

**A CAREER GUIDANCE COUNSELLING AND ASSESSMENT
PROGRAMME FOR DISADVANTAGED HIGH SCHOOLS, IN THE CASE
OF THE EASTERN CAPE, IN SOUTH AFRICA**

BY

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy - PhD (Community Psychology)

In the Faculty of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

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ABSTRACT

The study is a career assessment and counselling programme for disadvantaged high schools in the Eastern Cape Province, in South Africa. The specific aim was to guide learners through a process of career exploration in order to make appropriate career choices and plans. The sample consisted of 90 blacks, 1 coloured and 2 Indians from selected schools in the Eastern Cape Province. The main objectives were to formulate a career assessment and counselling programme, as an ongoing process of change, and not as an event, to empower disadvantaged students through their participation in the process; to nurture learning through engendering a tolerance of mistakes and differences in ideas, and to provide opportunities for the development of all.

Using a qualitative research design, self-administered questionnaires were distributed to respondents. A convenient/purposive, non-probability sampling procedure was utilised. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse demographic data, including frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data, obtained from open-ended questions of the survey questionnaire, were content analysed to identify the main themes. Nine themes were identified.

The results showed that many disadvantaged high schools did not have educators who were qualified in career guidance issues. Furthermore, there was a lack of governmental support in career guidance in disadvantaged schools. Additionally, there was a lack of equipment and funding required in career guidance. It has been indicated that the use of psychologists and

psychometric assessment in career assessment will improve the quality of career guidance.

It can be concluded that many disadvantaged and poor schools do not have educators who are qualified in career guidance issues. Disadvantaged schools do not have adequate resources such as money to pay qualified professionals to help learners in making optimised and better career decisions. The South African government is not supportive of these disadvantaged schools. Learners continue to be ignorant as far as career guidance issues are concerned. Many students are not aware of the benefits of counselling.

DECLARATION

I declare that, '**A career guidance counselling and assessment programme for disadvantaged high schools, in the case of the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**' is my original work and has never been submitted to any University for a degree. All the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of a complete reference.

Signature

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Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I would like to thank the almighty God and Jesus Christ the saviour for giving me this life and their guidance throughout the whole research. A special thank you goes to my supervisors, Professor Edwards and Professor Thwala for inspiring me and guiding me throughout the whole research. I would also want to thank my mother, husband and other family members for providing me with emotional and social support during my studies.

DEDICATION

To my mother, husband, child and friends.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTORY BACKGROUND, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introductory background

In South Africa, the Eastern Cape Department of Education has shown poor performance and results. The reality is that the majority of those currently being trained for professional careers in the Eastern Cape may not get the opportunity to be gainfully employed. The increase in the school population provides an unprecedented opportunity for the school counselling profession to make a more positive impact on society (Sieckle, 2005). School performance is important in order to assist learners with realistic expectations. Decision making skills are very important and should be taught from childhood. Many learners are, however, often uncertain about their careers. This uncertainty has different causes, some of which can be linked to career indecisiveness.

Crime and violence in numerous schools in Eastern Cape has attributed to the decline in the educational system in that region (Brynard, De Wet, 2012). This decline affects the culture and climate of the schooling system. Culture and climate affect the atmosphere in a school, which in turn affects the atmosphere. This chain effect has a negative impact on schools in Eastern Cape.

Schools in the Eastern Cape are considered disadvantaged due to the limited availability of proper resources and insufficient supply of input resources. Educator learner ratios, educator quality, learning materials and school infrastructure inhibit

learning abilities of students. (Mancebon & Molinero 2000); (Ray 1991); (Glewwe 2002); (Bhorat & Oosthuizen 2006); (Crouch & Mabogoane 1998); (Taylor 2009); (Taylor 2011); (Berg 2013).

Many learners are influenced by what other people have said or what they assume other people think. This might have a significant influence on self-efficacy and what learners think about their abilities, talents, personality, interest or values. The purpose of this study is to provide activities that will stimulate learners to think about themselves, and their possible, future careers and vocations, so that they can collect information that they can use to make career decisions and to plan to reach their career goals. Spangenberg (1980) state that, besides parents who are primarily responsible for the needs of their children, the school plays an important role in helping children choose a career.

The programme will provide guidance, counselling, consultation, coordination and assessment in school career programmes, with definite plans that provide adequate time for psychologists to assist the growing number of students with special needs. Within the proposed career programme, teachers will have the opportunity to get to know their pupils better and refer young people with personal problems to different professionals, such as psychologists. These problems are often the reason for poor progress at school and social maladjustment which prevents the forming of a clear perspective as far as the future is concerned. Students, such as these, need competent psychologists with caring attitudes who allot a specific amount of their time each day to responsive services.

Career guidance and counselling is necessary to shape and influence career choices and to prepare learners for employment. It is necessary to consider different psychological human variables and enables learners to evaluate their own abilities (Naicker, 1993). Unemployment in south Africa is continuously growing and this makes it more difficult for school leavers to find any types of employment. Career guidance will not only will not only get learners to develop their skills, but also to educate them more on the economic conditions, different employment opportunities available, social and technological movements currently in South Africa. This will enable them to be aware of the impact they will experience of leaving school.

Watts and Sultana (2004) conducted research to investigate an organisation development intervention in previously disadvantaged schools. The study was an attempt to introduce a process of planned change to one such school. The researcher decided that a career assessment and counselling programme for disadvantaged high schools would be socially relevant in this regard.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The present study concerns the challenges confronting the Eastern Cape Department of Education after the poor academic results of matric students. More specifically, these challenges are:

- A lack of information in disadvantaged schools. Such information would enable learners to make informed decisions about their own development.
- A lack of relevant human capital (psychologists for career assessment and counselling).
- Uncertainty in learners concerning their careers.

- The inability to make decisions, an unclear sense of identity, a lack of confidence, an external locus of control, the fear of commitment, blaming, and perfectionism.
- Chronic indecisiveness related to personal issues requiring counselling.
- Parental ignorance and un-involvement in their children's learning process.

To adequately address these challenges, it is vital that people from different ethnic groups live and work together in mutual understanding. The goal of this project is to contribute to the psychological knowledge that may help to meet these challenges.

1.3 Objectives of the study

- To formulate a career assessment and counselling programme as an ongoing process of development and not as an event.
- To support the Eastern Cape Department of Education in leading and actively encouraging career programmes.
- To empower disadvantaged students through participation in the process.
- To nurture learning through a tolerance of mistakes and differences in ideas.
- To provide opportunities for development of all.
- To employ action research in disadvantaged high schools to promote appropriate career programmes.

1.4 Research questions

The main purpose of this research is to design a career assessment and counselling programme for disadvantaged schools in the Eastern Cape Province. The following research questions will be addressed:

- What is understood by the term “career guidance”?
- What problems do schools encounter in supporting learners when they must make career and subject choice decisions?
- What programmes do schools have to support learners who are making career and subject choice decisions?
- What knowledge, skills and experience do schools have in the field of career guidance?
- What needs to be done to support learners who are making career and subject choice decisions?

1.5 Scope of the study

The general aim of this study is to design a career assessment and counselling programme for career guidance for disadvantaged high schools in the Eastern Cape Province. The specific aim of this project is to guide learners through a process of career exploration to make appropriate career choices and plans.

1.6 Definition of key concepts

1.6.1 Counselling

According to Savickas and Walsh (2002), counselling is the active listening to an individual’s story and communicating understanding, respect and empathy;

clarifying goals and assisting individuals with the decision-making process. Counselling is a mutual relationship between a counsellor (a professionally trained helper) and a client (a consumer of counselling services).

1.6.2 Career counselling Super (1980) defined career counselling as the process of helping a person to develop and accept an integrated and adequate picture of him/herself and of his/her role in the world of work; to test this concept against reality, and to convert it into a reality with satisfaction to him/herself and benefit to society.

1.6.2 Traditionally disadvantaged learner

According to the Department of Education (1998), the term "pupil" was replaced with the term "learner", which refers to any person who receives education or is obliged to receive education. In line with the Curriculum 2005 approach, the term "learner" emphasises the shift in focus from rote learning merely to memorise content, to learning that utilises certain skills and abilities for thinking analytically and creatively. In this study, the term "traditionally disadvantaged learner" refers to learners from the previously disadvantaged black, coloured and Indian communities.

1.6.3 Career assessment

These are career tests and assessments in career counselling which are often utilised to provide information regarding a variety of areas, such as interests or personality and style (Savickas and Walsh, 2002).

1.6.4 Career guidance

Career guidance refers to services and activities 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. Such services may be found in schools, universities and colleges, in training institutions, in public employment services, in the workplace, in the voluntary or community sector and in the private sector.

The activities may take place on an individual or group basis and may be face-to-face or at a distance (including help lines and web-based services). They include career information provision (in print, ICT-based and other forms), assessment and self-assessment tools, counselling interviews, career education programmes (to help individuals develop their self-awareness, opportunity awareness, and career management skills), taster programmes (to sample options before choosing them), work search programmes and transition services (Savickas and Walsh, 2002).

1.6.5 Career development

Career development is the total constellation of economic, sociological, psychological, educational, physical and chance factors that combine to shape one's career (Sears, 1982).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

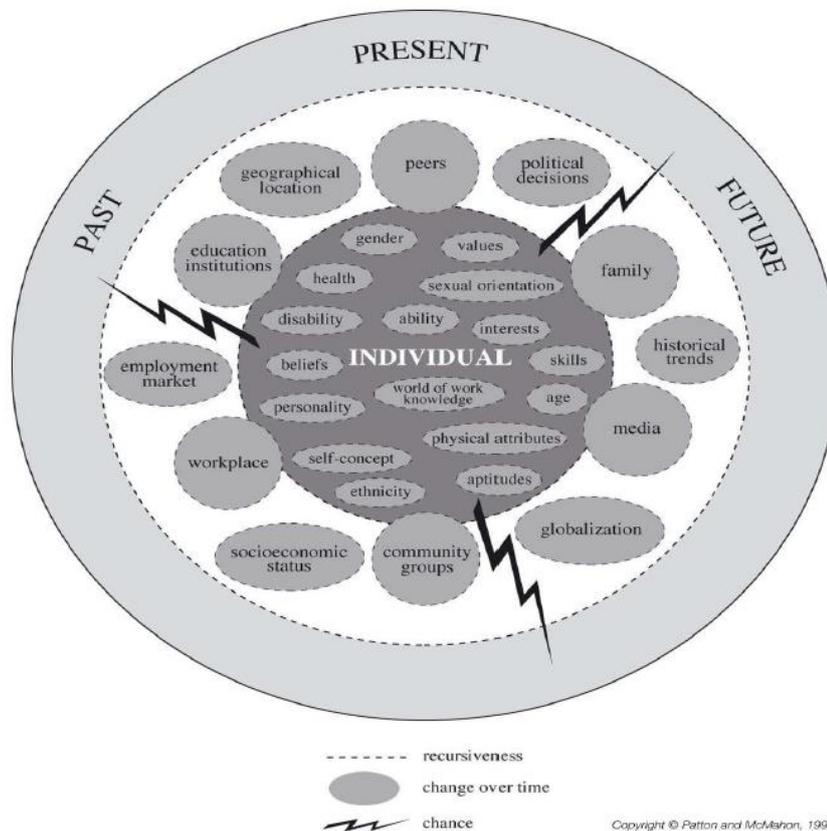
The literature review begins with a discussion of the theoretical framework of this project. There are two different theories underpinning this study. The first is the social cognitive theory based on Bandura's theory on self-efficacy beliefs, which states that people are products and producers of their environment. The second is the Trait-factor theory-Person/environmental fit, which is concerned with the total development of the individual across their life stages and environments. A background of counselling and guidance is reviewed. This is followed by a discussion of traditional career counselling and assessment. Thereafter, post-modern career counselling and assessment is reviewed. A link between career counselling and education, as well as education and training systems, is also established in this chapter. Furthermore, the chapter explores policy issues and how they affect career guidance in South African schools. An integrative and narrative approach to counselling also forms part of the discussion. Finally, an exploration of counselling interventions, counselling approaches and cultural appropriateness closes the discussion.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Career theory in South Africa has been, and still is, largely dependent on international, particularly Western, career theories. To understand the South African environment, the history of career theories, and their extensive

application in South Africa, must be explored. The study adopted the social cognitive theory, trait-factor theory and the contextual action theory. Patton and McMahon (1999,2006) have applied The Systems Theory Framework which maps the origins of career counselling. It states that personality, ability, gender and sexual orientation influences career development. The theory further states that individual influences are connected to a system. And each open system is connected to an outside system.

Figure 1. The Systems Theory Framework of Career Development (from Patton & McMahon, 1999)



2.2.1 Social cognitive career theory

This theory is derived from Bandura's theory on self-efficacy beliefs. The social cognitive career theory posits that career guidance is a cognitive process that regulates the individual's actions (Swanson & Fouad, 1999). The social

cognitive career theory postulates that people are products and producers of their environment, suggesting that the environment actively influences the individual, while the individual is also shaping the environment.

Success and high performance are also viewed as learning experiences that will further strengthen one's self-efficacy (i.e. Self-belief and outcomes expectations of activities with which they are involved) (Stead & Watson, 1999:95). Thus, personal performance, accomplishment provides opportunities for mastery experiences, which tend to increase the individual's self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy plays a fundamental role in the career decision-making process (Niles & Bowsbey, 2002). Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief about his/her ability to perform a task (Swanson & Fouad, 1999). Self-efficacy is context-specific and can be both positive and negative.

In terms of SCCT theory and the four sources of self-efficacy information, South African learners may have been disadvantaged in several ways. Personal performance accomplishments are a very important source of self-efficacy information. Furthermore, in the South African context, learners have had limited access to books, educational facilities and adequately trained teachers to provide them with direct learning experiences (de Bruin in Stead and Watson, 1999).

The social cognitive career theory seems to be applicable, within a disadvantaged context, because it explains career development aptly by paying attention to the potential barriers (perceived or real) that impact on the learners in disadvantaged contexts. Low self-efficacy may be limiting the exploration of

a diverse range of interests, because of the poor outcome expectations of learners in a disadvantaged context. Also, a correlation between adolescent self-esteem and socio-economic status has been shown to exist. Adolescents, who are poverty-stricken, seem to have lower self-esteem than those who are not. The same research further argues that adolescents from disadvantaged backgrounds have lower career aspirations and low outcome expectations than their advantaged counterparts (Arulmani & Nag-Arulmani, 2001).

The social cognitive career theory challenges the perceived barriers and explores mediators to overcome obstacles and barriers to career development. This theory is pragmatic in that it encourages learners to explore and implement their interests and learn from the process which informs their career decisions (Lent *et al.*, 2002). It also calls for interventions that focus primarily on building up self-efficacy and providing opportunities that overcome the barriers hindering learners in adequately planning their career development (Lent *et al.*, 2002). The learners within a disadvantaged context may benefit from such career development interventions that build on self-efficacy beliefs and provide opportunities for overcoming perceived career barriers.

2.2.2 Trait factor theory-Person/environmental fit

The trait-factor approach is concerned to deal with the total development of the individual across life stages and environments. Its short-term goal is to help the client stop irrational, unproductive thinking and behaviour, and start using rational problem-solving skills for effective decision making (Lynch & Maki, 1981). The counsellor-client relationship can be described as teaching,

mentoring, and influencing. External measures, that allow the individual to gauge personal development against society, are used. The long-term goal of the counselling relationship is to provide the client with decision-making skills formulated jointly by the client and society. Counselling is a vital tool for significant development.

According to Sharf (2006), “trait” refers to the characteristic of a person that can be measured through testing, and “factor” refers to a characteristic required for successful job performance. Career counsellors are thus placed in a superior position as the protagonists in the career counselling process. Psychometric tests, which are reliable and valid, can be used to test the compatibility of the individual traits with the environmental traits, which will then portray an accurate idea of an individual’s capabilities (Lamprecht & Lamprecht, 2002). Five basic traits that are assessed via psychometric testing are: aptitudes; achievements; interests; values and personality. These will help an individual understand himself or herself (Sharf,2006). The trait-factor approach is dependent on the postulation that an individual is aware of his or her attributes and is familiar with the process and context of the work environment. Furthermore, the theory posits that a person has a vast array of careers from which to choose freely, although it is a challenge to find employment in the South African context (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2001).

The basic assumptions of the trait-factor theory, as it applies to career counselling, specifically, are:

- Each person possesses a unique and stable pattern of traits that can be measured.

- There is a unique pattern of traits required for the successful performance of the critical tasks of each occupation.
- It is possible to match the traits of persons with the trait requirements of occupations on a rational and actuarial basis.
- The closer the fit between a person's traits, and the trait requirements of that person's occupation, the greater the likelihood of successful job performance and personal satisfaction (Klein & Weiner, 1977).
- Personal traits may be viewed in the context of how well they fit into the environmental system within which the person operates. Environmental systems may be viewed in a broad ecological context that includes geographical, local, cultural heritage, family background and influence, socio-economic class, work/school setting, community setting, and economic climate.
- In a broader context, “occupational” or “vocational” counselling may be replaced with any of the developmental tasks of living, such as going to school, raising a family, or planning for retirement.

The trait-factor theory is applicable to this study to the extent that counsellors should act as educators, and work towards helping disadvantaged students match their traits with their environment. Poor students from rural areas may not be able to understand themselves and the environment around them. It is the duty of the counsellor, as a trained professional, to ensure that these students realise their potential and understand themselves better, thus choosing careers that best suit them. The counsellor should ensure that the environment in which students are operating influences their abilities and, in turn, that students' abilities influences their environment. Ultimately, students

should choose careers which are compatible with their ability and strength, and in which they will be successful.

2.3 Contextual action theory

The contextual action theory is aimed at enlightening the career process and supporting adolescents in the complex transition to adulthood. It also attempts to provide an understanding of behaviour as a goal-directed action, which may be cognitively directed and regulated and influenced by social attributes (Young et al., 2011; Young & Valach, 2008; Young, Valach, & Collin, 2002). This action embraces manifestations such as making notes or reading a textbook, as well as internal processes, which entail worrying or identifying a task to do. Furthermore, it includes social meaning such as training to win a competition, and achieving good results (Young et al., 2002). In contextual action theory, the focus is on the action rather than interaction. It thus focuses on action systems, which include action, joint action, project, and career. Each of these may be seen from the perspective of manifestation of behaviour, internal processes, and social meaning, and defined as goals, functional steps, and elements. For instance, Young et al. (2002) distinguished these actions and adopted concepts and asserted that joint action was needed to understand action of others, projects were to comprehend action overtime, and careers were to comprehend action containing goals. Moreover, where groups of actions have common goals, they are regarded as projects. In contrast, actions are short-term, and projects operate over amid-term timeframe. If projects come together over an extensive period they are referred to as a career (McMahon, 2014).

Joint action identifies the collective transition to adulthood and considers individual activity, as well as the social and cultural influences of families. For instance, adolescents may discuss and plan for their future with their parents. Furthermore, an action occurs over time, during which contingencies and life circumstances may intervene, resulting in the need to define and redefine goals and actions. A project is a broader construct than action, but it also has social meaning (Young et al., 2002). For example, an adolescent and his or her parents may construct a project by deciding what information they need to make their decisions and determining that they will go to a career fair together and that the adolescent will make an appointment to see a career counsellor. Career extends over a longer time span than project and may encompass more actions. Thus, career becomes a complex interaction of goal-directed behaviours, social meaning, and internal processes (McMahon, 2014).

This theory has been far more relevant in the context of career assessment and career guidance in secondary and tertiary education in previously disadvantaged communities. As such, stakeholders, in the form of teachers and educators and professionals in career counselling and career guidance, ought to engage students to assist them in carving out potentially accommodative and successful career paths, with the aid of joint action, group actions, and projects to highlight and promote social meaning.

It has been established that there are no career theories that have been developed in South Africa that primarily dwell on the career development of South Africa's diverse population groups (Watson & Stead, 2002). Subsequently, career theory in South Africa has and still is largely dependent on international, particularly, Western career theories. Thus, it has been

postulated that, to comprehend the South African career theories and assessment environment, the protracted history of career theories and their extensive application in South Africa must be explored (Bischof, 2007).

2.4 Background of career counselling and assessment

With South Africa two decades into democracy, young learners, especially from disadvantaged communities, are ill-equipped for the task of making effective career decisions. They are faced with the challenge of entering into a technology-dependent, global market, at present dominated by largely Western business practices. Furthermore, the youth are faced with a dramatic increase in demands as they move towards adulthood (Crossland, 2006).

