.

You can ask any questions about the study during the interviews and group discussions. If you feel at any time that you don't want to continue being part of the study, you can always tell me and you will not be in any trouble for that. All discussions and interviews will be confidential and false names will be used.

Thanking you in advance

Miss Q. Maharaj

## DECLARATION

I \_\_\_\_\_ (name and surname of the learner) would voluntarily like to take part in this study. I know that I am free to change my mind at any time.

Signature of the learner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that I have explained the study to the participant to the extent compatible with the understanding of the participant and that the participant has agreed to be part of the study.

Signature of the student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX 7

### Semi-structured interview schedule for learners

#### **An exploration of Grade ten rural high school learners and teachers experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education.**

This interview schedule was designed to explore the experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within the Life Orientation curriculum. This schedule was used with the Grade ten participating learners of this study.

#### **Sample Interview Schedule: Grade Ten Learners**

1. LO is a compulsory subject from grade R-12. What is your opinion about the subject?
2. One of the topics in the LO grade ten curriculum is CGC. What is your understanding about:
  - a) Career?
  - b) Guidance and Counselling?
3. What subjects are you currently doing?  
Probe: Why did you choose these subjects?
4. Who did you approach to discuss your career planning or career choice?
5. Did your parent's approval and support influence your career choice in any way?  
Explain Why/Why not
6. What information was given in grade nine in order to select the subjects?
7. Was the information you received in grade nine valuable to you when choosing your subjects or do you regret the subjects you have chosen? Explain Why/Why not
8. What information would have been useful to you during subject choices?
9. Do you think the topic "World of Work" in grade nine assisted you enough in order to choose the subjects which would probably lead you to your career choice?
10. Describe the kind of work/ activities you do in class or out of class that are related to the topic Careers and Career choice within LO?
11. What aspects of Careers and Career choice do you enjoy?
12. Is there any work you do in Careers and Career choice that is not related to your career goal? Give examples. How do you deal with such a situation in the LO periods?

13. Are there aspects of Career and Career Choice that teachers' should do but they do not?
14. What kind of support does your school offer for CGC other than what is offered in LO?
15. What support would you like the school to offer?
16. What aspects of Careers and Career choice do you think is unnecessary?
17. If you could, what aspects of Careers and career choice would you change?

*Thank you very much for taking part in my study.*

## APPENDIX 8

### Semi-structured interview schedule for teachers

#### **An exploration of Grade ten rural high school learners and teachers experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education.**

This interview schedule was designed to explore the experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within the Life Orientation curriculum. This schedule was used with Senior and Further Education and Training (FET) Phase Life Orientation teachers.

#### **Sample Interview Schedule: Life Orientation Teachers**

1. How long have you been teaching in a rural/ township high school?
2. Which subjects are you currently teaching other than LO? Did you choose to teach LO or where you assigned to teach the subject?
3. In your opinion, what is the work of a LO teacher? Do you think LO teachers are equipped with the necessary skills needed to effectively teach all the topics in the grade ten curriculum? Please explain
4. What is your opinion regarding the policies, procedures, assessment and standards regarding LO for learners?
5. In your opinion, has LO changed since your first appointment? What is the value assigned to LO in this school and in the development of learner skills for subject choices and careers and career choices?
6. One of the topics within LO in grade ten is Careers and Career choice, how do you find this topic?
7. Describe the activities you do with learners in the classroom for Careers and Career choice and guidance within LO?
8. What support do you receive from the school and the Department of Education as a LO teacher? Have you been trained for Career Counselling since it is a specialized field, if so, do you think it was enough to equip you to counsel learners?
9. Which are the best methodologies that you use when teaching Career and Career choices?

10. From your observation, what kind of challenges have you seen learners face when making subject choices or informed career decisions? How do you deal with those challenges?
11. What kind of support do you think learners need when it comes to career choices?
12. Which aspects of the LO curriculum do you think is unnecessary in Career and Career choices?
13. What aspects of Career and Career choices do you experience as complicated and what would you change?
14. In your opinion, is Careers and Career choice taught the same in every school? Why or Why not?

*Thank you very much for taking part in my study.*

## APPENDIX 9

### Focus group interview schedule for teachers and learners

#### **An exploration of Grade ten rural high school learners and teachers experiences of Career Guidance and Counselling within Life Orientation Education.**

The purpose of this schedule was to elicit the teachers and learners experiences and understandings of Career Guidance and Counselling within the Life Orientation curriculum.

#### **Focus Group Interview Schedule: Life Orientation Teachers and Learners**

1. What is your understanding of the topic Career Guidance and Counselling in the LO curriculum?
2. TEACHERS: Do you think it is important to provide learners with Career Guidance and Counselling within the LO curriculum? Please explain  
LEARNERS: Do you think it is important to learn and be provided with Career Guidance and Counselling within the LO curriculum? Please explain
3. Which material or prescribed books are used for teaching and learning the topic Career Guidance and Counselling? Do you find them helpful and why?
4. Do you get any Career Guidance or Counselling from LO?
5. What challenges (if any) have you encountered with the topic Career Guidance and Counselling? What would have been your successes (if any) after having been exposed to this topic in LO?
6. Except for LO, what is being done at school to assist learners in making careers choices?
7. There are so many new careers to choose from in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, do you feel that you are equipped enough to understand and expose learners to the variety of career choices?
8. What role do parents play in relation to career and subject choices of learners? Which support is given to parents and vice versa?
9. What can you suggest could be the best way to go about the teaching and learning of this compulsory topic CGC within LO?

*Thank you very much for taking part in my study.*

**APPENDIX 10**

**Editor's Letter**

696 Clare Road

Clare Estate

Durban

4091

24 January 2017

**Editing of Dissertation:**

An exploration of Grade ten rural high school teachers and learners experiences of career guidance and counselling within Life Orientation education

This letter confirms that the aforementioned dissertation has been language edited.

Any queries may be directed to the number listed below.

Kind Regards



MP Mathews

083 676 478

**APPENDIX 11**  
**Turnitin Report**

210521361 MeD Dissertation

ORIGINALITY REPORT

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