A barrage of career psychology theories has been applied in the South African context in the bid to address the challenges in the context of South Africa. Career psychology in South Africa, while strongly influenced by theories developed in the United States of America, was originally used to regulate entry into the South African labour market in accordance with apartheid philosophy, and therefore along racial lines (Kay & Fretwell, 2003; Kraak, 2004; Stead & Watson, 1999). Evidently, the South African government documents have reflected that international models for career psychology have been indiscriminately adopted rather than adapted for use in South Africa, leading to a contextually blind and a contextually bound process (Stead & Watson, 2002). Thus, the South African, career psychology domain, inclusive of career assessment and counselling, is confronted with the challenge to develop and evaluate models of career psychology appropriate to the South African context, while maintaining a global view (Stead & Watson, 1999). However, it has been

emphasised that there is a need to contextualise any proposed competency framework for career development practitioners (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2014).

Differences in socio-economic environments between the West and South Africa has compelled South African career psychology, and related career guidance and career education practices, to develop in order to better suit our unique situation (Stead & Watson, 1999). Watson, Samuels and Flederman (2014) augmented this assertion and postulated that there has been a long-lasting acknowledgement that most South Africans' career development psychology has been certainly, and, without a doubt, continues to be restricted and prescribed by socio-political and educational systemic factors. Career guidance has become an essential component of education in twenty-first century South Africa, as many young people from technologically disadvantaged, rural communities strive to move from an agrarian way of life, into an industrial and manufacturing-based, urban economy. Young people are confronted with the reality of having to make difficult decisions with regards to career paths, due to the burgeoning multiplicity of occupational opportunities in their immediate environment (Stead & Watson, 1999).

School-based, career guidance initiatives are essential to help young people increase their ability to earn a living, cope with change, and recognise and make appropriate use of opportunities (Plant, 2003). This will empower learners to be able to get into, and compete, in the labour market amid high employment, poverty and limited experience and skills. This ought to help them develop career decision-making competencies essential for a life-time of career development in a dynamic labour market (Lindhard, 1987). In other words,

young people will be able to manage change and take advantage of the associated opportunities associated with rising life challenges.

Various abstract theories and assessment methods have been initiated within the South African context. Research on the identification of appropriate assessment instruments for career counselling in the diverse context of South Africa (and Africa in general) is in its infancy and needs to be broadened considerably (Maree &, 2007). There have been a widespread of career development services in South Africa, which have been seen to be skewed towards assessment and information. Watson and McMahon (2013: 474) pointed to the fact that “career delivery services in South Africa have been dominated by the use of standardised, psychometric tests”. Current career counselling strategies rely primarily on the results of psychometric tests, despite the glaring shortcomings of the traditional approach to career counselling, which have become apparent in postmodern, post-apartheid South Africa. These shortcomings include the following:

- Counselors who implement current career counselling models rely mainly on the results of profiles of psychometric tests.
- Few psychometric tests have been specifically designed for South Africa's multicultural population.
- Most American and European tests currently in use in South Africa are not necessarily valid and reliable for diverse South African cultures.
- The value of the test results is often exaggerated, and the career counselor is regarded as an expert, whose recommendations should be accepted unconditionally, often resulting in the learner being excluded from the decision-making process.

- The client often avoids the responsibility of making his or her own choices regarding a future career, and there is little proof of exploration and development of the self by the client.
- Clients are often deprived of the opportunity to explore and develop because tests are seldom interpreted in a dynamic manner.
- The clear majority of testee's are not well versed in English, which is the primary language of learning and teaching (Lamprecht, 2002).
- Tests and current career counselling models have, until recently, only been available to white, Afrikaans and English-speaking learners. These models are not seen to be suitable for all cultures, genders and socio-economic groups (Lamprecht, 2002; Maree & Beck, 2004).

Career counselling, from a postmodern, narrative perspective, requires reconsidering the traditional (modern) approach of the 20th century. Another approach is needed to provide the means to answer the following career-counselling questions: "How would this approach be useful to a man who has been sentenced to spend the rest of his life in prison; or someone who consumes a bottle of gin a day and lives on the streets; or a gang member in an urban ghetto or a single mother with four children living in abject poverty?" (Winslade, 2007).

In South Africa, there is an urgent need for an approach that attempts to:

- Facilitate an understanding of individual and collective strengths, and barriers in career development.
- Assist clients to utilise strengths and negotiate barriers to facilitate wellbeing (happiness) by mobilising existing resources.

- Enhance assessment (and employment) opportunities for learners.
- Help learners negotiate major life transitions (e.g., choosing a career at the end of their final year of schooling).
- Assist learners who are taking their first steps in shaping their career paths
- Administer viable, affordable career counselling to all learners.
- Link life stories and career choices.

The general aim of narrative career counselling is to script a person's own life story. This focus makes the approach uniquely suited to the exploration of personal meanings, and for helping to resolve many kinds of problems involving meaning. In attempting to facilitate career development, a narrative approach attempts to effect personal agency, by viewing learners as active agents in their personal development and cultivating an increased emphasis on emotions and passions. Kidd (1998) noted, however, that the major distinction between the traditional and a more subjective approach lies in the increased emphasis that the latter places on clients' purposes, emotions and passions. McMahon and Patton (2002) emphasised that both approaches have a rightful place in the process of career development. The latter view seems to be appropriate, which is why, in most research, an attempt is made to meld these two approaches in a meaningful way, to enable the design of a career counselling strategy that might provide all provincial Departments of Education with a positive direction for the future.

2.5 Traditional career counselling and assessment in South Africa

According to Lamprecht and Lamprecht (2002), career counselling can broadly be defined as a procedure where a trained professional assists an individual, or a group of individuals, to make informed and effective career-related decisions. Career counselling can be divided into three phases, namely, a diagnosis of what the client wishes to achieve via career counselling; why the client requires help with his or her career decision, and what the client's work-related strengths and weaknesses and career preferences are (Crites, 1981; De Bruin, 2002).

Career counselling in South Africa is still characterised by psychometric assessment. Psychometric tests are suitable primarily for dominant cultural groups in South Africa, namely, Afrikaans and English (mother tongue) speaking groups. In career-counselling practice, these tests are often applied to traditionally disadvantaged learners in an unscientific manner. Until recently, career counsellors were caught up in the western approach to counselling, which uses psychometric tests to guide the adolescent to make responsible career choices and decisions (Cosser, 2002). It is evident that, at present, career counselling in South Africa is available primarily to people who are able to afford this expensive service (Nicholas, Pretorius & Naidoo, 1999). Assessment and counselling, moreover, are still based on western principles, and do not cater for the unique nature of various South African cultures.

In this regard, there is a need for alternative approaches to career counselling and career decisions. Regarding this need, Savickas (1993) recommended that counselling approaches should fit the spirit of the age, if clients are to accept

them as useful. Career counselling, as a discipline, traditionally favoured an objective (positivist) perspective. Sophisticated media such as psychometric tests, work sheets and computer programmes were utilised to form an objective image of the individual. This image was then matched with the character traits suited to a specific career. If the values, interests and abilities of the individual were considered congruent with the requirements of a specific career, the assumption was made that the individual would find that career stable, productive and satisfying. The 'matching', 'objective' image was accepted as real and true.

According to Maree, Bester, Lubbe and Beck (2001), there are shortcomings that can be found in the traditional approach to career counselling; these have become apparent in post-modern, post-apartheid South Africa. It is therefore important for psychologists and counsellors to consider the use of the post-modern approach as it provides advantages that the traditional approach would otherwise not have provided. In contrast to the traditional approach, the post-modern approach considers the needs of those disadvantaged groups that were initially not exposed to the methods and undertakings of the traditional approach.

Career counselling in South Africa (SA) is, by and large, still characterised by relatively privileged counsellors facilitating career counselling with those whose experiences have been marginalised. As such, the danger exists that counsellor modes may carry the potential to silence clients during career facilitation. In addition, the bulk of psychometric assessment instruments, still widely in use in SA, are based on Western principles, and are therefore not representative of the manifold group's indicative of South African (Tlali, 1999).

Tlali (1999) maintained that the root of some of the struggles experienced by South African psychology is to be found in "therapists' cultural ignorance and their isolation from the rich diversity of African indigenous methods of healing". This could inevitably lead to compound marginalisation. Higgs, Higgs and Venter (2003) argued in favour of the integration of indigenous knowledge systems in South African higher education. Such an exploration could be beneficial in interrogating existing Eurocentric career counselling approaches and practices.

The struggles in the South African context led to scenarios that further weighed down the predicament already initiated at school level. As such, "the vast educational, psychological, career counselling and social needs of the non-privileged majority are minimally provided, for the average ratio [educational psychologist: number of students] for black education is 1:30 000, whereas for whites it is 1:2 750" (Kriegler, 1993).

Nevertheless, "the institutionalized norms, standards and expectations which were generated by an increasing body of expert knowledge served as a measure against which people are continually incited to evaluate themselves" (Soal & Kottler, 1996: 11). This discourse was widely adopted as the sole "truth" and accepted as the newly established norms to play an active role in their own suppression.

2.6 Career counselling and assessment in the post-modern context

The post-modern framework has defied definition although it may be broadly described as a dissatisfaction with, and protest, the legacy of the modern era (Stead & Watson, 1998). The post-modern framework has been widely

researched in recent years. This propelled the development of qualitative, as opposed to quantitative, career theories, and assessment methods, which is a move towards developing a more culturally appropriate career guidance program in the South African context. Furthermore, innovative and creative qualitative techniques have been developed to help the client in this process and the assessment takes place continuously so that clients are never overwhelmed by test results and procedures. The client and counsellor ought to pursue regular, constant dialogue, until they believe they have all the information they need. This information should be continuously collaborated with information that is readily available (Lamprecht, 2002).

Significant people in the client's lives are also consulted in the process. The client's career values play an important role in the process, in contrast to its rare emphasis in the trait-and-factor approach (Lamprecht, 2002; Maree & Ebersohn, 2002). This approach ensures personal growth of the client, and reciprocal trust of the counsellor, hence building a conducive relationship. It has been established that qualitative career assessment techniques satisfy the needs of diverse cultural and ethnic groups, and can also be applied to people with disabilities, as well as people in different socio-economic groups, and people with different sexual identities (Goldman, 1990; McMahon & Patton, 2002). This approach is advantageous as it adopts informant processes, and there is room for flexibility, and promotes self-awareness of the client. Additionally, this type of assessment, unusually, does not require the statistical competencies involved in number scores, norms, or data regarding reliability and validity.

Resistance to the post-modern approach should be viewed against the backdrop of modern science's claim to objectivity, rationality, universal validity and certainty. Post-modernists believe that cultural relativity and diversity of knowledge need to be considered; they also believe that there are various possible interpretations of texts and that knowledge is relative to specific contexts. Culture and language constitute the individual's symbolic world within which meaning, and sense are ascribed (Savickas, 1993).

Stead and Watson (1998) summarised the characteristics of post-modernism as follows:

- An open attitude toward different races, cultures, religions, moral convictions and sexual orientations.
- A belief that diversity within communities is important and enriching.
- A blend of styles and a selective and creative combination of existing ideas (irrespective of their origin).
- A strong criticism of Eurocentrism, and skepticism about the accuracy of the Western perspective.

According to Savickas (1993), career counselling in the post-modern era is characterised by the following innovations:

2.6.1 No more experts.

The post-modern career counselling and assessment approach directly opposes the trait-and-factor approach in several areas. Firstly, the qualitative approach assumes that clients, and not the counsellor, are the experts on their lives, whereas the counsellor merely facilitates the career assessment process.

The client becomes actively involved and empowered by the process and is trusted to make personal career decisions (Lamprecht, 2002).

In the past, the career counsellor's main task was to guide clients to careers or occupations that suited their measured interests, personalities and abilities. Although communication was regarded as important at that stage, the counsellor/client relationship was often neglected. Clients, all too often, erroneously regarded counsellors as experts in career counselling and career choices. Clients have recently started becoming agents who interpret their own needs and plan their lives according to a whole series of possibilities, rather than just being passive recipients of the advice of counsellors. Counsellors no longer regard the client as the problem and themselves as the solution. Instead of seeing themselves as masters of truth, counsellors encourage clients to become active participants. Consequently, clients are assisted in improving their decision-making skills and are eventually able to make their own decisions (Savickas, 1993).

1. Empowerment *versus* fitting in

In the past, attempts were made to 'normalise' individuals from diverse cultures, in order that they fitted into the dominant culture. In this way, all individuals who were regarded as misfits, because of class, gender or sexual orientation, were subjected to a uniform, normalising discourse. Now, counselling that focuses on empowerment affords each individual enough freedom to create and implement his/her own life-plan (Savickas, 1993).

2. Rewriting the individual's narrative

Counsellors should broaden their focus to include more than the work role, in this way equipping each client to create a feasible personal framework for his/her life. No two individuals in a multicultural society share the same framework/narrative. The post-modern trend is for life design to be part of preparing for and choosing a career, hence, there is a concern amongst post-modern counsellors about the way in which clients structure their lives according to the basic facets of work, leisure, friendships and family life (Super, 1980). Current counselling, regarding life roles, focuses on the relationship between the work role and other roles, as well as the effect of a career or work role on the client's interpersonal relationships, family and community (Hanson, 1989). The role of life design in the counselling process is reflected in the assessment that media counsellors have recently started implementing; examples of these are the measurement of work ethics and the use of lifestyle questionnaires.

2.7 The narrative approach

The narrative approach, another post-modern approach to career counselling and assessment, considered to be one of the third-wave of post-modern approach, also actively involves the learner in his or her own development in career assessment and career decision-making process.

“Narrative career assessment assists learners to understand and locate their self-concept, revealing certain psychological and personal information which needed to be dealt with. The narrative career assessment provides a useful environment for locating barriers to career

development barriers some of these particularly in the South African context when addressing inaccurate self-efficacy beliefs and/or outcome expectations in terms of Social Cognitive Career Theory” (Bischof, 2007:67)

Maree and Beck (2004) explained how a post-modern narrative perspective focuses on a client’s subjective career (his/her life story) and assists them in developing and interpreting stories to empower their career decisions.

In other words, the narrative approach implies that both problems and difficulties are embedded in texts, words and stories, representing lived experience, which only exists in the language in stories (Joffe, 1999). Using narratives is a natural way to express the inherent structure of personal experience (Barresi & Juckes, 1997). A client is regarded as the expert on himself/herself, and an author of his/her own story, whereas the counsellor assumes a 'not knowing' position. Christensen and Johnston (2003) explained that clients share stories they are attempting to enact in the world of work, even if the narrative does not necessarily construct real events but rather clients' idiosyncratic versions. This includes an indication of what clients need to know about themselves. The narrative approach can create a space which carries rich and revealing signature information to support career counselling in clients.

Narrative assessment thus makes the learner or client to be an expert in his or her own career choices and decisions (Maree & Ebersohn, 2002). The narrative approach is both a product and process, which requires the counsellor to have a significant sense of self-awareness and understanding of a person’s beliefs, expectations and the environmental influences on which the individual has been exposed (Bujold, 2004). The narrative approach is adopted in the form of a

story, themed according to an individual's life. Narrative techniques provide for the critical examination of how stories are privileged and by whom. It can be substantiated, by Campbell and Ungar (2004:22), who asserted that 'individuals' stories are understood not as accurate, but as selective recollections of the past and descriptions of the present contributing to what they hold as a preferred story of the future". Thus, this can be asserted that the narrative approach is a holistic and integrative methodology, which is a shift from finding a job, to finding one's self, with crystal clear understanding (Brott, 2004).

The client, or learner, is given the platform to narrate his or her story, with details from the past, present and future, from which the counsellor seeks clarification and contextualises the problems. The problem is then isolated, and its strength is determined, and prescribed measures are applied to deal with the problem, and this helps the client to deal with the challenge (Maree & Ebersohn, 2002). This ultimately gives the client control over the problem, thus coming up with an alternative story, of which the counsellor provides guidelines and support by creating thematic links and deconstructing aspects that contradict the client's story or narrative (Maree & Ebersohn, 2002). This allows the client to construct his or her meaningful future, and discover his or her potential, which can be revised over a course of time (Brott, 2004). In other words, narrative assessment allows personal stories to be transformed into career paths, and allows clients to influence their career narratives, rather than be dependent on the career counsellor's influence (Maree & Ebersohn, 2002).

Based on this client centred-model, Maree et al. (2001) proposed the following phases for career assessment within a postmodern context in South Africa:

- “Phase One – Initial phase: Posing the Problem: During this phase the client becomes aware of the challenges which he or she face. The client can tell his/her life story, while the counsellor utilises communication skills such as paying attention, listening, understanding, empathizing, assessing and summarizing to help the client to elucidate his/her life story and to identify patterns and commonalities. This phase also involves an agreement to cooperate between the counsellor and the client.
- Phase Two - Middle Phase: During this phase, an exploration of possible career possibilities takes place to assist the client with direction towards a future career plan. It involves the composition of a story or narrative that the individual will live (possibilities for a better future). This phase also provides the opportunity to take note of the client’s cognitive strategies, such as their faulty suppositions, inconsistent behavior, irrational ideas, impediments and beliefs about themselves.
- Phase Three - Final Phase: This phase identifies the activity and input needed to put the possibilities identified by Phase Two into operation. It answers questions such as; which potential problems or hindrances may occur regarding the choice of career; and which persons or institutions would be able and willing to provide more information regarding certain careers and steps which the client must take to follow his/her choice of career” (Bischof, 2007).

Contextualised in the South African environment, narrative career assessment has played a significant role in the decreased use of traditional psychometric testing methodology which had been widely adopted and failed to find solutions

to complex challenges faced. However, this approach is not without barriers; the main stumbling block is that the narrative approach lies within the constraints of the client (Campbell & Ungar, 2004). Taking insight from the South African context, there are bound to be numerous stories that evolve around racial and social prejudice, poverty and injustice, and a lack of confidence, which will subsequently be influencing the narrative. These constraints need to be identified and addressed to assist the client in making a career decision that is well-informed (Campbell & Ungar, 2004; Bischof, 2007).

2.8 Narrative counselling in diverse settings

Narrative career counselling takes place in different settings, in diverse environments. Thus, it should be used to address the multi-layered challenges caused by diversity. The aim is not to ponder these many challenges. Rather, the hope is to propose one counselling mode which recognises social groups belonging to the whole gamut of society's power - especially as played out in the domain of career psychology.

Cronbach (1990) asserted that a significant number of rather complex socio-cultural factors need to be considered during counselling in diverse settings. These factors include the importance of sensitivity to the dilemmas generally encountered when individuals from educationally, environmentally or culturally marginalised groups participate in assessment. By this, the term "marginalised" is used not only in terms of a "western" perspective, but also in terms of multiple "African" perspectives, because it is deemed an erroneous belief to think in terms of a homogenic, so-called, "African perspective". At the same time, the

glacier effect of ever-changing socio-cultural conditions should be borne in mind. Faulty inferences occur especially when researchers assume that socio-cultural situations are static rather than dynamic.

Economic disparities emphasise diversity in accessing career counselling services. Even in 2005, career counselling in SA was available, primarily, to people who were able to afford this (expensive) service (Nicholas, Pretorius & Naidoo, 1999). Schools have virtually done away with the practice of psychological assessment, thereby denying learners on the economic side-lines access to this previously free service.

1. Chen (2001:318) proposed the accompanying rules, or "helping systems", for vocation improvement experts who tackle uncommon essentials in an assorted setting (Chen, 2001:326-328):1. The need to encourage subjectivity. Vocation advocates need to encourage clients to be subjectively included in the career guiding procedure, with an uncommon accentuation on the question: "What do these outcomes intend to me?"
2. Clients need to add to an individual's expectation, i.e. individual objectives, destinations and results. Keeping in mind the end goal to do this, customers' first need to conceal the importance of their own life profession adventure encounters.
3. Clients and counsellors need to add to a sharp comprehension of the profession guiding, on the other hand, improvement setting. For this to happen, instructor sought to remember the need to remind themselves, reliably, to put clients' accounts into a point of view (i.e. translate and see customers' appearances in "the extremely experiential setting in which such

importance exists" (Chen, 2001:327). Besides, counsellors/instructors need to help clients' n elucidating and understanding the setting, amid advising.

4. Guides need to bolster clients in comprehending their encounters, i.e. advancing furthermore, and encouraging a feeling of adaptability and inventiveness in their impression of significance. Amundson (in Chen, 2001) stressed the way that customers can reproduce the importance of occasions.
5. Advisors need to help clients build implications for arranging what's to come. In this sense, the vocation guiding procedure turns into a conceivable open door for "dynamic engagement" (Amundson, in Chen, 2001).

As per Hickson and Christie (1989), the result of any helpful intercession depends, to a degree, on the joined impact of the estimations of the customer, the advisor, and the social milieu, in which they find themselves (Maree, Eberson, Molepo, 2006).

2.7.1 The narrative approach and post modernism

The narrative approach links up with post-modernism (or going beyond the modern era), which is generally considered a body of knowledge that originated in opposition to ideas of certainty, predictability, universal truth and empirical inquiry (Joffe, 1999). Postmodernism implies that the universe cannot be understood objectively, and that reality exists in the assumptions of the observer. From this perspective, individuals are treated as meaning-making persons, instead of being objectified and pictured as points on a so-called

normal curve (Savickas, 1993). Postmodernism has significantly contributed to the discovery of patterns of meaning in psychological research. In addition, subjects tend to systematically and idiosyncratically disrupt patterns to negotiate meaning(s) which, although not necessarily static, evolve with the 'meaning expectations' of the subject within ever-changing, non-static, fluid contexts.

From a vantage point, this means that the brutal power of a positivist, modern approach to career counselling provides a rationale for the disempowerment of clients (i.e. meaning making, personal growth and personal agency are stifled). Post-modernism and post-structuralism, however, challenge the modern notion (still prevailing in psychology in South Africa) that "science and technology are the beginning and that we are on the linear road to improvement discourse analysis which has saved psychology from the brutality of experimental methods" (Burman, 1996).

Both the narrative approach and postmodernism connect with constructivism. According to MacMahon, Patton and Watson (2003), "meaning making is fundamental to constructivism". In constructivist assessment and counselling, specific attention is paid to tracing the connections between clients' experiences and various elements from their respective system of influences, and this includes the past, present and future. Social constructionism is based on knowledge as a social construct, language as a social phenomenon and the individual as a rational person. In short, it maintains that humans are social beings who live in the domain of language.

Inherent in every social system are values and norms that facilitate relationships and existence (McLean, 1997). The self and the concept of 'truth'

are viewed as manifestations of human interaction, which is constructed by communication (language) and relationship systems or discourse. This approach ties in with a qualitative approach to counselling, which involves "non-standardized and non-quantitatively based appraisal measures". This term refers to informal assessment strategies, which may, for instance, include (auto-)biographies, interviews, games (e.g. card sorts, lifelines), simulations and metaphors that may be described as "figure[s] of speech in which special qualities of one concept or entity are applied to another to provide clearer meaning or to add colour to the presentation" (Inkson, 2002: 24).

2.9 Career counselling and education in the South African context

As far as the issue of career counselling and guidance is concerned, Watts (2000) presented the idea that career counselling presupposes choice. During the apartheid period in South Africa, such a choice was denied, or severely constrained, for most of the country's population. As South Africa transforms itself into a new political dispensation, the choices and challenges of career development are becoming increasingly important.

Therefore, black matriculants emerge from secondary school with an inadequate working knowledge of careers, and an urgent need for career planning and career counselling (Hickson & White, 1999). Against this background, there has been an increasing shift towards career education, rather than career counselling and guidance. However, the move towards career education has largely been driven by research conducted at tertiary institutions and has not been integrated into the school education system,

despite students consistently rating career education as the most important of all school objectives (Behr, 1997). Additionally, there is a concern about the low status of vocational guidance in the formal education system, which has resulted in the hijacking of guidance and life orientation periods by examination subjects, and the absence, or underinvestment, of funds in developing guidance services.

South African research has focused on career education programmes rather than career counselling. Such research has been limited either by perspective, such as the notion that career education should aim to meet the labour needs of the country, or by samples which have consisted largely of White, middle-class, senior high school students. There has been a resultant lack of information on the career counselling of Black adolescents, with only 14% of career counselling research between 1980 and 1990 having sampled the Black youth of South Africa.

Despite these limitations, career education research endorses the suitability of core components of international career education programmes for use with economically disadvantaged high school students (Watson & Stead, 1996). These studies have demonstrated that career maturity is a developmental construct that can be enhanced through a structured programme intervention. More recent research on career education has been action based and has represented a collaborative effort between researchers and community members. This has resulted in programmes that are adaptable to the context in which participants find themselves. The less prescriptive nature of these programmes has resulted in programmes that are more to the point (Watson, Benjamin, & Stead, 1995), and thus require limited resources, and which have

built-in feedback loops, allowing for adaptation to the perceived needs of students.

South Africa is a developing country and is only in the initial stages of providing effective and contextually relevant career programmes for all its citizens. It is vital that the scope of such research be extended both in terms of its sample base and its programme content so that appropriate career counselling and education programmes could be implemented to create optimal working conditions for all its citizens.

2.10 Career Assessment and measuring scales in South Africa

Career assessment points to the many roles and functions of career guidance and assessment. It is considerably more than a face-to-face interview; it goes far beyond direct client work, and well into feedback and system change, and, thus policy-making. It includes informing, advising, assessing, teaching, enabling, advocating, networking, feeding back, managing, innovating/changing systems, signposting, mentoring, sampling work experience, and following up (Ford, 2001; Haug & Plant, 2015). There has been a considerably significant use of measuring scales that have been adopted and used in South Africa, making significant contribution to career psychology.

The practice and research of career psychology in South Africa demonstrates the use of a wide array of career measures. While it can be stated, with reasonable certainty, that most career measures in international use are also used in South Africa, it is equally true that there is a paucity of research that has assessed the relevance and validity of such usage. South African practitioners and researchers have suffered from a severe lack of standardised

psychometric instrumentation that is applicable for all members of South Africa's multicultural and multilingual society (Watson & Stead, 1996).

It is only in the last decade that research has examined the construct validity of the test scores of international and national career instruments. Factor analyses have produced mixed findings regarding several measures. Osipow's Career Decision Scale has produced a simple two factor structure on adolescents, and a single factor amongst undergraduate students (Stead & Watson, 1993). However, the Career Factors Inventory and the Career Decision Profile were found to be multidimensional amongst undergraduate university students. A factor analysis of the Commitment to Career Choices Scale, conducted on White and Black university students, identified similar factors to those found in Blustein's (1993) study, however; it was found that certain items on both dimensions had low factor loadings. Subsequent confirmatory factor analyses Stead, Watson and Mels (1994) confirmed earlier findings that certain items were problematic within the South African sample. Nicholas and Pretorius (1994) presented normative data for the use of the Vocational Identity Scale amongst first-year Black students, and reported that the internal consistency coefficients of the VIS for men and women were .80 and .78, respectively.

South Africa's involvement in Super's Work Importance Study by Verko and Super (1995) led to the development of several instruments that were adapted for use in South Africa, such as the values' scale, the Career Development Questionnaire, and the Life Role Inventory. The psychometric properties of the values' scale, and the Life Role Inventory in particular, appear acceptable for the major ethnic groups in South Africa (Langley, 1995).

Research into the theoretical foundations and the structure of interests, with a view to developing adequate instrumentation, has been limited. Brand, van Noordwyk, and Hanekom (1994) found significant positive relationships between Holland's (1985) Self-Directed Search, and the Vocational Interest Questionnaire Coetzee (1982), amongst Black Grade 12 students. They suggested that this provided further evidence that Holland's theory could be applied to most cultures. However, as previously stated, the level of fit of the structure of interests to Holland's hexagonal model amongst Black Grade 12 and Black Grade 10 to 12 students appears to be inadequate.

There has been no significant attempt to develop original instrumentation in South Africa. Exceptions are the development of the Career Myths Scale, to assess the career beliefs of high school and university students, and the Meyer Interest Questionnaire, for high school and first-year university students.

2. 11 Education and training systems

Career counselling and guidance is an important tool for high school students, especially those from disadvantaged groups, to give them direction in the pursuit of suitable careers. Career guidance and counselling were not, however, available to the black population during the apartheid period, and presented many challenges for the education system in South Africa. Even after the new South African post-apartheid government assumed power in 1994, the Department of Education faced many challenges in trying to provide opportunities which were not available to black students during apartheid rule.

In its Revised Strategic Plan 2015/2016 for the Education Province of Eastern Cape it was found that quality of teaching and learning were hindered. The Executive Council found that the economic crisis was due to the systematic challenges in education in Eastern Cape.

The plan focuses on a medium-term framework of the following:

- Improved quality of teaching and learning through development, supply and effective utilisation of teachers.
- Improved quality of teaching and learning through provision of adequate quality infrastructure and Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM).
- Tracking of learner performance through reporting and analysis of the Annual National Assessment (ANA) at Grade 3, 6 and 9 level and improving ANA over time to ensure appropriate feedback to learners and teachers and to benchmark performance over time.
- Expanded access to Early Childhood Development and improvement of the quality of Grade R.
- Strengthening accountability and improving management at the school, community and district level.
- Partnerships for education reform and improved quality.

2.12 Career education and guidance in schools

2.12.1 Policy and legislation matters

Post 1994 independence, and the establishment of a democratic government,

“government legislation and policy have been continuously evaluated, and changed to entrench the constitutional rights and

responsibilities of all individuals, resulting in the introduction of career development related legislation providing a policy framework for the implementation of career development for all South Africans” (Crossland, 2006:33).

One of the major policy frameworks that has informed the South African career guidance and assessment arena is the National Qualifications Authority (NQF). The NQF, overseen by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), has the objective of establishing an integrated national education and training structure for South Africa. In principle, the NQF has the objective of ensuring that all learners have access to professional career guidance services.

“The framework aims to encourage entry into and movement within the education system as a whole, in order to provide quality education and training, resulting in the provision of the skills required for the economic and social development of the country” (Kay &Fretwell, 2003).

- **National Youth Development Agency**

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) takes its decree from the NYDA Act (54 of 2008). The NYDA's essential capacity is to advance economic development amongst the youth. One of the undertakings that the NYDA performs is to provide career guidance. There are, at present, 16 career guidance officers at the NYDA, of whom 14 work from NYDA branches, whilst 2 are based at their head office. The NYDA offers professional advice on careers' development, some of which involves dissemination of career information, administration, sourcing and pursuing bursaries, study

opportunities and scarce skills. They do this by means of their website (DHET, 2014).

- **Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA)**

SETAs are built up under the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998. The National Skills Development Strategy III (NSDS III) determines the role-part played by the SETA with reference to career development. There are 21 SETAs in South Africa. Segment 10 (1) (an) of the Skills' Development Act indicates that every SETA is to add to a Sector Skills' Plan (SSP). The SSP ought to give data on the supply and demand of careers in a specific economic sector. Moreover, the SSP ought to give an evaluation of where the demands are as far as skills, so that this information can be gathered from every one of the SETAs and fed into a national labour market analysis (DHET, 2014).

- **Universities**

The Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 made provision for Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to provide Student Support Services (SSS) and, without a doubt, most HEI in South Africa have a focus on student support and student counselling units. Whilst HEIs act independently of each other, the Southern African Association for Counselling and Development in Higher Education (SAACDHE) is working towards enhancing efficient administration of Higher Education Institutions. One of the services offered by HEI's is student support and counselling units, which provide career guidance. The form of these services offered contrasts with the theoretical model adopted by specific units. In specific establishments, the utilisation of psychometric appraisals is utilised, whilst in different institutions open discourse models are utilised. The essential

point, on the other hand, is that career guidance and counselling take place. These services are accessible to both students and the public (DHET, 2014).

- **Further Education and Training (FET) colleges**

Further Education and Training (FET) colleges are required to offer career guidance to all current and future FET students. FET colleges have a low throughput rate, and prospective students are increasing. Career guidance at FET universities is becoming progressively more essential to build the rate of students advancing their academic levels through scholastic engagement. The Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006 determines that every FET colleges to offer Student Support Services (SSS). It is in the Student Support Services Framework (2009), that it is indicated that FET colleges ought to be putting forth career guidance and counselling services and ought to have a devoted area put aside particularly for career information (DHET,2014).

Two of the many critical government departments play a vital role in career guidance and assessment. The Department of Labour arranges for services to be delivered to people outside of the school system, whereas the Department of Education focuses on learners and people within the education system (Kay &Fretwell, 2003).

Other legislation affecting career development includes the following acts promulgated by the Department of Education or the Department of Labour:

- South African Schools Act (1996)

- National Education Policy Act (1996)
- Employment Equity Act (1998)
- Skills Development Act (1998)
- Skills Development Levies Act (1999)
- National Student Financial Aid Scheme Act (1999)
- Adult Basic Education and Training Act (2000)
- South African Council for Education Act (2000)
- General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act (2001).

These legislations have led to the establishment of key government agencies. For instance, the Skills Development Act led to the formulation of the National Skills Fund, and the Sector Education and Training Authorities, while the Higher Education Act (1997) made it possible for the Council on Higher Education (CHE) to be established. These legislations have also led to the establishment of the National Skills Development Strategy, and the review of the national curriculum for high schools, as well as adult basic education initiatives (Crossland, 2006:36).

Present government policies seem to have been strongly influenced by the programs and policies developed in these organizations and many of the members of the sector have been employed in the youth, skills development and education sectors of government services (Kay & Fretwell, 2003).

Such initiatives, however, have been confronted with challenges of limited resources and marginal time allocated to career guidance through the life

orientation programmes in schools. This, thus, calls for more hands-on effort and support by all stakeholders in providing progressive input in career guidance. This includes the call for professional psychologists, publishers, counsellors and the private sector stakeholders to be actively involved in the career guidance programmes (Kay & Fretwell, 2003; Crossland, 2006).

Career information resource centres were established prior to South Africa's democracy, with funding from local and international partners. However, with the lack of funding after democracy, all but one of these career information centres has since closed. At present, the Career Resource and Information Centre (CRIC) in the Western Cape, the first centre in South Africa, is the only centre still operating (Crossland, 2006). It can thus be asserted that,

Legislation and government policy have created the framework for effective career guidance and career education, for many schools and people without access to the internet, government sponsored advisory services, commercially produced and sold books, and a self-sustaining, non-profit based career guidance service organization which can accommodate large groups and individuals is a necessity (Crossland, 2006:38).

Assessment in the South Africa context is also regulated by legislation. This also covers careers' assessment and testing. For instance, the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, Section 8 (Government Gazette, 1998, in Huysamen, 2002:26) sustained that psychological testing and assessment is not to be used unless the test or assessment being used, (a) has been scientifically shown to be valid and reliable, (b) can be applied fairly to all employees, and (c) is not biased against any employee or group (Bischof, 2007). This ensures that their

ethical considerations are observed, and maintained, in every aspect of career assessment, testing and guidance.

2.12.2 In compulsory schooling

The foundations of career self-management skills (for example, decision making, self-awareness, and self-confidence) are laid at an early age. Despite this, career education and guidance in the primary school system are limited or non-existent, and little systematic provision is made to explore the world of work. Young people need to make a smooth transition from primary school to the initial years of secondary education. The choices that they make at this point have major implications for later education and work options. Career guidance needs to be part of the process that helps them to make a smooth transition. Career education is increasingly present in the curriculum at the lower secondary school level, either as a separate subject or as part of another subject. However, it is included in widely differing ways and, at times, these seem designed to suit the organisational needs of the school, rather than the career development needs of the student. Career education often has little connection to the wider school curriculum (Career Guidance Handbook, 2004). In lower secondary school, personal career guidance frequently targets students at key decision-making points (when they are choosing subjects; prior to the end of compulsory schooling; at the transition to upper secondary level, or to work). However, those who are targeted for personal interviews are often not selected based on a well-defined need (for example, low vocational maturity, or readiness for decision making) (Watts & Fretwell, 2004).

2.12.3 In upper secondary schooling

According to Watts and Fretwell (2004), it is often assumed that upper secondary students have made specific educational and career choices and that they do not need further support. This assumption is especially held regarding students in vocational education pathways. In many countries, these students receive significantly less career assistance than students in general education pathways. This takes little account of the increasing flexibility that is included in upper secondary vocational education programmes, or of the wide range of career options and jobs that can flow from broadly designed vocational education and training.

Within general education pathways, career guidance staff members often spend substantial time preparing students to choose and compete for places within tertiary education. This can result in those who do not intend entering tertiary education receiving little help. It can also lead to little account being taken of the occupational and labour market consequences of tertiary education choices (Career Guidance Handbook, 2004).

2.13 Some issues that apply to all levels of schooling

According to the Career Guidance Handbook (2004), as much as schools want students to make informed decisions concerning their careers, through career guidance, there are problems and issues that are often encountered which reduce the effectiveness of career guidance. The problems and issue encountered are:

- Those who provide career education and guidance in schools often lack specialized training.
- Those who provide career education and guidance in schools are often not career guidance specialists. They very often combine career guidance with other roles, such as teaching other school subjects; providing counselling and guidance for personal problems, and study difficulties.
- The number of people employed to provide career education and guidance in schools is often not enough to meet student needs and demands.
- These services largely continue to be provided on an individual, face-to-face model. This reduces the capacity of the service to respond to the needs of all learners.
- Career guidance staff often do not have the resources that they need to do the job properly: i.e. a private space where students can be interviewed; a library of up-to-date career information; a computer; access to a telephone or secretarial assistance.
- Career education and guidance are often considered to be the sole responsibility of the specialist career guidance staff, rather than the joint responsibility of all members of the teaching staff.
- Few career guidance services have structured approaches aimed at helping students develop an entrepreneurial spirit and entrepreneurial skills. They therefore tend to focus on guidance for paid employment, rather than self-employment.

- School career guidance services are often not audited, and users have little opportunity to signal satisfaction or otherwise with the services provided. No data are collected on student, teacher, and parent or employer satisfaction with the service.

2.14 Career guidance for young people at risk

2.14.1 Policy Issues

In some countries, services designed to quickly re-integrate early school leavers into learning and work are poorly developed. Where such re-integration services do exist - for young people who have left school early and who are at risk - career guidance is not always integrated with them. A challenge for policy-makers is to make sure that career guidance is part of community-based services that are targeted at early school-leavers. These services need to be designed so that users can identify with the staff who work with them, and can feel comfortable with the programmes and the staff. A related challenge is to develop the capacity of communities with high school leaving rates to assist potential, young, school leavers to stay in school, or, having left school, to help them re-engage with learning.

School career guidance services have often not been part of strategies to prevent early school leaving, particularly of young people who are at risk of social exclusion. A challenge for policymakers is to make sure that career guidance is part of all schools' strategies to detect and assist young people who leave school early or who are without qualifications. This is specifically directed at helping them find meaning in staying at school, or to have well planned exit

strategies that will enable them to re-engage in learning, and successfully complete their secondary education and training. Where such programmes do not exist, a broader challenge is to work with educators to create them.

2.14.2 Questions that policies need to address

Sultana (2004) deliberated upon the following questions that policies should address. Where programmes do not exist in schools to detect and assist early school-leavers, what arguments can career guidance policy-makers and practitioners use to help create them? What career guidance should be provided to potential early school-leavers, and how? Should it be delivered as part of the curriculum, or in addition to it? Should it be delivered by internal or external personnel, or both? Should it include out of school experiential placements? What training and competencies do career guidance workers need to work with early school-leavers and at-risk youth? Do present career guidance workers have these competencies (for example, the appropriate referral of users to other services and collaboration in cross-sectoral teams)? How should school, and other education-based and training-based career guidance, personnel collaborate with out-of-school personnel such as youth workers, social workers, community workers and other adults to optimise the impact of both? Do community-based services for early school-leavers make adequate provision for career guidance as part of a wide range of individualised assistance? What career guidance is provided in second-chance learning programmes for early school leavers? How is guidance integrated into such programmes? What should its content be? How should it be delivered, by whom

and when? (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2004).

2.14.3 Various Options

The South African government's Career Guidance Handbook (2004) proposes some policy options for career guidance -if it is to be effective. According to the handbook, career guidance for potential early school leavers should be made a priority in the allocation of guidance resources to schools. Furthermore, there should be collaboration with education system managers and school leaders to demonstrate the value of early intervention strategies aimed at detecting potential school drop-outs, and to show the role that educational and career guidance can play in such strategies. There should also be an improvement in the initial and in-service training of school principals, teachers and guidance workers to alert them to ways in which they can integrate career guidance into programmes to assist potential early school leavers.

In addition, Sultana (2004) stated that high schools should make use of community outreach measures (delivered where young people congregate) and work through significant adults, who are in daily contact with these young people, to provide career guidance to at-risk young people. They should also ensure that training programmes for career guidance practitioners enable them to develop the requisite skills to work with at-risk youth and school drop-outs, including skills in networking, collaboration with significant adults and agencies, referral and team work. Every early school-leaver should have an individual action plan for further learning, work and other life goals.

Schools should also undertake to follow-up on early school-leavers, to provide career guidance assistance where required, and where possible, up to two years after the pupil has left school. Furthermore, schools should develop early intervention strategies, working with and through families, meeting them in their homes, and organising assistance such as homework clubs (Career Guidance Handbook, 2004).

2.15 An integrative approach to counselling

Most people live their lives and make important decisions by adhering to a range of complex principles and concepts. Their thoughts, decision making, and actions are influenced by several factors including experiences, values and beliefs, feelings, socio-cultural and economic background, education, gender and sexuality. At any one time, when it becomes clear that a decision about people's lives is required, individuals assess the situation in which they find themselves, and consider the best way of approaching and dealing with the issues at hand. Individuals may on occasion decide to take direct, concrete, practical action, based on an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of options. On other occasions – perhaps where options are less clear cut, consequences are more complex, and emotions are heightened – further introspection, reflection and exploration is required before any decisions can be made.

There may also be times in life when people find it impossible to take any action at all, even though they are keen to make changes. Most people would argue that they do not live their lives by one set of rigid and inflexible rules, but rather respond pragmatically by applying different knowledge, skills and expertise to

inform their decisions, and make changes where necessary. In other words, people's decisions about their lives are formed by *integrating* a complex range of concepts, principles, experiences and reflections into their thinking, and then acting, as appropriate.

In many ways, an *integrative approach to counselling* mirrors what people already know and do in their lives. In brief, according to Culley and Bond (2004), integrative counsellors draw from, and integrate, a range of theoretical perspectives in their counselling practice. As in a single theoretical approach (for example, person-centred, cognitive-behavioural or solution-focused counselling and others), integrative counsellors who work with young people place an emphasis on the quality of the counsel or client relationship. They begin their work by developing a relationship of trust, whereby clients are enabled to identify and explore their issues and concerns in a safe environment. Once this assessment of individual needs takes place, the integrative counsellor's practice differs from those counsellors who adhere to a single approach. The integrative counsellor will consider possible ways of enabling their client to tackle issues by applying appropriate therapeutic perspectives to their counselling practice (Egan, 2002).

According to Culley and Bond (2004), these perspectives are drawn from the counsellor's knowledge of a range of counselling approaches. The integrative counsellor applies concepts and techniques that are most appropriate, and which 'fit' both their assessment of the young person, as well as his or her problem and underlying issues. The purpose of integrative counselling is focused on working towards change; this implies helping clients to reflect on

the issues and problems which they face so that they can examine and select appropriate courses of action.

Geldard and Geldard (2009) posited that, rather than following a single approach, integrative counsellors have a broad knowledge of key counselling concepts from which to select; they understand the principles of a range of theoretical orientations, and value the differences in approach, whilst acknowledging the strengths and potential weaknesses of applying each theory to practice. Of course, this opens the potential for the criticism, 'Jack of all trades, and master of none'. The advantage of such an integrative approach is that it increases the counsellor's repertoire in such a way that it is possible to address the needs and problems of clients more effectively by offering more options for intervention than a traditional single approach.

Using the integrative approach for disadvantaged students in South Africa will help in identifying their problems and needs, and thus taking proper action. Making use of psychometric assessment has been found to be limited in scope as it fails to understand the needs of students from their own perspective. An integrative perspective that understands values and accesses a range of different counselling perspectives and orientations - and integrates these as and when it is appropriate in practice - will enable the unlocking of the potential of many disadvantaged high school students in South Africa. Thus, counsellors, and those who offer career guidance in high schools, should use the integrative approach to counselling.

2.18 Concluding remarks

This chapter opened with an identification of the different theories underpinning the study. A discussion of the background of traditional career assessment was then offered. Additionally, career counselling from the post-modern perspective was reviewed. Career counselling and education, as well as career guidance for young people at risk, were also reviewed. Various approaches and options were reviewed including issues in these approaches. Each option was encompassed around career guidance in Eastern Cape.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter was dealt with the literature review, relating to career assessment and counselling, which has informed this study. This chapter centres on the research methodology employed in this study. Methodology refers to the body of methods used in an activity or research process. This chapter will also illuminate on the population, sample, and details of data collection instruments, as well as data analysis methods used in this study, to achieve the objectives of the research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Interpretation of the data is also discussed. According to Hair, Wolfinbarger, Ortinau and Bush (2008), the quality of collected data is only as good as the methodology employed in collecting it.

3.2 Research Design

A research design encompasses the overall structure of the procedures that a researcher uses when conducting research. It includes asking research questions based on theoretical orientation, selection of respondents, data collection and the reporting of results (Marvasti, 2004). Research design is the complete strategy for the attack on the central research problem, to retrieve answers to the research question (Leedy & Ormrod, 2002; Kumar, 2005). The plan is the complete scheme or programme for the research. It involves plans for data collection, and the instrument for gathering information, as well as how

this information gathered would be processed and analysed to give meaning to the research findings. There are two distinct approaches that inform the gathering of data in any research project, namely the quantitative and qualitative approaches.

- **Research Paradigm and Philosophy's**

Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) defined paradigms as comprehensive systems of interlocking practice and thinking that define the nature of the research along the dimensions of ontology (nature of the reality and what can be studied about it); epistemology (the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the researched), and the methodology (how the researcher may study what they believe can be known). Essentially, the paradigm is a lens through which the researcher views the obvious and not so obvious, principles of reality (Maree, 2007). Terre Blanche et al., (2006) defined the main research paradigms in social sciences as positivist, interpretive and constructionists' approaches.

- **Interpretative Approach**

The study adopted the interpretative approach. This approach, stemming from a hermeneutic tradition, is most interested in interpreting deeper meaning in discourse, and understanding multiple realities (as opposed to one "objective" reality) that are represented in a collection of personal narratives or observed behaviors and activities. In other words, "the philosophical base of interpretive research is hermeneutics and phenomenology" (Boland, 1985). Hermeneutics

is a major branch of interpretive philosophy, with Gadamer and Ricoeur arguably being its most well-known exponents Klein and Myers (1999), and it emerged in the late nineteenth century (Kaboob, 2001). Hermeneutics can be treated as both an underlying philosophy, and a specific mode of analysis (Bleicher, 1980). As a philosophical approach to human understanding, hermeneutics provides the philosophical grounding for “interpretivism”.

The interpretivist approach allows a client to tell a story, and its effect on the intended audience is the centerpiece of the method. In other words, the interpretative approach is good for smaller data sets; has the latitude to explore data more deeply, and extrapolate beyond the text, and it is good for cognitively oriented studies (Geertz, 1973).

Gephart (1999) asserted that the interpretivist approach showed “that knowledge and meaning are acts of interpretation”, hence there is no objective knowledge which is independent of thinking, reasoning humans”. Furthermore, Myers (2009) contended that the premise of interpretive approach is that access to reality (whether given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness and shared meanings. The interpretive paradigm “is underpinned by observation and interpretation, thus to observe is to collect information about events, while to interpret is to make meaning of that information by drawing inferences, or by judging the match between the information and some abstract pattern” (Aikenhead, 1997; Thomas, 2010:296). Observations and interpretation of shared meaning were the main methods used in this study.

3.2.1 Quantitative approach

Quantitative research is defined as a category of research in which results are presented as numbers, typically in the form of descriptive and inferential statistics. Quantitative research employs mathematical analysis for the measurement of variables and places emphasis on the use of structured questionnaires (Goodwin, 2002).

Quantitative research design is informed and inclined towards the positivist research paradigm. The positivist approach relies heavily upon experimental and manipulative methods. These methods maintain that there is a distance between the subjective biases of the researcher, and the objective reality she or he studies. In other words, the positivist approach assumes that social reality has an objective ontological structure, and that individuals are responding agents to this objective environment (Creswell, 2003; Johnson & Ownwuegbuzle, 2004; Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005). Quantitative research involves the counting and measuring of events, and performing the statistical analysis of a body of numerical data. The assumption behind the positivist paradigm is that there is an objective truth existing in the world that can be measured and explained scientifically. The main concerns of the quantitative paradigm are that measurements must be reliable, valid, and generalisable in their clear prediction of cause and effect (Dean & Bowden, 2004).

The quantitative method is advantageous in that it eliminates and minimises subjectivity of judgment, and allows for longitudinal measures of subsequent performance of research subjects. Furthermore, precision and control are ensured. Control is achieved through sampling and design, as well as precise and reliable quantitative measurements. Moreover, the stating of the research

problem is very specific, and both the independent and dependent variables under investigation are specified clearly and precisely (Jennings, 2001).

The quantitative method, however, has its own limitations. Firstly, it fails to provide the researcher with information regarding the context of the situation in which the studied phenomenon occurs. It also denigrates human individuality and the ability to think. Its mechanistic ethos tends to exclude notions of freedom, choice and moral responsibility.

3.2.2 Qualitative approach

Researchers using qualitative approaches customarily take a constructivist Guba and Lincoln, 1982; Creswell (2003) or a participatory Creswell, 2003; Mertens, (2003) perspective. This perspective shares the theoretical assumptions of the interpretative paradigm, which is based on the notion that social reality is created and sustained through the subjective experience of people involved in communication (Jennings, 2001). Qualitative researchers are concerned with attempting to accurately describe, decode, and interpret the meanings of phenomena occurring in their normal social contexts. The researchers, operating within the framework of the interpretative paradigm, should be focused on investigating the complexity, authenticity, contextualization, shared subjectivity of the researcher and the researched, and the minimisation of illusion (Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006).

Qualitative reports are not presented as a statistical summation, instead, they adopt a more descriptive, narrative style, and this type of research is thus likely to be of benefit in revealing the qualities of group experience (Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). Additionally, it provides a holistic view of the phenomena

under investigation, and it also has flexible ways to perform data collection, subsequent analysis, and the interpretation of collected information (Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006).

The qualitative approach was used in this research, in which respondents gave more detailed explanations of the research phenomenon.

3.3 Population of the study

Hair et al. (2008) defined population as an indefinite group of elements (for instance, people, products, or organisations of interest) to the researcher, and pertinent to the information problem. McClendon (2004) defined population as the total number of possible units or elements that are included in a study. It is the aggregate of all units that have a chance of being included in the sample to be studied. In this study, the population consisted of 300 educators in high schools in the Eastern Cape Province.

3.4 Sample and sampling procedure

A sample is comprised of elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or it can be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which one is interested (Hair et al., 2008). Similarly, Gray (2006) defined a sample as a set of objects, occurrences or individuals selected from a parent population for a research study. The primary idea of sampling is that, by selecting some elements of a population, the researcher can draw conclusions about the entire and defined group of elements (target population) (Creswell, 1994). The total sample for this study was 93 educators from selected high schools in the Eastern Cape Province.

3.5 Sampling procedure

After a suitable sample size had been determined, it was necessary to determine the appropriate sampling technique to use. According to Loubser (1999), sampling procedure refers to the method which is used to draw the sample, as well as the way in which sampling units are selected. The sampling procedures used in the study consisted of probability and non-probability sampling.

3.5.1 Probability sampling methods.

Probability sampling is a method in which every element in the population has an equal, and known, non-zero probability of being included in the sample (Loubser, 1999). Examples of probability sampling methods include simple random sampling, cluster sampling, systematic random sampling and stratified random sampling.

- **Simple random sampling** is a sampling method in which every element has an equal chance of being selected for the sample. In simple random sampling, an unsystematic random selection process is used, i.e. there will be an identification of every element in the sampling frame and then a choice of elements on some planned basis, ensuring that every element has the same opportunity of being selected (Hair et al., 2008).
- **Cluster sampling** involves dividing the population into groups (clusters) of items that serve as primary sampling units. Participants would then be selected randomly from each cluster. Through cluster sampling, hierarchical groups are randomly selected from the sampling frame by creating clusters that can be further sampled into finer gradations of

clusters, until a list of elements is obtained (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997).

- **Systematic random sampling** is done through some ordered criteria, by choosing elements from a randomly arranged sampling frame. Participants can be chosen from every “nth” element in a sample frame, i.e. 10th, 15th, 20th and so on. For example, supposing the sample size were made up of 30 participants from a sample frame of 400 participants, this is a proportion of $30/400 = 0.075$, which means every 13th person may be needed (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997).
- **Stratified sampling**- According to Tustin, Ligtheim, Martins and Van Wyk (2005), stratified random sampling is a modification of random sampling in which the whole population is divided into two or more strata based on one or more attributes. For instance, employees can be divided according to departments, such as the marketing department, finance department, human resource department, and the information systems department. To ensure that samples adequately represent the relevant strata (departments), respondents are randomly selected from within each stratum, that is, from each department.

3.5.2 Non-probability sampling methods

Goodwin (2002) defined non-probability sampling as any procedure in which elements would not have the equal opportunities of being included in a sample. In non-probability sampling, a criterion for elements to be included in the sample is set based on region, appearance, and so forth, hence limiting the chances of representation in the sample. Examples of non-probability sampling include

accidental sampling, purposive sampling, quota sampling and snowball sampling:

- **Accidental sampling** is selection, based on the availability or ease of inclusion. For instance, a certain individual is walking down the street and an interviewer chose to videotape him/her for the evening local news broadcast. This is accidental sampling because this was a selection based merely on a person's availability and willingness to talk. Accidental sampling can lead to the misinterpretation of results (Haslam & McGarty, 2003).
- **Purposive/convenient sampling**- According to Goodwin (2002), convenience sampling involves the researcher simply requesting volunteers from a group of people who meet the general requirements of the study. This method has an advantage in that it is less costly and is easy to use. However, with this sampling method, results cannot be generalised to the whole population since it is a biased sampling method.
- **Quota sampling**- In quota sampling, elements are selected based on categories that are assumed to exist within a population. Quota sampling differs from stratified random sampling in that elements in stratified sampling are randomly selected from stratified groups, while in quota sampling a presumed subdivision is used as the basis of the selection procedure. Although the results of quota sampling may almost reflect similarities with the population, there is difficulty in determining the margin of sample error (McClendon, 2004).

- **Snowball sampling-** With snowball sampling, at first several research participants is selected at random and then interviewed, and their perceptions obtained concerning the problem at hand. The same participants are then asked to nominate other people who are also members of the population under investigation. The second group of respondents is then interviewed and asked to nominate more population members. Thus, the sample is constructed by adding more and more respondents (snowball effect). The advantage of snowball sampling is that it is economical and can be useful, particularly when researchers seek to find characteristics that are rare in the population (Loubser, 1999).

3.5.3 Rationale methodology of the study

The study principally employed a qualitative method in the bid to formulate the desired career assessment and counselling programme, though quantitative elements were employed as well. Qualitative approach has been favoured in this study because the study seeks to understand the reality of the research phenomenon from the people involved, and as such, most of the information would give attention to detail with minimal use of quantification of data. Becker and Bryman (2006:92) asserted that, “qualitative research is flexible such that it will enable the study to uncover actors’ meanings and interpretations rather than impose one’s own understanding”.

Qualitative research methods remain greatly underutilised within the field of community psychology, hence the motivation to use it in this study. Furthermore, “qualitative research methods can assist in capturing the multiple

standpoints of community members which in turn will assist us in creating theories and interventions that are more inclusive and representative” (Banyward & Miller, 1998:494). Bringing in quantitative features to the study would be complimentary to the qualitatively acquired data, as it would help in drawing conclusion. However, priority, implementation and integration would be inclined towards qualitative research methods. It is important to reiterate that

“qualitative research methods are consistent with the core values of the field of Community Psychology; qualitative methods can lay the groundwork for the development of culturally anchored quantitative methods and measures; and qualitative methods are a powerful set of tools for understanding the "why" of human behaviour - the subjective meanings people make of their experiences and that give rise to specific behaviours” (Banyward & Miller, 1998:489).

3.5.4 Research Design Analysis

This study employed the case study design. A case study is an intensive description of a social unit, such as an organisation or community such which forms part of the disadvantaged high schools in the Eastern Cape Province. This kind of research design has the risk of subjectivity, and it is difficult to generalise results. Heedful of the associated risk, this design is carried out with the intent of revealing significant factors characteristic of this case, with the hope of finding principles that can be extrapolated to similar cases (Hofstee, 2006). The study was descriptive in nature, with the aim to describe phenomena accurately through narrative-type description (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The

study also used quantitative elements, hence descriptive statistics were used to analyse demographic data, including frequencies and percentages.

This study used the convenient/purposive non-probability sampling procedure. As per the definition offered by Goodwin (2002), convenience sampling involves the researcher simply requesting volunteers from a group of people who meet the general requirements of the study. Upon choosing the sample, the volunteers were given questionnaires to complete. Questionnaires were initially distributed to approximately 150 educators in different high schools in the Eastern Cape Province. The actual sample of 93 was finally achieved through purposive sampling.

3.6 Data collection

A questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. Babbie (2009) defined a questionnaire as a document containing questions, and other types of items, designed to solicit information appropriate to the analysis. Leung (2001) defined a questionnaire as a booklet of standardised procedure, pre-coded and containing open ended questions, or it can be regarded as a data collection instrument that sets out questions, to be asked in a formal way, to produce the desired information.

The questionnaire made use of open-ended interviews, which afforded the researcher the insight to probe deeply to uncover new clues, open new dimensions of a problem, and to secure clear, accurate accounts based on personal experience. Furthermore, the use of semi-structured questions was used to avoid digression from the objective of the research, and at the same time accommodating the differing circumstances of the respondents. This

questionnaire had questions that allowed respondents to express their views and answer with discretion, and it gave them an opportunity to express their opinions without restriction (Patton, 1990).

3.7 Descriptive statistics

According to Gray (2006), descriptive statistics describe a collection of data in a clear and understandable way. This method allowed the researcher to summarise data numerically, in readily accessible formats, in the form of graphs, charts and tables. Descriptive statistics were used in this study to analyse demographic data, including frequencies and percentages.

3.8 Data analysis

A qualitative approach was used to analyse data in this research. There are many different methods that can be used to analyse data qualitatively. Some of the methods are:

- **Constant comparison/grounded theory-** This method looks at documents, such as field notes, for indicators of categories in events and behavior, and it then names them and codes them in the documents. It then compares codes to find consistencies and differences. Consistencies between codes (similar meanings or pointing to a basic idea) reveal categories.
- **Analytical induction-** This method looks at an event and develops a hypothetical statement of what happened. Then it looks at another similar event and sees if it fits the hypothesis. If it does not, the hypothesis is revised (Reisman, 1993).

- **Event analysis**- Emphasis is placed on finding precise beginnings and endings of events, by finding specific boundaries and indicators that mark boundaries or events. It is specifically oriented toward film and video. After finding boundaries, it finds phases in events by repeated viewing.
- **Domain analysis**- describes a social situation and the cultural patterns within it. It emphasizes the meanings of the social situation to participants, and inter-relates the social situation and cultural meanings (Sparsely, 1980).
- **Phenomenology**- Emphasizes idiosyncratic meaning to individuals and not shared constructions as much. Again, the individual tries to bracket him/herself out, and enter the other person's perspective and experience. It emphasizes the effects of the research experience on the researcher-personal experience. How does this affect me as researcher? It is much like hermeneutical analysis, but even more focused on the researcher's experience (Lofland & Lofland, 1995).
- **Content Analysis**- This method looks at documents, texts, or speech to see which themes emerge, what people talk about the most, and gauges how themes relate to each other. It also seeks to find latent emphases, such as the political views of newspaper writers, which are implicit, or look at the surface level - overt emphasis (Webber, 1990).

In this study, interpretative and thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. Thematic analysis is the “identifying, analysing and reporting of patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various

aspects of the research topic” (Braun and Clarke, 2006:79). 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 (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

To thematically analyse appropriately, it was first, and foremost, important to become familiar with the data; secondly, to generate initial codes, and thirdly to search for themes, and review them. Once this was done, themes were defined and named, finally producing the report.

Rich, thematic characterisation of a data set was done, in that the data obtained from open-ended questions of the survey questionnaire were analysed to identify the main themes. The responses of participants in the questionnaire were reviewed to check the themes, and similar responses were grouped together. The analysis also reviewed what was most emphasised by participants in their responses. The information obtained from the questionnaire of each respondent was transcribed, and uncertainties were clarified. The questionnaires were then merged into one large document. The information was grouped per question. Where discussions tended to overlap, some of the questions were grouped together. Ideas and themes were grouped together, documented, and explained from the analysis of the written responses to each question. Quotations were added to enrich and elaborate upon the themes, as necessary. Nine themes were identified from the analysis.

- **Steps/Stages followed in thematic analysis**

Thematic analysis is a search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon (Daly, Kellehear & Gliksman, 1997). The thematic method of analysis adopted for this empirical research was a hybrid approach of qualitative methods of thematic analysis, and it incorporated both the data-driven inductive approach of Boyatzis (1998), and the deductive a priori template of codes approach outlined by Crabtree and Miller (1999). An inductive approach means the themes identified are strongly linked to the data themselves Patton (1990), and as such, this form of thematic analysis bears some similarity to grounded theory. In this approach, if the data have been collected specifically for the research (e.g., via interview or focus group), the themes identified may bear little relationship to the specific question that were asked of the participants

The quantity of data gathered for this research was deemed manageable for manual coding, rather than applying a computer coding technique. This allowed the researcher “to personally immerse in to the entire data set in search of collective meaning. An inductive approach to code creation was taken” Creswell (2009: 175), so codes were not developed before the data collection and editing, thus allowing greater sensitivity to context. The concepts derived from relevant literature included in the review chapter provided some initial ideas for codes and categories.

Interview transcripts were randomly assigned with individual identification codes. While quoting from their responses in the findings chapter, pseudonyms were used for participants to ensure anonymity. The study utilised some basic techniques of thematic analysis Ryan and Bernard (2003), such as word repetitions, key words in context, compare, searching for any missing

information, metaphors and analogies, for greater consistency in identifying meaning and strength of meaning. The steps taken in the analysis of the data were as follows:

1. At first, transcripts were studied by focusing on the questions stipulated in the questionnaires. Key phrases, “forming potential codes from the text, were identified and highlighted, and then written down on a separate document. The researcher started taking notes or marking ideas for coding. Coding continued to be developed and defined throughout the entire analysis.

2. Generating initial codes

This process began when the data were read and familiarised, and an initial list of ideas about what was in the data and what was interesting about them had been generated. Codes were written with reference to Boyatzis (1998) and identified by:

- The code label or name.
- The definition of what the theme concerns.
- A description of how to know when the theme occurs.

3. Searching for themes

This process began when all data were initially coded & collated, and a long list of the different codes where been identified across the data set. The codes were analyzed with consideration that different these codes may combine to form overarching themes. In other words, transcripts were summarized separately, by outlining the key points made by participants (noting individual and group comments) in response to the questions asked by the researcher. This stage was aided using mind maps and rough sketch

notes, as well with the aid of visual representation, naming each code (and a brief description) on a separate piece of paper and playing around with organizing them into theme-piles”.

4. Reviewing themes

This process entailed refining the themes, where some themes were broken down into finer themes with sub-categories, to have clear and identifiable distinctions between themes.

5. At this point, the themes were further defined to represent themes that present the analysis and analyses the data within them. The study thus applied the “define and refine” method, which in essence is “what each theme is about and determining what aspect of the data each theme captures”. This was done by going back to collated data extracts for each theme and organizing them into a coherent and internally consistent account, with accompanying narrative.

6. Report Analysis

In the final analysis, the researcher provided enough evidence of the themes within the data, i.e., enough data extracts to demonstrate the prevalence of the theme. The study thus provided an interpretative, concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive, and interesting account of the story the data had to tell, within and across themes.

3.9 Research as instruments and bracketing bias

In instances where data had to “go through” the researcher's mind before it was put on paper, the worry about subjectivity arose, as researchers are likely to be affected by observer bias. As qualitative study is dependent on the skills training, insights, and capabilities of the researcher, qualitative analysis

ultimately depends on the analytical intellect and style of the analyst (Patton, 1990). The human factor is the great strength, and the fundamental weakness of qualitative inquiry and analysis. This is because researchers are fallible, as they can make mistakes and get things wrong.

There are various forms of bias that have been generally identified in qualitative research, such as:

- The reactivity of researchers with the providers and consumers of information.
- Selection biases including the sampling of times, places, events, people, issues, questions and the balance between the novel and the mundane.
- The availability and reliability of various sources of data, either in general or their availability to different researchers.
- The affinity of researchers with certain kinds of people, designs, data, theories, concepts, explanations.
- The ability of researchers, including their knowledge, skills, methodological strengths, capacity for imagination.
- The value preferences and commitments of researchers and their knowledge or otherwise of these.
- The personal qualities of researchers, including, for example, their capacity for concentration and patience; tolerance of boredom and ambiguity; their need for resolution, conclusion and certainty” (CARE, 1994).

This study recognised the possibilities of bias in the researcher, and thus implemented measures of social processes to reduce biasness and keep

honest research. To reduce and manage biasness, it is imperative that a researcher has to “record detailed field notes which include reflection on their own subjectivity. A consideration of self as a researcher and self in relation to the topic of research is a precondition for coping with bias” (CARE, 1994). This can be complemented through introspection and analysis.

Furthermore, data can be reviewed by others to indicate something of the personal style of the researcher. Some researchers may make use of immediate colleagues who can constructively critique his or her work. In the context of this study, the researcher asked a couple of colleagues to evaluate the research methodology of the study. This helped the researcher explore their(her) preferences for certain kinds of evidence, interpretations and explanations and consider alternatives, locate blind spots and omissions, assess sampling procedures to highlight selection biases, examine judgements and make the processes of research more public. In the context of this study, the researcher had to be objective about the sampling and selection of participants and the whole data collection analysis process, with the aid of field notes and analytic memos. Fundamentally, the researcher adopted credible research strategy, which required that the investigator adopt a stance of neutrality about the research phenomenon under evaluation. This exerted a balancing act in a qualitative study which does not provide clear guidelines. This will contribute into providing meaningful, credible, valid, reliable, accurate, and confirmable findings.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Ethics is defined as a set of principles prescribing behaviours that are morally correct (Goodwin, 2002). Several ethical issues were addressed while collecting the data. Permission to carry out the study was first sought from the principals of the schools used in this research. This means there was honest and open declaration of the study project to the relevant authorities and participants. Furthermore, participation by respondents was voluntary, and the confidentiality of their identities was maintained.

3.11 Concluding remarks

This chapter discussed the methodology used to conduct the present study. Indicated in the discussion was the population selected for the study, a description of respondents, sampling procedures, the variables investigated, the instrument used for data collection, and the data analysis procedure. The next chapter will present the analysis of the results.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the study are presented. The results will include descriptive statistics analysing demographic data, including frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data obtained from open-ended questions will be grouped into main themes and discussed in detail. It will be recalled that the study is a career assessment and counselling programme for disadvantaged high schools in the Eastern Cape Province. The study seeks to empower disadvantaged students through participation in the process, and to nurture learning through tolerance of mistakes and differences in ideas.

4.2 Demographic data

The results of the descriptive statistics analysis have been presented in the form of pie charts, graphs and tables below. The demographic variables under consideration are gender, race, age, nationality, language and marital status.

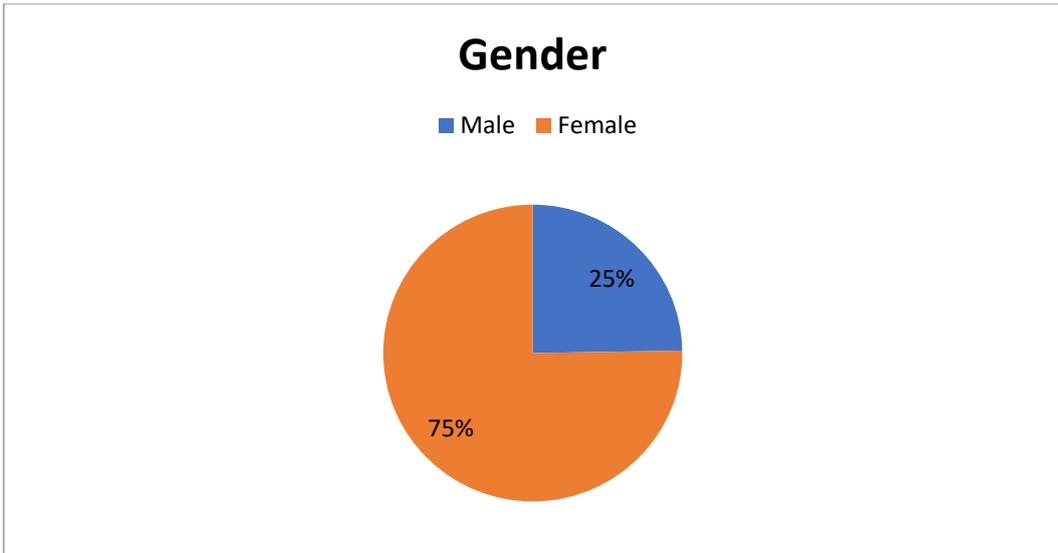


Figure 1: Gender of respondents

As shown in Figure 1 above, 25% (23) respondents were male, while 75% (70) were female.

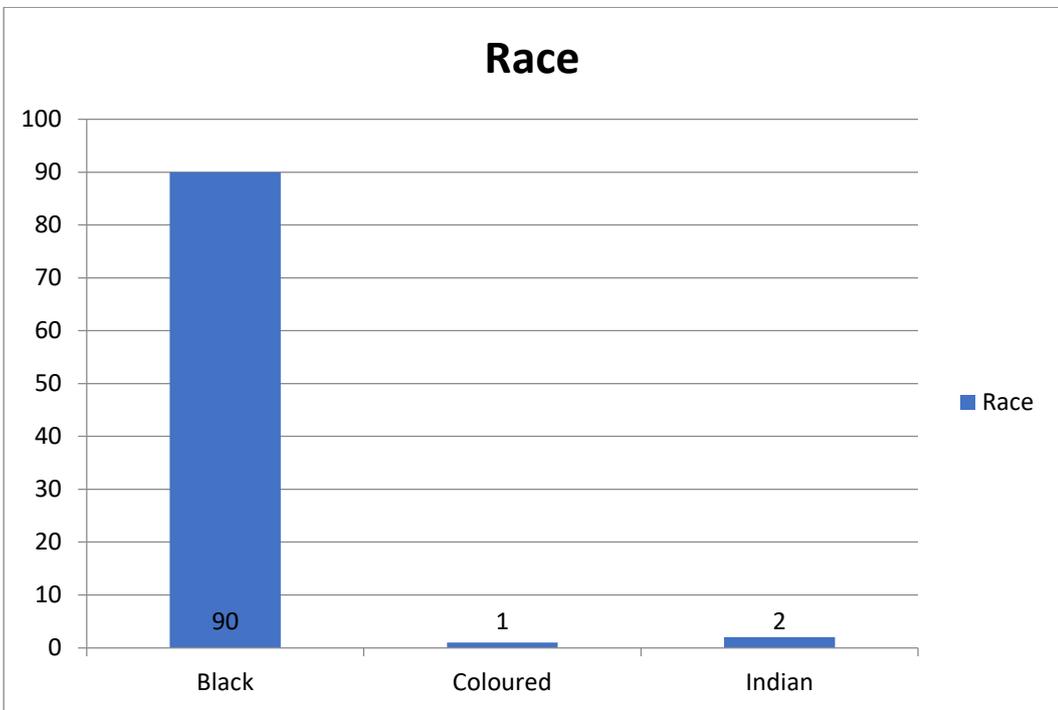


Figure 2: Race of respondents

Figure 2 illustrates the race of respondents. A total of 97% (90) respondents were black, 1% (1) were coloured and 2% (2) were Indian.

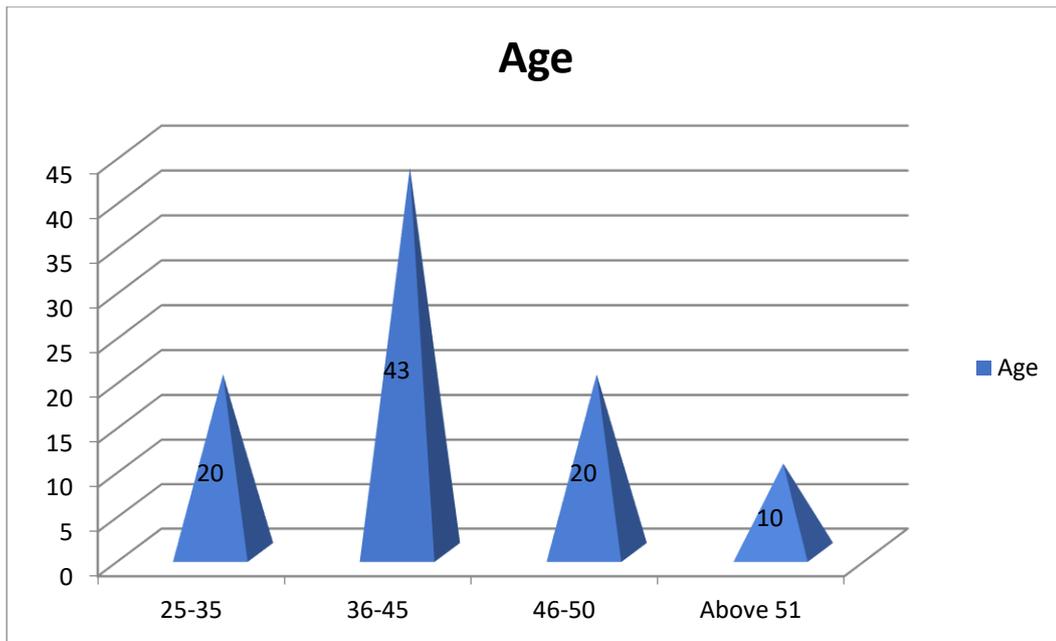


Figure 3: Age of respondents

According to Figure 3 above, 22 (20%) respondents were between the ages of 25 to 35, 46 (43%) were between the ages of 36 to 45, 22 (20%) were between the ages of 46 to 50, whilst 10 (10%) were above 51 years.

Table 1: Nationality of respondents

	South African	Zimbabwean	Nigerian	Other
Frequency	93	0	0	0
Percentage	100	0	0	0

Table 1 above shows that only South Africans participated in this study. A total of 93 participated.

Table 2: Language of respondents

	Xhosa	Zulu	English	Other
Frequency	90	0	0	3
Percentage	97	0	0	3

As shown in table above, 97% (90) Xhosa speaking respondents participated in the study, whilst 3% (3) indicated other languages.

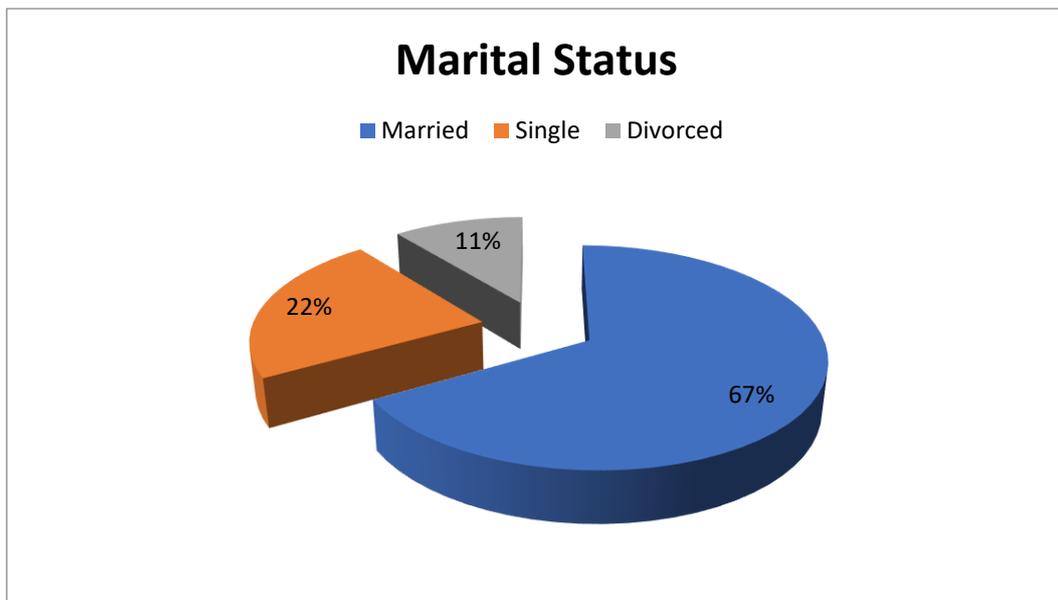


Figure 4: Marital status of respondents

According to Figure 4 above, 67% (62) of the respondents were married, 22% (21) were single whilst 11% (10) were divorced.

4.3 Thematic analysis

The information obtained from each respondent's questionnaire was transcribed and uncertainties were clarified. The questionnaires from all the respondents were then merged into one large document. The information was then grouped according to each question. Where discussions tended to overlap, some of the questions were grouped together. From the analysis of the text per question, ideas and themes were grouped, and were documented and have been explained below. Quotations were added to enrich and elaborate on the themes where necessary.

Nine themes from the study were identified:

1. Problems and challenges in career guidance (supporting learners).
2. Current contemporary approaches used in career guidance.
3. Government, parents and school's partnership in support of learners in career making decisions.
4. Consultation with subject matter experts: psychologist and psychological assessment instruments; social workers, community and youth development workers in career guidance.
5. Role of career counselling in career guidance.
6. Training, skills, subject knowledge expertise, and resources development for educators in career development and guidance.
7. Community based services for early school leavers.
8. Student based initiatives in career guidance.
9. Promoting counselling effectiveness and feedback.

4.3.1 Theme 1: Problems and challenges in career guidance (supporting learners)

Respondents reported that they do not have qualified guidance educators and could only utilise the services of life orientation educators. This made it difficult for disadvantaged schools to provide quality career guidance, to help learners in making informed decisions concerning their careers.

“We do not have qualified persons to do guide students in terms of their careers. Many students finish their Grade 12 but do not have the proper direction to go. Some decide to stay at home because they are not sure of what they should do and how to pursue their careers”

Furthermore, respondents said that there is a lack of financial resources and support from government and other stakeholders. Respondents cited this as a big problem in disadvantaged schools. The availability of money would allow schools to engage the services of qualified professionals, such as psychologists, social workers and so forth. However, government has been criticised, owing to the perceived lack of substantial support of learners in terms of providing resources, and help and direction for learners needing career guidance. Schools have thus been left with no proper career guidance services to enable learners to make informed decisions concerning their careers.

“We have a problem with money because without enough money it’s difficult to support learners in making optimal career decisions. We also have a problem with government as it is not doing anything to support students in career guidance”.

“At my school there is no budget for career guidance as a result we do not engage the services of professional guidance providers as it is expensive for us”.

Additionally, one other challenge faced by disadvantaged schools is that of ignorance and lack of interest in career counselling and guidance issues by learners. Educators were of the view that learners are not well informed of the benefits of career guidance. Some students were disinterested in attending career guidance workshops and presentations.

“Many students think it’s a waste of time to attend career exhibition workshops and they will rather go home than attend. At my school students were called to attend a career guidance workshop and only 10 out of possible 80 students attended”

4.3.2 Theme 2: Current contemporary approaches used in career guidance

Through educators’ responses, several approaches were identified as being used by different schools to support learners, who are making career and subject choice decisions in the disadvantaged schools in the Eastern Cape region. Below are some of the approaches identified:

- Learners ought to attend career workshops and career expos - Learners were booked for workshops dealing with career guidance. Such workshops were conducted by experienced professionals in the field of career guidance, thus providing students with up to date information on how to make informed decisions.

- Newsletters - newsletters with information on the importance and benefits of career guidance and counselling were provided to both learners and educators in schools. These letters further detailed the type of professionals that are important in providing guidance to students.
- Attending conferences - Learners attended conferences dealing with career guidance to be equipped with the necessary knowledge that would enable them to make the best decisions about their careers. Schools usually organized these conferences, during which different schools gathered at one place and ensured that learners participated in activities that could impact on their future careers.
- Group discussions - This approach allowed learners to gather in groups and formulate and discuss a topic concerning career guidance. Every student participated in these discussions and, with the help of trained guidance educators, students asked questions whenever they needed assistance with certain issues.
- Visiting tertiary institutions - This approach allowed learners to visit tertiary institutions such as universities, Technikons and colleges. This allowed secondary learners to meet tertiary learners and educators who provided insight into programmes offered and entry requirements for the programmes. Furthermore, it motivated high school learners to work hard to enter the tertiary institutions of their choice.

“We sent students to attend workshops to help them know themselves better and make the better decisions in their lives. Learners also gather in groups for discussions concerning career guidance issues”

“Learners collect newsletters once every month. These newsletters contain important information about career guidance and provide the necessary directions for students to take after completing their metric”.

“Learners in my school once attended a conference about career issues twice and it helped them a lot”.

4.3.3. Theme 3: Government, parents and school’s partnership in support of learners in career making decisions

Respondents believed that it should be the responsibility of parents, government and schools to help learners in choosing the course of study that aligned with their talents.

“We need a psychologist to be employed at our schools that way learners may learn to make best decisions about their future. If you look at most top schools that have money to pay psychologists, their learners are well advanced in terms of making better career decisions”.

“Government should do something about the plight of disadvantaged schools. We need better trained professionals such as psychologists to help our learners in making the right career choices”.

These three role players should work together in supporting students in career guidance. Parents have the primary role of sending their children to school and identifying their strengths, talents and weaknesses, whilst providing the necessary resources that will enable them to pursue their studies. The school’s role is to provide enough educators who are skilled career guidance providers.

The government should provide these schools with the resources required for career guidance and qualified professionals such as psychologists.

“Parents, schools and the government should work together in the provision of career guidance services to learners. Without the cooperation of government, parents and schools’ children will never realise their full potential”.

“Government, schools and parents should come together and devise the best strategies that will help learners to improve decision making in their career choices and options”.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Consultation with subject matter experts

Educators were of the view that more expert-based support is needed in disadvantaged schools to enable learners to make better career decisions. They suggested that every school should employ the services of a psychologist to offer career guidance in disadvantaged schools. The service of an educational or counselling psychologist would be useful to learners. A psychologist is a trained professional who has the necessary skills and knowledge that can help learners in career decision making.

They believed that access to the services of a psychologist would aid learners in pursuing a career that links very well to their abilities and talents.

“Psychologists have a base knowledge about career issues and their inputs are important to learners from disadvantaged schools. Their availability is necessary thus their importance should never be ignored”.

“We need a psychologist to be employed at our schools that way learners may learn to make best decisions about their future. If you look at most top schools that have money to pay psychologists, their learners are well advanced in terms of making better career decisions”.

“The reason why learners from disadvantaged schools get lost on the program choice to study that suits their talents is because of the unavailability of a psychologist who have the necessary skills to advice our students”.

Educators mentioned different points which outline the importance of a psychologist in career guidance. These were:

- Psychologists are trained professionals who base their work on objective and scientific standards rather than depend on guess work, hearsay and bounded rationality.
- Psychologists are bound by their code of conduct, which enables them to perform their work according to established and accepted standards of psychology. Furthermore, they are obliged to maintain confidentiality in their work, and treat every person in a dignified manner. This will encourage learners and educators to utilise their services without any fear of victimisation, or disclosure of confidential information.
- Psychologists have knowledge of the current market trends and prospects of employment in the South African labour market. They also have information on the different programmes offered by different tertiary institutions. In addition, they can determine a learner’s level of ability, motivations, potential to learn, intellectual abilities and interests. Having such information will enable a psychologist to help learners choose

programmes that suit their abilities and fulfil their future learning potential. Furthermore, learners are provided with insight into the best paying careers and skills that are in demand in the open labour market.

- They utilise tests that are limited to the use solely by psychologists; such tests provide a realistic picture of a student, his/her abilities, interests, skills, talents and motivations.

“For me a psychologist is important in that he/she provides direction for learners and this gives each student an added advantage in terms of choosing the right program to study at the University. Psychologist also provide with important information to help students in making the right choice at school”.

“A psychologist is someone who can understand learners better and thus he/she is in a position to help each learner in choosing the right career. Also, a psychologist enables a learner to pursue a career based on the learner’s skills, their needs and their strength”.

- **Use of psychometric assessment in career guidance**

The use of psychometric assessment in career guidance was endorsed by respondents who felt that such a career method would provide a realistic picture of the learner. The educators involved in this study stipulated that psychometric tools linked an individual’s abilities, skills, talents, and interests to different programmes offered at tertiary institutions. Assessment practitioners, such as psychologists, use different types of tests to determine a learner’s ability, interest, intelligence level, and personality. These are then matched to different programmes at universities, Technikons and colleges. This would allow a learner to choose the programme that best suits him/her. A learner needs to

choose a career that best suits him/her to provide a satisfactory and productive career life.

“Disadvantaged schools should utilise the services of psychologists who uses psychological tests for assessing learner’s ability and potential. These psychological tests are important because they match an individual to his/her future career. It provides a clear picture of what one must do after completing his/her high school education”.

“These tools that psychologists use is important to learners. They play an important role in career guidance and hence they must be used in our schools. Though it may be costly but in the long run they provide more benefits to disadvantaged learners who need help in deciding about better careers”.

Furthermore, educators also believed that psychometric tools should be used by psychologists who are certified to use them in the psychological field. Thus, control of any tool that taps into the psychological characteristics of an individual should be controlled and used by psychologists. Their benefits would be fully utilised if used by qualified persons. Furthermore, psychological tests have legal and ethical implications if not used properly. Psychologists are professionals who are trained in ethical, legal and other related issues; they are thus able to use such tests responsibly.

“I have a problem when our students are tested by unqualified persons who claim to know more about the psychological characteristics of people. I believe if psychological tests are used by qualified professionals such as psychologists they are a valuable tool in career guidance”.

- **Consulting services of social workers, and community and youth development workers**

Educators believed that schools should collaborate with professionals such as social workers, as well as youth and community workers. Learners and educators need to meet and mix with these professionals in conferences, workshops and organised discussions. These professionals have the necessary knowledge to help learners in choosing their careers wisely.

“Disadvantaged schools should allow learners to attend workshops and discussions where they will meet social workers and other experienced professionals. Social workers will provide a positive influence in career decisions of learners”

“Students should always meet trained professionals regularly possibly after every 3 months. These students should have an opportunity to ask questions to professionals experienced with career issues. This will provide learners with awareness of their strength and abilities”.

Respondents asserted that there is lack of collaboration between learners from disadvantaged schools and social workers, youth and community workers. Schools are not doing enough in promoting such collaborations. Learners are thus lost regarding their careers. Students learn and proceed without direction because there are no trained counsellors and professionals to aid them in pursuing a rewarding career.

“Those who are responsible for organising the collaboration of professionals with students are nowhere to be found. We have tried to set a committee

responsible with career issue, but it never worked and hence students are left to make career decisions on their own without the help of trained professionals”.

“Schools themselves are not doing enough with regards to career guidance issues. We always seat and blame the government for not supporting learners from disadvantaged schools when in fact it’s the schools that fails to take initiatives. Schools should organise discussions and workshops in which professionals such as social workers are invited so that they mingle with learners and provide them with important and necessary information about their careers”.

4.3.5. Theme 5: Role of career counselling in career guidance

Respondents recognised that career counselling is important in career guidance because it gives learners a general idea about what they might be good and helps them to learn how to explore career opportunities, choose the right career or job and investigate potential measures and occupations.

“Many students are at the crossroads when it comes to choosing a specialised course of study after grade 12 or after graduating from university. They either blindly follow their other classmates or surrender to their parents who thrust their opinions on them. Career counselling can play a vital role in helping these students to make a right choice”.

Educators further identified more benefits of career counselling, such as:

- It assists learners to make educational, training and occupational choices to manage their careers. Thus, the availability of counselling psychologists in schools will aid learners in this regard.

- It provides career information to learners and helps individuals develop their self-awareness, opportunity awareness, and career management skills, which contribute to them making better career decisions.
- Career counselling helps in building capabilities and builds confidence in learners, thus creating commitment in their tasks and activities.
- It helps in building high motivational levels by understanding what the learner wants. It ensures that every individual sets up some goals and consequences and gives his/her best in achieving them.
- It helps in maintaining a balance between a student's personal life and school life, an understanding of one's strength and weaknesses and keeping one's vision and values ahead of anything else.

“The best part about career counselling is that it inspires every student to make a career of themselves in the field in which their interest and passion lies. By doing so it aids every learner to know his own powers and the success that each student is capable of achieving”

4.5.6 Theme 6: Training, skills, subject knowledge expertise and resources development

Participants expressed concern with the lack of adequate training and resources needed in helping learners in career guidance. They argued that they needed to be sent for both in-house and out-house training. In-house training requires that educators receive training in their usual working sites. An experienced professional is hired to teach educators about issues related to career guidance. The knowledge gained during in-house training is then passed

on to learners later. Out-house training is where educators leave their usual working premises to receive training in another area. These may include attending conferences, workshops, and skills development sessions outside of their work premises. Whether in- or out-house training is done, it remains an important factor in skilling educators with the necessary career guidance skills.

“Training is vital in equipping educators with the necessary skills in career guidance. It also allows educators to play the role of a counsellor in career related issues thus contributing positively to learner’s decision making”.

“As educators we are required to help our students with career guidance, but the problem is we are not adequately trained in career guidance and something has to be done”.

Respondents further stated that they do not have enough resources in career guidance. There is very little money allotted to career guidance. There is also a lack of equipment, such as computers. Without adequate resources, especially money, it is always difficult for them to provide quality guidance to learners. They believe that government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) should help them with the much-needed resources.

“Lack of money is impacting negatively on our role as educators in the career guidance field. We need help from well-wishers to contribute whatever the amount so that we are equipped with enough resources”.

“Government should intervene and provide necessary resources such as computers in disadvantaged schools”.

- **Subject knowledge expertise, skills and experience**

The study also established that educators do not have enough knowledge, skills, and experience in career guidance. This poses a great challenge to learners given that most disadvantaged schools do not have enough financial resources to acquire the services of professionals, such as psychologists and trained guidance providers. However, educators indicated that they need to acquire more knowledge and skills to help learners in making optimal decisions.

“We as educators haven’t acquired any skills to enable our students in career issues. We once organised to attend a 2 weeks training, but our principal later told us that there was no money to attend that training”.

“It is unfortunate that we as educators don’t have the necessary skills to educate our students about career guidance issues. Students look to us as educators when they need help and information about career guidance. We need to acquire more skills and knowledge in future”.

“Our government is not doing anything in terms of educating us on career guidance issues. We can’t help our students when we don’t have the necessary skills and knowledge”.

Respondents indicated the skills that they would want to acquire and how they wished to acquire them. Below are the skills which respondents felt they need:

- Knowledge about different service providers of career guidance.
- Information about different programmes offered at tertiary institutions, and how they are related to subjects offered at high school.
- The psychology of students, as this will help them understand the different needs, motivations and abilities of the learners.

- Information on general employment trends, such as historical trends and future demands as well as data on the structure of the labour market; this would include discussion regarding which jobs exist, in how many sectors and which occupations are viable for students.

“We need to be sent for workshops, training and skills development programs on how to improve our skills in providing career guidance to our learners. This should start as early as possible since most of us don’t have the necessary skills in the field of guidance”.

- **Investing in equipment resources**

Additionally, the study also established that, besides the need to acquire skills and sound knowledge in career guidance, most educators also pointed out that they need different equipment and tools to aid learners in career decisions. This would go a long way in supporting and facilitating career guidance initiatives. Below are the tools and equipment that were deemed useful in career guidance:

- **Computers** are needed to keep and store all the information that learners require for career guidance. All presentations, names of learners and educators, names of service providers, and their addresses, are kept on the hard drive of a computer. A computer can also be connected to the internet, thus allowing educators and students to search for information related to career guidance. The internet allows one to search the web for different service providers, and to know the exact type of services they offer.
- **Overhead Projector** - a projector is used in slideshow presentations at schools, conferences, workshops and group discussions; it makes it

easier for those attending these events to have a better view of the information being presented.

- Printers and photocopiers - A printer is needed to print out newsletters, brochures and any other information that may be needed as hard copies for learners and educators.
- Flash drives and modems - Flash drives are needed as backup for information stored on the hard drive of a computer. In case the information on the computer gets lost, that which is on the flash drive can be retrieved and be used or put back onto the computer. Modems are particularly useful in areas where there is no internet connection. A modem can be connected to a computer, and thus allow access to the internet.

“We don’t have computers at this school and this makes it difficult to keep student’s information related to their career issues”

“We need to be sent for workshops, training and skills development programs so as to provide them with the necessary skills which will help them make better career choices in future”.

4.5.7 Theme 7: Community based services for early school leavers

Respondents further placed emphasis on the need to establish Community Based Services (CBS) for early school leavers. They emphasised that these services are vital for learners who leave school at the minimum school-leaving age. Community Based Services give every learner a chance to participate in community life through various work experience programmes. Community

employment and job initiatives are forms of Community Based Services primarily aimed at the long term unemployed, and other disadvantaged groups. Many educators believe that the availability of such services for disadvantaged learners can offer them an opportunity to benefit from training and engage in useful work within their communities on a temporary, fixed term basis.

“There is high unemployment rate in South Africa which has led to many learners who finish school to be involved in crime because they find themselves being unemployed after completing their high school. To combat such a problem there should be community services such as temporary work in schools, hospitals, clinics that will provide those leaving school an opportunity to earn an income”

“We have a problem with learners who left school either before or after completing grade 12. They terrify people because of their criminal behaviours. Some end up stealing and being involved in robberies. This is because they don't have anything to do after high school. They steal to get money to buy drugs and alcohol. I am sure we as the community need to do something. We need to create community-based programmes aimed at skilling these learners after leaving school. This will also offer some income thus reducing crime rate”

“The problem that we face in our communities is that we don't have any programmes to help those leaving school early a chance for them to be gainfully employed. Such programmes are needed as they not only provide with income but offer various skills and knowledge that will help the learners to grow and develop personally. When they gain community-based skills through such programmes it becomes easier for them to be employed in the South African

labour market. Some will even be motivated to further their skills in formal education system. So, something needs to be done in our communities”.

Respondents provided examples of Community Based Services that they considered to be important in helping early school leavers. A few examples of these were:

- **The Local Training Initiative** - This is a programmed in which community groups can set up projects which aim to provide training and community services locally. Training is delivered across a broad range of areas such as childcare, horticulture and public health. The aim of the programmed is to provide flexible training opportunities, and to raise the competency levels of unemployed people. This helps to facilitate their progression towards labor market participation, by using collaborative community resources and opportunities.
- **Community Training Centres** - provide community-based training for early school leavers as part of the national youth outreach programme. Community Training Centres are independent, community-based organisations which provide training and related support for early school leavers, primarily aged between 16 and 21 years, who have left school with no formal, or incomplete qualifications. Learners in Community Training Centres develop individualised learning plans and participate in personal, social and vocational skills training and development, leading to major awards on the National Framework of Qualifications.
- **Job clubs** - The initiatives provide training to assist those respondents who are ready for work to develop skills, which they can then use to find

a job. This active, practical and participative process takes place under the guidance and supervision of the job club leader.

- **Wider horizons programmes** - target disadvantaged unemployed people between the ages of 16 and 26. These programmes involve training and work experience, both at home and in the work environment outside of the home.

“We need to set up different programmes that will help those leaving school so that they gain needed and relevant skills. The community, government and schools should work together and designing different type of community programmes that will help the unemployed especially those from disadvantaged communities in all regions in South Africa”.

4.5.8 Theme 8: Student based initiatives in career guidance

Respondents indicated that students need to take ownership of their careers. Although it is important for learners to receive guidance from professionals and trained educators, the main responsibility lies with the student. Students should constantly seek advice on the best way forward. Furthermore, it was suggested that students should express interest and motivation in whatever they are doing in terms of career progression. The lack of interest and motivation makes it difficult to seek career guidance. The reason why some students absent themselves from workshops and discussions which focus on career guidance is that there is a lack of interest on the part of the student. Interest in what one is doing increases the energy to engage in behaviour that is rewarding. Such behaviours include seeking help and advice from people who are

knowledgeable about career issues. After receiving advice, one then pursues a career that is rewarding and that links well with one's abilities, skills and motivations.

“Learners should always know that their lives belong to no one else except themselves. Therefore, they should take ownership of their careers. We as adults we are there to help and guide them only”.

“Learners need to be provided with the right information in career guidance as this will motivate them to work towards their careers. Without motivation and a lack of interest it becomes difficult for them to take full responsibility of what they are doing in school”.

Respondents further stated that learners should work hard in class and achieve better results. Students should attend classes, read their books and be involved in group discussions to improve their class performance. It is easier for a professional to provide guidance to a learner who achieves good grades in class and who takes responsibility for his/her work. Students should know that performing very well in class will not only please their parents, educators and those providing career guidance, but it will also increase their chances of proceeding to the tertiary level.

“A learner who works hard knows that he/she is in a better position to advance to the tertiary level which will lead to him/her getting a better well-paying job”.

4.3.9. Theme 9: Promoting counselling effectiveness and feedback

According to several respondents, counselling can be effective if conducted by trained professionals, such as social workers and psychologists. Such

professionals are trained and have experience in career counselling. They base their interventions on established scientific methods. If career counselling is carried out by unqualified and inexperienced persons, it may not be enough to provide adequate help to disadvantaged learners. Furthermore, learners may be led astray if they are guided in their careers by people who base their interventions on guess work. Career counselling can be effective and provide a legacy if done by people who understand the psychology of students and who are aware of the labour market trends in South Africa and abroad.

“If career counselling is done by professional it will provide a lasting positive impact to learners. Those who seek career guidance should consult persons who are knowledgeable about career issues and who are trained in the area. This will ensure counselling effectiveness”.

“Some of our students have been led astray by those who claim to have adequate knowledge with career counselling. They are not qualified or experienced and only do so to get paid”.

Another issue emphasised by respondents, in terms of ensuring counselling effectiveness, is that of feedback. The counsellor and the learner should constantly keep in touch, should anything not go according to the procedure or the plan that has been set down. The career counsellor should provide feedback to learners on their progress in career issues. Another important aspect that ensures counselling effectiveness is to evaluate whether the ideas given to learners are improving career decision making. This should be done regularly, and if methods used in career counselling are not providing any benefits, they should be abandoned.

“Those providing career counselling should ensure that their methods are effective. If their methods are not of any benefit to students, then they should consider using new and effective methods. Furthermore, counsellors should constantly be in touch with learners to ensure counselling effectiveness”.

4.4 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, the results of the current study were presented. The chapter presented the demographic characteristics of the respondents by using descriptive statistics. Thematic analysis was used to identify the main themes derived from the open-ended questionnaires. Nine themes were outlined in the analysis. The results place emphasis on the need to empower all community stakeholders with capacitating with technical and theoretical skills, which will enable all stakeholders to effectively play their roles in community development. Quotations from the respondents were added to the themes to support the results. A discussion of the results will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the results of the study. In this chapter, the discussion of the outlined results is presented. This chapter discusses the themes that were established in the previous chapter.

5.2 Discussion

It will be recalled that the main purpose of this research was to design a career assessment and counselling programme for disadvantaged schools. The specific aim was to guide learners through a process of career exploration in order that they make appropriate career choices and plans. The main objectives were: to formulate a career assessment and counselling programme as an ongoing process of change, and not as an event; to support the Eastern Cape Department of Education in leading, and actively encouraging career programmes; to empower disadvantaged students through participation in the process, and to nurture learning through tolerance of mistakes and differences of ideas. The rationale for the study was to devise career assessment and counselling programmes to develop competencies in students about self and others, career planning and exploration, as well as educational-vocational development.

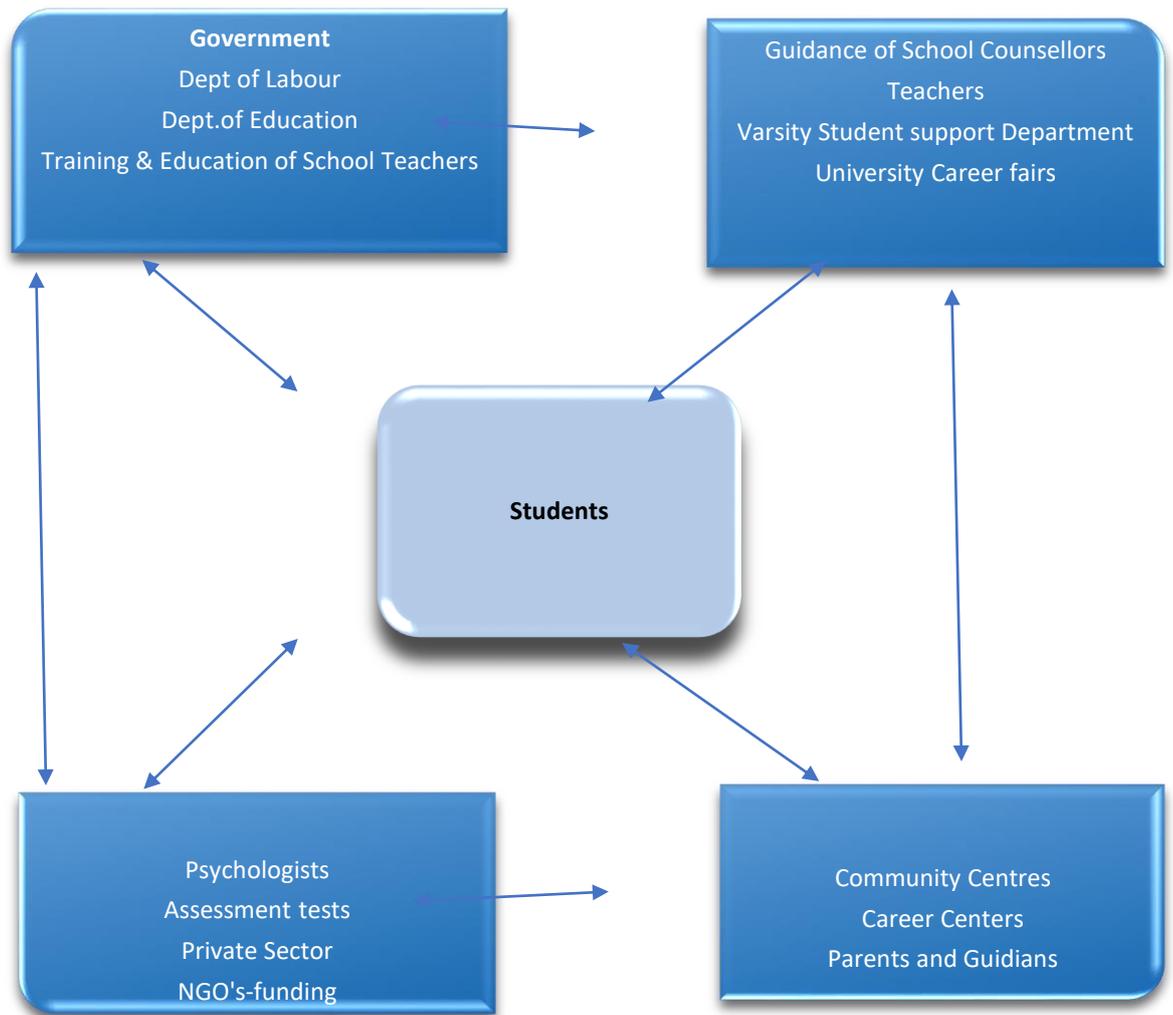


Figure.5: Career Guidance and Assessment Matrix

The analysis reveals that many disadvantaged high schools do not have educators who are qualified in career guidance issues. Schools only have the services of life orientation educators, who are responsible for providing students with real life experiences in managing their own life, in a well informed and responsible manner. This view is supported by the National Curriculum Statement (2005). The statement asserts that the new curriculum in schools introduces an outcome called "careers and career choices" as part of the learning area. Although life orientation is important in schools, educators feel

that career guidance should be given a higher priority in disadvantaged schools, to enable students to make better decisions concerning their career progression.

In addition, respondents believed that the lack of resources and government support further hampers efforts to improve career guidance amongst disadvantaged learners. Many disadvantaged schools do not have enough funds which means that they cannot afford to add career issues to their already constrained budgets. According to the respondents, government should be seen to be extending a helping hand to disadvantaged schools by providing enough money and qualified professionals for career guidance and counselling. It is also clear that students themselves do not have enough knowledge concerning the benefits of career guidance; they see no point in attending career workshops as they deem these to be unimportant. Thus, imparting knowledge about the benefits of career guidance to students will motivate them to buy into it, and attend career guidance workshops and discussions. This view is supported by Lugulu and Kipkoech (2011) who asserted that, if students are exposed to career issues, they will become part of programmes that offer guidance to improve their career decision making.

Different approaches are used by different schools to help disadvantaged learners get a better understanding of and benefit from career guidance. Learners attend career workshops and career expos which are conducted by trained professionals. Such workshops impart knowledge to learners about which careers to pursue after completing high school. Newsletters are another method which may be used to guide learners in their careers. Such newsletters,

which have rich information about career guidance, are distributed to each learner. The attendance of conferences has also provided important information that learners need to choose the right career path. Conferences bring together qualified professionals who give presentations about career guidance. These are useful to students. Schools also utilise group discussions to enable students to discuss issues that may affect their careers, which improves decision making. Furthermore, students visit tertiary institutions where they meet tertiary level learners and educators with whom they discuss the different programmes offered and their entry requirements.

5.2.1 Training, skills, subject knowledge expertise and resources development for educators in career development and guidance

Educators express a strong need for obtaining the necessary knowledge and skills in career guidance. The lack of knowledge and skills by educators has been identified as the main challenge that disadvantaged schools face. They believe that the main reason why students are unsure about their careers is that educators, who should play a major role in career guidance, do not have the requisite skills to help disadvantaged learners. According to Mackenzie (1996), this lack of knowledge by educators has led to many learners accepting bursaries based purely on financial considerations, and thereby choosing career fields and courses that are entirely unsuited to them, with disastrous consequences.

Therefore, it is essential that educators acquire career relevant qualifications, and supplement them with qualifications in career assessment and career

guidance, to complement their expertise and experience in the education platform. The need for training is depicted in Figure .5, assessment and guidance matrix. Such training should be conducted and led by all stakeholders. This will equip them with the fundamental skills needed in career development and guidance. In-house training exercises and workshops are some of the initiatives in which the disadvantaged schools can get their educators to engage and participate. This is so as this enables the counsellors use their expertise to help the client overcome emotional and personality-related difficulties, in addition to the cognitive aspects of information processing (Gati & Asher, 2001; Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, & Lenz, 2004).

Irving and Barker (2004) proposed that research activities and training programmes, ought to be key components of professional and personal development for academics and practitioners, to ensure that “real world” challenges are recognised, and to maintain the professionalism of careers practice within a rapidly changing world.

As the need for gaining skills in career guidance is high amongst educators, the different types of knowledge they need have been cited. These include knowing professionals who provide career guidance to learners, information on different types of certificates, diplomas and degrees offered at tertiary institutions, and the objective requirements needed to enter them, together with knowledge of the behavioural patterns exhibited by students on different occasions and information on the structure of the labour market.

Educators suggest that greater support is needed in disadvantaged schools to improve learners’ career decision making. They believe that there is a lack of support in career guidance. They hold the view that if every disadvantaged

school were provided with a psychologist, it would help learners in decision making. Respondents note that the services of educational and counselling psychologists will provide a very useful platform for career guidance.

5.2.2. Consultation with subject matter experts: psychologists and use of psychological instruments, social workers, community and youth development workers in career guidance

A comparison between top advantaged schools and disadvantaged schools revealed that top schools can afford the services of psychologists, while disadvantaged schools cannot afford such services. This is in direct contrast to Ackhurst and Mkhize (1999) who postulated that,

The new curriculum requires that career education become a formal part of the learning outcomes and marks a significant change in the philosophy and approach to the career development of young people. Where career guidance was previously offered mainly to learners in white schools in the previous dispensation, the new curriculum now integrates career education as a compulsory and substantial part of the requirements for achieving a school leaving certificate.

The respondents do not only recognise the need for psychologists in helping learners from disadvantaged schools, but also indicate why these professionals are important in guiding learners. Firstly, they believe that psychologists use tests that can measure a learner's personality, ability, interest and strength. They then use the knowledge gained from the results and interpretation of the tests to match different students to different programmes offered at tertiary institutions. Furthermore, psychologists are trained to offer an objective view to

a learner by using scientific procedures. This eliminates reaching a conclusion on the psychological characteristics of a learner through guesswork. It is also stated that psychologists can maintain the confidential information of clients and respect their dignity and worth whilst treating each person equally. This gives educators and learners more confidence in using their services.

Furthermore, psychologists are viewed by respondents as professionals who have up-to-date information on market trends, and prospects of employment in the South African labour market. In addition to their ability to understand the psychological makeup of each learner, they can give students more information on programmes offered and how these matches with their different abilities. Without the guidance of psychologists, students rush to make decisions that are of little benefit to their careers.

The results of the analysis show that many respondents hold the view that schools should collaborate with psychologists, social workers and other professionals through organised conferences and workshops. The main reason for this is that students will learn more from these professionals about career guidance, hence the facilitation of vicarious learning. This will offer learners insight into what is expected of them in making career choices. Gibson (1990) endorsed this view by stating that it is important for schools to organise workshops in which learners mix and mingle with psychologists. Such an arrangement will enable learners to benefit from career guidance.

Many respondents recognise the importance of psychometric assessment in career guidance. The usefulness of these tests is described as offering a realistic picture about a learner's ability, personality, aptitude, and intellectual level. They also provide a good link between a student's true ability, and a study

programme chosen at a tertiary institution. When psychometric tools are used, learners will be able to choose programmes that are in line with their intellectual level, and interests. This is further supported by Foxcroft, Paterson, Le Roux and Herbst (2004) who posited that psychologists use tests primarily for the purposes of career, intellectual, and personality assessment. To a slightly lesser extent, they also use these tests for assessing psycho-educational and learning problems, school readiness, and learning potential. They further stated that these tests provide a link between a person's ability and/or personality and a training programme.

Even though educators recognise the importance of psychological tests, they believe that such tests must be left in the hands of psychologists. This is because psychologists are trained to use such tests, and they can use them in a responsible and ethical manner without infringing upon the rights of learners. Foxcroft and Roodt (2001) endorsed this assertion when they said that the use of psychological tests should fall within the ambit of psychologists who are trained in ethical and legal issues, and who are able to control any negative consequences that may arise because of the application of such tests.

The uses of psychological assessment by professional psychologists will go a long way into contributing towards career guidance which is evidence based, which is "the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of the individual patient. It means integrating individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence from systematic research" (Sackett, Rosenberg, Gray, Haynes & Richardson, 1996:71). It is important to consult and actively involve guidance users so that they feel motivated to share their views concerning different aspects of the

services provided. It is thus essential to assert that, in involving users as co-producers of evidence, action, and research-based approaches have the potential to create firm links between policy, practice, and research (Haug & Plant, 2015).

5.2.3 Government, parents, and schools' partnerships in support of learners in career decisions

Respondents propose that schools, parents and government should play a combined role in career guidance. These role players have different functions to play in the career life of learners. Parents are pointed out as only fulfilling the role of sending children to school and paying their fees; schools provide educators who are qualified while the government takes on the role of providing resources to cater for career guidance. However, Mathabe and Temane (1993) believed that the link between parents and schools is weak when they contended that, "the teacher-parent link in South African schools is very weak. There is often negligible involvement of parents in the career development of their children". In a study conducted by Maite (2005), it was established that the career development of learners in disadvantaged communities is strongly influenced by destructive parental involvement, and low parental income. Negative parental reactions to career choices, and a lack of encouragement, can also lead to learner demotivation, and create further potential career barriers (Maite, 2005). This can be attributed to lack of vicarious learning, such that there are no, if not few, role models to which they can relate and look up, particularly in terms of people from similar backgrounds that have excelled.

"Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds may also fear that they are not adequately prepared for the demands of tertiary education, due to

language problems and the fact that their parents do not have experience of universities, Technikons or colleges. This may create anxiety in terms of coping with such an environment which, in turn, could lead to physiological and emotional arousal" (Bischof, 2007:55).

Learners ought to be provided with the support that they need, to encourage them to take up opportunities for personal accomplishments and expose them to appropriate role models. "Such encouragement is unlikely to have a major impact on students' efficacy expectations" (de Bruin in Stead & Watson, 1999:98).

Liu, McMahon, and Watson (2014), in a study conducted in China, to evaluate parental influence in child career aspirations, asserted that family is an imperative context in which children develop their career aspirations. There is literature that augments this assertion. McMahon and Rixon (2007) established that parents play a significant role in the education of their children, by facilitating their children's interest and development, by stimulating their career aspirations. For instance, through the home environment or family excursions. Thus, experiences of parent-child relationships are essential in children's exploration of interests, which, in turn, is linked to career interest development (Bryant, Zvonkovic, & Reynolds, 2006). Parents and parental figures do not at every instance necessarily set-out plans for their children's future, but rather the transmission of career-related values, especially the emphasis on education, suggests that they were planning for their children's future towards what they considered as the right path. This is so as parents contribute to their children's shaping the image of the future of their children. Parents form the

core functions of children's environments, and children extract cues from their environment regarding what work they might do and why. Children play an active role in the development of their career aspirations by making sense of information provided by their parents or parental figures (Buzzanell, Berkelaar, & Kisselburgh, 2011).

Parent active participation and involvement in school activities also have a significant influence on career assessment and guidance programmes. For instance, firstly, schools may provide children with opportunities to learn about a wider range of careers, given that parents may expose children to a limited range of careers that lead to their children's early circumscription of careers. Secondly, links can be established between formal career guidance programmes, and the informal network of the family. Schools may provide information to help parents understand their role in children's career development (Liu, McMahon, & Watson, 2015). For example, parents' emphasis on high status careers may lead to children's unrealistic expectations of salary and work conditions, and thus their difficulty in securing a job or even to unemployment (China Labour Bulletin, 2013). Schools may invite parents to take part in career guidance activities to ensure that children's career development is facilitated in a consistent way.

5.2.4 Role of career counselling in career guidance

Educators recognise the importance of career counselling in that it gives students a clear picture of themselves, their abilities and strengths; this helps them choose better careers and jobs that suit their skills and abilities. The

respondents believe that learners do not choose programmes that represent their best match, instead, they blindly follow what their friends, parents and colleagues tell them. They do not seek proper guidance and advice from professionals. Career counselling is seen as aiding learners in making better choices regarding which educational programmes to pursue at school, type/s and form/s of training that contribute to the acquisition of knowledge and skills in specific fields, and the occupations that are rewarding, both in terms of satisfaction and remuneration. This point is confirmed by Schmidli (2001) who explained that career guidance and counselling is an important avenue through which students acquire the ability to make rational career decisions and, by extension, to choose programmes for study at universities that impact on their future working lives.

Career counselling is also seen as an important tool for providing learners with career information that will improve their management skills, awareness of the different opportunities available to them, and knowing themselves. It makes individuals develop, and have a better understanding of what is right for them in terms of their future potential. Herr (2002), in support of the importance of career counselling, designed a classroom-based career guidance programme to enhance the career knowledge of learners, increase their self-awareness in relation to careers, and ultimately to accelerate their career maturity process. This career guidance programme compliments career counselling programmes that are of benefit to learners.

The respondents further postulate that career counselling builds confidence amongst learners. This further motivates students to work hard in their studies because they will have a sense of direction and know what is best for their

future. Koontz and Wehrich (1990) however, believe that counselling does not lead to individuals becoming motivated, but that it works in the reverse. A learner should be motivated to allow a professional adviser to provide advice and counselling related to career guidance.

Respondents suggest that students can maintain a balance between personal and school life by using career counselling in their lives. According to Hartman (1999), this is true, as it enables students to plan their activities and tasks in advance. Instead of doing their daily chores in a haphazard manner, counselling opens their minds, and allows them to have a general timetable in their heads, which they will follow whenever they are engaged in both school and home related activities.

An empirical study conducted by Pieterse (2005) has established that previously disadvantaged learners in South Africa are not adequately prepared to make informed career choices. Despite having expanded career choices in post-Apartheid South Africa, learners from disadvantaged communities still seem to have a low career maturity due to the socio-political dispensation of the past. The learners in the research seemed to lack this career maturity in terms of their uncertainty around career recommendations revealed by the psychometric assessment (Bischoff, 2007).

Career counselling practitioners should thus aim to facilitate clients' career decision making, effectively and efficiently with the use of face-to-face career counselling, and with the use of career indecision assessments as career guidance tool (Gati & Levin, 2014). This will ensure that during the career guidance processes, counsellors will better understand their clients' needs and challenges (i.e., a lack of readiness, a lack of information, an inability to use the

information at hand, or a combination of several difficulties). This material will facilitate the career guidance process by allowing counselors to focus on issues that prevent their clients from reaching a decision independently - the issues that brought them to seek professional help in the first place (Gati & Levin, 2014). It is thus of great importance that counsellors in career guidance understand the seriousness of the effects of career indecisiveness, and what is required to alleviate the challenge, as indecisiveness requires the longest intervention (Gati, Amir, & Landman, 2010). Being aware of challenges can help counselors to better plan and tailor the intervention by targeting the sources of these difficulties.

It has become abundantly clear that that learners need to develop skills to adapt to their even changing environment (Ebberwein, Krieshok, Ulven, & Prosser, 2004). Moreover, it is more important for South African career counselling and assessment to focus on the career adaptability, as opposed to the career maturity, of learners due to new challenges encountered in a rapidly changing work environment (Langley in Stead & Watson, 1999). This brings forth the relevance of Super's theory on career development, which places the concept of career adaptability during the adult life-stage the challenges and principles it raises can easily be related to career adaptability problems experienced by adolescents.

5.2.5. Problems and challenges in career guidance counselling

Educators complain about the lack of equipment for career guidance. They fear that if such equipment is not made available, learners will not benefit fully from career guidance. The equipment that respondents refer to include computers, to keep and store information for learners, educators and other important

information on career guidance; projectors used in presentations; printers; photocopiers, and flash drives. Stead (2006) further added that many disadvantaged schools in developing countries do not have career guidance books. In addition to electronic equipment, career books are an important aspect of career guidance. The findings reveal that respondents are worried about the lack of training amongst educators on career guidance. Educators are supposed to be the main custodians of career issues affecting their students. Furthermore, respondents assert that career guidance should focus on primarily educators, to equip them with the necessary knowledge that will enable them to help their students in making the best career decisions.

However, Reynolds and Cheek (2002) differed in their opinion on the matter. They believed that using professionals, such as psychologists, who have vast knowledge in career guidance, presents the best option for schools, rather than wasting resources in training educators, as schools still need to consult these professionals. However, Savickas, Van Esbroeck and Herr (2005) disagreed when they said that there is a shortage of professionally trained guidance practitioners in developing countries, including South Africa, and governments should ensure that educators receive enough training in career guidance.

Another issue that respondents indicate as a need in terms of career guidance is the availability of resources in disadvantaged schools. Respondents felt that government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) should contribute by funding disadvantaged schools, so that they are able to invest in career guidance. This view is in sharp contrast to Lapan (2001) who believed that NGOs should fund vulnerable children and orphans who need primary basic care. The researcher believes that if NGOs fund career related issues which

are secondary to their role, then vulnerable children will be at risk of losing funding.

5.2.6. Community based services for early school learners

Rutondoki (2000) stated that community-based services are an important setup in most poor countries. They target, mostly, disadvantaged learners who finish school and become unemployed. This will help in reducing loitering and crime by unemployed youth in the community. This view corroborates what the respondents propose in the study; they propose that there should be community-based services for early school leavers. Just as Rutondoki (2000) saw as an advantage of community-based services, respondents also believe that such services will reduce crime by giving young people knowledge and experience, through participation in different programmes. This will prepare the unemployed youth for the real work environment, and increase their chances of gaining employment after completing these community programmes.

Respondents identify different community-based services which they consider the most important for early school leavers. These include local training initiatives, community training centres, job clubs and wider horizons. These services will, however, need the community to be at the forefront in running them. They also need proper management and accountability. Without proper management all initiatives will come to naught. These were described as important services for providing the youth with the necessary skills for their economic benefit. According to Maseko (2004), early school leavers should become occupied with community-based programmes, hence reducing the prevalence for crime in the community.

This indicates the importance of community and school's collaboration. Communities thus should establish community-based programmes that are there to accommodate early school leavers, as well as those who do not make it into the mainstream tertiary education sector. As such, communities should establish or advocate for career education modules within secondary school environments that will focus on career development programmes, which will significantly enhance career planning ability, self-efficacy, and career maturity (Talib, Salleh, Amat, Ghavifekr & Ariff, 2015). Such initiatives can be initiated within secondary schools. However, this can also be implemented within community centers, which will play a role of community colleges, which could offer career education modules, designed to provide a specific learning experience for learners to achieve specific objectives, hence the Community College Exploration Module (CCEM) (Amla, Ibrahim, & Amat, 1998). This is consistent with literature in a study by Talib et al. (2015) conducted at a Malaysian community college, who advocated for a career education module. This entails class interventions integrated into the college class timetable for a couple weeks (nine weeks), with a qualified counselor facilitating the classes. It consists of structured career and learning activities aimed at helping students or participants accomplish two career developmental tasks: career planning ability (CPA), and career maturity (CM). Such concerted efforts should be initiated by the community in collaboration with local primary and secondary structures. This will provide content on career-related information and skills, as well as to offer guided and supportive learning experiences. According to Holland (1997), this will help participants make informed career decisions and subsequently engage in effective career planning. Super added that exposure

to career information with guidance and encouragement will accelerate career maturity and career planning ability (Betz, 2008).

The establishment of career centers provides the users of the career guidance and assessment Centre with life-skills information, which will aid in following a self-help, display-led career decision making process; gathering career and life skills information through the use of a combination of passive, reactive and interactive exhibits, and becoming aware of local labour market needs as reflected in the information provided by displays (Crosslands, 2006).

According to Crosslands, (2006:89),

“The outline of the career centres exemplifies a few applicable psychological theories. It is basically a self-improvement-led process. Its improvement gave an open door for the creative use of existing characteristic and trait, life-span, constructivist, Social-learning, decision-making, and socio-economic approaches within the South African context. The life-span and decision-making methodologies provided the theoretical background to the critical thinking investigation processes utilized as a career centre, while the trait and factor theories gave strategies for self-knowledge acquisition and career information classification. Social learning theory provided insight of the significant part the members of staff would need to play learning procedures, while the constructivist speculations prompted an understanding that clients of the centre would have the capacity to develop their insight into careers from their experiences with the centre showcases and their own particular lived encounters”.

5.2.7 Student based Initiatives in Career Guidance

Although access to career guidance providers is important, as part of career guidance, respondents indicate that learners should play a leading role in their careers for it to be more effective. This can only happen when learners are motivated enough in their careers. Respondents are of the view that, when a learner lacks interest in his/her studies, it is difficult for that learner to seek career guidance from professionals, and trained educators. It has been noted that students who perform better in class are more motivated to shape their future. They are thus more motivated to seek help from career guidance providers to make choices that are rewarding. It is therefore important to ensure that such students receive the necessary support to improve their decision making.

In as much as students need to take active participation, there are studies that have augmented literature's support for the need to get students motivated to seek and participate in career guidance. Many learners are recognised as un-informed and lacking the initiative to seek information, thus indicating the reasons behind their lack of initiative (Makura et al., 2011). In a study conducted by Makura et al. (2011), it was established that the learners or participants were 'scared', 'nervous', and 'lost and confused' prior to the implementation of a career guidance initiative. Most learners are unaware of such initiatives during their high school days. It is this lack of vital knowledge that manifests itself when learners present themselves in higher education. It is now well-accepted and recognised that poor academic preparation Makura et al., (2011); van Schalkwyk, (2007); Wight and Maree, (2007) and lack of career guidance Bernes et al. (2007); Wight and Maree (2007); van Schalkwyk, (2007); Sweet,

(2004); Stern (2003) in high school pose a major problem for post-secondary institutions. It can thus be asserted that career development programmes should be initiated, and curriculum reforms be instigated to support learner-based inquiry learning (Bernes et al., 2007). Such initiatives will go a long way into ensuring that learners are aware of options and available opportunities for them (Stern, 2003).

The findings of this study are consistent with the aforementioned argument. Most of the learners in the study, from poor and disadvantaged communities of Eastern Cape of South Africa feel lost, confused, and lack confidence in making career choices due to the poor provision or lack of career guidance and development programmes in their respective schools. However, many of the participants feel more confident and proud after undergoing the training on career guidance and development.

Participants in this study also express positive feelings when they were asked about what they thought and felt after completed the training programme. Some indicate that they would like to go and study at the university when they finished matric. Research actually shows that most learners who have received career guidance in high school aim to enter higher education (Euvrard, 1996). This means that career guidance has a positive effect on one's desire to enter higher education, and this has implications for the Department of Education in terms of its support of career guidance and development activities in high schools. As such, tertiary institutions should mount more periodic and scheduled career development, student-based, outreach programmes to inform prospective students. This empowers learners to take responsibility for career decision-making, and participation in the process of assessment.

5.2.8 Promoting counselling effectiveness and feedback

Educators also emphasise the effectiveness of counselling and believe that this can be achieved if it is done by trained professionals who have special skills in counselling; these would include counselling psychologists, educational psychologists, industrial psychologists, and social workers. Counselling that bases its conclusions on guess work does not guarantee its effectiveness. Another important issue for counselling to be more effective is feedback. Respondents believe that a professional and a learner should always keep in touch, and any counsellor should provide feedback to learners on any information that is necessary for them to make better decisions and choose better careers. Information that learners receive as feedback will enable them to buy into the process and appreciate the benefits of counselling. Merely engaging learners, without giving them feedback about their performance, behavioural make up, and what they need to change, and improve, will not improve counselling effectiveness.

It is of paramount importance, therefore, that counsellors are trained in the use of career assessment models, to ensure that they give accurate feedback to clients. As such, career guidance counsellors in disadvantaged communities, should be encouraged and deployed to familiarise themselves with evidence-based career indecision assessments that provide pertinent information about three facets of individuals' career decision making:

“(a) the Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ; Gati, Krausz, and Osipow (1996), which helps locate the foci of clients' difficulties in making career decisions; (b) the Emotional and Personality-Related Career Decision-Making Difficulties questionnaire EPCD; Saka

and Gati, (2007); Saka, Gati, and Kelly, (2008), which helps locate the sources of clients' indecisiveness; and (c) the Career Decision-Making Profile questionnaire (CDMP; Gati, Landman, Davidovitch, Asulin-Peretz, and Gadassi, (2010), which helps pinpoint the way each client tends to make career decisions.”

Results from these assessments will help provide enough feedback and effectiveness, such that the effects of career guidance are clearly observable.

For instance, the career decision-making profile questionnaire helps identify the way the client typically makes career decisions using the profile created from the assessment (Gati et al., 2010). For example, there are people who rely on others and the support structures around them, and make decisions to make impressions for them, and seek approval and acceptance., There is an external locus of control personality predisposition or, on the other hand, there are people who may be comfortably taking their own independent initiative in career decision making, with an internal locus of control personality predisposition, as well as an active engagement in collecting information (Gati & Lerven, 2010). Consequently, in order to provide sufficient and effective feedback, it is important that career guidance counsellors ensure to become familiar with their clients' typical decision-making behavior, so they can tailor the counselling process to the unique way each of their clients makes career decisions. This has been substantiated by empirical literature, that asserts that individuals with different approaches to career decision making tend to respond best to counselling that is tailored to their particular style (Amit & Gati, 2013; Amit & Sagiv, 2013; Mau, 1995; Tinsley, Tinsley, & Rushing, 2002; Zakay & Tsal, 1993).

5.3 Concluding remarks

This chapter discussed the results of the study. The discussion centred on a career assessment and counselling programme for disadvantaged schools. Central themes emerged from the analysis which indicated the status quo of career assessment and counselling, and provided direction of measures that are essential for the programme.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTION FOR FUTURE STUDIES

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the results of the study. It will be recalled that the main purpose of the research was to design a career assessment and counselling programme for disadvantaged schools. The specific aim was to guide learners through a process of career exploration in order that they make appropriate career choices and plans. This chapter provides the conclusions of the study, offers recommendations, highlights the limitations of the study and proposes a possible direction for future studies.

6.2 Conclusions

The findings of the research can be summarised as follows:

- Many disadvantaged and poor schools do not have educators who are qualified in career guidance issues. Schools only make use of life orientation programmes that provide students with real life experiences. These programmes ignore career issues that are core to a learner's career development.
- Disadvantaged schools do not have adequate resources, such as money, to pay for qualified professionals to help learners in making optimised and better career decisions. Furthermore, government is not

supportive enough of these disadvantaged schools. Government should be seen to provide the necessary resources to enable disadvantaged learners to benefit from different qualified career guidance providers.

- Learners are ignorant on the matter of career guidance issues. Many students are not aware of the benefits of counselling and believe that it is a waste of time to attend career exhibitions, workshops and conferences. This is worsened by the lack of support they receive from educators who do not have adequate skills in career guidance issues.
- Schools use different approaches to help disadvantaged learners to get a better understanding, and to benefit from career guidance. Such approaches include the attendance of career workshops, career expos, and conferences, distributing newsletters to learners, facilitating group discussions, and visiting tertiary institutions. Such approaches are valuable in providing students with important information regarding career guidance.
- Educators in disadvantaged schools do not have significant and/or necessary knowledge and skills in career guidance. This has had disastrous consequences for learners who choose degree programmes that do not match their abilities. Educators need to gain guidance skills that will familiarise them with different service providers, information on programmes offered in tertiary institutions, and the meaning of behaviours exhibited by learners. This will enable them to provide up to date information and help learners choose better careers.
- Disadvantaged schools should be provided with the services of psychologists who are qualified enough to aid learners in career

guidance. Each school should have a psychologist who will deal with career issues, and other related information, to equip learners with necessary information on career guidance. Psychologists also make use of psychological tests that match a learner's ability to choose a tertiary programme. Furthermore, psychologists provide a scientific view of a learner's psychological characteristics and respect the confidential nature of any information provided or received.

- Schools, government and parents are regarded as the main stakeholders in schools, in terms of guidance and counselling. Therefore, they should play a combined, pivotal role in helping learners do their best, through the adequate provision of career guidance.
- Career counselling is regarded as an important tool in career guidance. It gives students a clear view and understanding of themselves and what is good for their future. Career counselling also provides learners with career information that will improve their management skills, raise their awareness of the different opportunities available to them, and increase their self-knowledge. It allows individuals to develop and have a better understanding of what is right for them in terms of their future potential. It reduces the chances of learners choosing a programme on a whim or based on what their friends have chosen.
- Many disadvantaged schools do not have the equipment required for career guidance. Equipment such as computers, projectors, printers, photocopiers, flash drives are either not available, or are in short supply. This has worsened the plight of learners as many learners,

predominantly from poor backgrounds, only get to know how to use such equipment when they are at university or college.

- Community based services have been identified as important, especially in poor countries which are characterised by high unemployment. Among the community-based services identified are local training initiatives, community training centres, job clubs and wider horizons. These services provide early school leavers, who are unemployed, with activities to occupy themselves, and that are necessary for skills development and financial benefits.
- Students who perform better in class are more motivated to seek career guidance than those who perform badly. Such students should be identified and provided with the necessary guidance and counselling to give a better match between their abilities and different degree programmes. Thus, feedback is an essential aspect of career assessment and guidance.
- Psychometric assessment is regarded as important in career guidance as it provides a realistic picture of a learner's ability, personality, aptitude, and intellectual capacity. It also provides a good link between a student's true ability, and a study programme at a tertiary institution. It also increases the effectiveness of career counselling by enabling a psychologist to reach a decision concerning a learner's characteristics, through the use of scientific and professional methods.

6.3 Recommendations

- Schools should actively seek financial support from charitable organisations, private companies and donors, to train educators in career guidance, and to acquire the services of professional guidance providers, such as social workers and psychologists.
- Government should extend its assistance to disadvantaged schools with much needed help, such as financial and economic assistance, to enable learners to receive quality career guidance that will help them in their career progression and development.
- Different schools ought to work together to promote career counselling and guidance. Schools should organise conferences and workshops in which learners from different schools meet at one place and learn more about their careers, and how best to progress therein. There should be concerted efforts to provide training, to have improved counsellor counselling and assessment (McCarthy, 2004; Plant, 2004). In the proceedings from an international career development symposium, it was established that there is a need for improved career guidance and counselling practice. Emphasis must, therefore, be on the need for improved counsellor training and human resources, hence improved career service delivery practices that are culture-specific, and improved career resources (Hartung, 2005).
- Educators should be sent by schools, with the help of government, for training to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge in career guidance. Educators should act as role models for learners. Training will increase their status as role models for students. Educators and career

guidance counsellors should be well trained and appraised with the latest technological advancement that can be utilised in career assessment and counselling programmes. Literature augments this assertion, by asserting that a significant number of career counsellors have incorporated the use of one or more computer-assisted career guidance systems (CACGS), or an internet version of such systems, into the face-to-face career counselling process, and use such systems as an integral part of their interaction with their clients (Gati & Asher,2001). It is thus imperative that educators, as career guidance counsellors and assessors, should be equipped and trained in using state of the art of equipment, and assessment models. CACGSs can indeed be extremely helpful during pre-screening and can aid in locating promising alternatives out of the large number included in the database of CACGSs. CACGSs can also be used for the in-depth exploration of these promising alternatives (Gati & Asher, 2001). However, care must be taken to ensure that personalised face-to-face counselling is not completely overhauled and ignored, as it is may be needed for providing refined judgments and sensitive evaluations, restructuring the decision, and reframing the compromises involved to reduce their unfavourable consequences (Gati, Homier, & Aviram, 1998; Gati, Houminer, & Fassa,1997; Gati & Asher, 2001). Furthermore, it is also of importance to measure the effectiveness of such programmes. One measure that was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of career counselling, is the Career Counselling Needs Survey (CCNS; Bardick et al., 2004) which contained questions evaluating the effectiveness and helpfulness of

career services for junior and senior high school students. In other words, educators, career guidance counsellors and assessors, should be skilled to qualitatively interpret quantitative assessment, that is, acquire the necessary skills to contextualise assessment scores within a developing world context. Additionally, Watson and McMahon (2013:484) “have called for the equipping of career development practitioners to be skilled in the use of alternative qualitative career assessment, predominantly in group contexts, so that career development practitioners can accommodate the less tangible and, therefore, less measurable variables that may influence individual career development” (Watson & 2013:484).

- Schools, parents and government should form an alliance through active collaboration in order to help students improve their career decision making. These role players should meet regularly to decide the strategies and methods that are most effective in career guidance. Furthermore, schools should also collaborate with different professionals such as social workers and psychologists so as to receive up to date career information and strategies that are helpful in career guidance.
- Parents ought to provide support for their children’s career aspirations through nurturing of their children’s career interests by intentionally providing opportunities for their children to learn more about them (Liu, McMahon, & Watson, 2014). Thus parents should not verbally communicate career aspirations but should actively engage them, by emphasising the importance of education in future career attainment, as education is an important ladder in social mobility, and conveying their

expectations for their children to adopt high-income careers (Dandy & Nettlebeck, 2002; Archer et al., 2014). By exerting such influence on children's development of career aspirations, it also fosters career-related intrapersonal characteristics (e.g., interest and skills) and values, and beliefs (e.g., education and income) (Liu et al., 2014).

- Community members should form committees that should be responsible for creating community based services for early school leavers. Such a committee should be responsible for overseeing the smooth functioning of such services, and ensuring that unemployed youth get the necessary skills to prepare them for employment. Communities ought to initiate community based programmes, such as career education classes in established community centres, as career intervention modules. The findings of this study are consistent with previous literature, which augment the results of this study, by emphasising the importance of career interventions at community level. It has been established that career intervention programmes successfully improve career maturity, career self-efficacy concept, motivation, self-efficacy, and career planning ability among programme participants (e.g., Hirschi & La"ge, 2007; Miles, 2008; Syed-Mohamad, 2005). Such programmes can thus be implemented within secondary schools, but can also be initiated within communities, in the form of workshops, so as to advance career development opportunities. This further reiterates that one's career maturity, and career planning ability, can be improved if individuals begin to focus more on their career development (Amla et al., 2013; Hirschi & La"ge, 2008). Furthermore, it

reiterates that individuals can be trained in a career in a stimulating environment through which their career maturity, abilities, skills, talents, and interests develop (Ballout, 2009; Hirschi & La"ge, 2008; Tarigan, 2011). Such programmes can be implemented in the South African context, as they have proven to be successful in other different countries, hence evaluation and trial programmes ought to be initiated within disadvantaged schools. In the event that they are well adopted, especially within disadvantaged schools, positive experiences will help adolescents prepare for their future (Super, 1957; Talib et al., 2015).

In view of expanded associations with some country groups, it can be deduced that practically identical groups can be as open to change, or selection of another method, bringing about a unified force in the organisation, with vocation experts as our accomplice groups. Frameworks may not be as fruitful as they are proposed to be, however, if opportunities to get groups on board are missed. Group structures, NGOs, school groups and youth associations can be requested to urge youngsters to discuss their lives, ways of life, and future desires. This may open entryways for the positive habits in life of self-expression, taking pride in oneself and self-regard. This can be accomplished through the inclusion of scientists who not just see, but additionally share and embrace the social and etymological types of target gatherings (Maree, Ebersohn, & Molepo, 2006).

- Disadvantaged schools should employ psychologists who should become part of the school staff. This will allow learners to consult such a psychologist at any time they feel that they need help on any matter

concerning their careers. The availability of a psychologist allows learners to be tested by different psychological tools which provide a realistic and true picture of a student's psychological characteristics.

- Most importantly, it is essential that a systematic approach to the career guidance and decision-making process, in which the deliberating client plays not only an active role but a leading one, is followed. In this instance, students ought to take an active and participative role in their own educational and vocational career guidance initiatives. For instance, it is essential that educators and career guidance counsellors ensure that they adopt already established models to help student make sound and reasonable career decisions. One such initiative is the adoption,

“of the three stage PIC-model, which comprises of the Pre-screening of the universe of potentially relevant career alternatives, based on the individual's preferences, to locate a small and thus manageable set of promising alternatives that deserve further exploration, secondly, an In-depth exploration of the promising alternatives (including an examination of the possibility of actualizing them), to locate a few suitable alternatives, and finally the ‘Choice’ of the most suitable alternative, based on a comparison between the suitable alternatives” (Gati & Asher, 2001:142).

Each stage has its unique features, but all three stages have the similar underlying structure of a dynamic counsellor-client dialogue with three elements. Discrepancies between the counsellor's perceptions and the client's responses, if any, should be discussed during the feedback phase of each stage (Gati & Asher, 2001). It is advisable to provide the

client/students with feedback on the PIC-model for the career decision-making process. This ensures deep involvement in career guidance and assessment. This is done because guidance users feel that it is important that they are involved and consulted, and they are interested in having their voices heard concerning different aspects of guidance services (Haug & Plant, 2015). This is of great importance before the beginning the decision-making process, thus assessing the clients/student's readiness, and ensuring the students' compatibility with present alternative preferences to assist in making career decisions, with the exploration of their cognitive and personality traits, as well as material resources. The flexibility of the proposed practice permits counsellors not to simply adopt the model, but also to acclimatise it to the specific counsellor-client/student situations that they come across (Gati & Asher, 2001).

- It is recommended that future studies use longitudinal research methods to measure career aspirations and choices, as it has been established that they change over time. Children's career aspirations and expectations were found to change over time (become more "realistic"), and parental influence over children's career aspirations was found to decrease over time. This will pave the way for evidence-based interventions, which are tailor made for a particular set of students (Helwig, 2004). However, a balanced approach to career guidance and counselling research, which will require a diverse methodology, will be beneficial. Furthermore, measurement instruments, specific to

measuring outcome variables in career guidance and counselling, need to be developed (Bernes, Bardick & Orr, 2007).

- Further research, using post-modern narrative approach in a group setting, is recommended, as it provides a chance for learners to address self-concept issues, and to identify internal and external barriers experienced in disadvantaged community settings. Career guidance counsellors should be trained in narrative career counselling and assessments. Furthermore, they need to be cognisant of issues relating to narrative assessment, and deal with them in order to assist clients in overcoming personal issues and career barriers towards effective occupational decision-making. “Narrative career assessment has not been used in a group setting before and the research revealed certain advantages and disadvantages to this approach, particularly in terms of its use in disadvantaged communities” (Bischof, 2007:72).
- Counsellors and assessors need to be superlatively aware of the implications of working in a diverse context, and play a more active role in engaging with learners to assist them in understanding their narratives, life career journeys and to help them make sense of their experiences (Bischof, 2007).

6.4 Limitations of the study

- In executing the study, only one type of instrument, the questionnaire, was used. Although the instrument was valid and reliable, more insights might have been obtained from using more than one data instrument. In future, more instruments such as interviews and observations could be added to a study of this nature.

- Personality differences amongst the participants could have contributed to the findings. For example, based on their personalities, some of the educators could have attributed external or internal factors to their positive or negative perceptions of career guidance. Future research could therefore assess participants' locus of control.
- Not all races participated in the study. The study included many blacks, few Indians, one coloured and no whites. Whites did not participate, and neither did they offer their view on career counselling and guidance. Future studies could also include whites, and a proportionate balance in race representation.
- The study was only carried out in the Eastern Cape Province. As a result, the results in the present study are not easily generalisable to the whole South Africa population. This is because there are some differences between the province used in the study, and others. In future, data could be obtained from other provinces in order to ascertain whether any differences might exist that are unique to a particular province.
- The study used a qualitative research design for obtaining information from participants, and no pilot study was conducted to identify potential practical problems in following the research procedure, to determine the adequacy of research instruments, identifying research logistical problems, and research protocol. However, the research design enables participants to give detailed information concerning their feelings. It can only be used on a small sample as it is expensive and time consuming to target a big sample. Therefore, the results of the study are not generalisable.

- The study was conducted in a narrative qualitative approach, however it ought to be used in conjunction with other psychometric related instruments, to further validate the results.

6.5 Concluding remarks

This chapter highlighted the conclusions and recommendations of the study. Finally, the chapter concluded by outlining the limitations of the study. It can be asserted that it is crucial to focus on guidance as a remedy to a number of societal challenges (e.g., unemployment, school dropout, inclusion of marginalised groups, gender, inequalities, etc.) (Haug & Plant, 2015), and new thinking and further development of career guidance. It is of great importance that there is a concerted effort by all stakeholders in linking policy, practice, research, and theory. Without sufficient collaboration, there is weakness amongst stakeholder relations in career assessment and career guidance, and this thus weakens the evidence-based policy making in the guidance field (Hughes & Gration, 2009). It is also important that career guidance and assessment, take place within the cultural contexts that accommodate the participants or the subject studies. In this case, career assessment, and career guidance counselling, should be tailor made for previously disadvantaged schools. Hartung (2005), highlighted the need for career guidance, and counselling research to take place within a cultural context. Theoretical concepts and models of career services are useful only if they relate meaningfully to the culture in which they are delivered. Career theories, assessment methods, and interventions will have relevance and validity if they are designed and conducted in relation to the local culture (Hartung, 2005). This

underscores the need for outcome research examining career guidance and counselling interventions with diverse populations. Furthermore, there is a need for newly designed instruments that will address career assessment and career counselling by measuring various career-related factors (Guindon & Richmond, 2005). Thus, there is a need for the development of technically adequate instruments designed to measure the effectiveness of career counselling interventions (Plant, 2004; Bernes, Bardick & Orr, 2007).

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

TOPIC

**“A CAREER ASSESSMENT AND COUNSELLING PROGRAMME FOR
DISADVANTAGED HIGH SCHOOLS IN EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE”**

Biographical Information

My name is Nokhanyo Rungqu, student number: 2001001515 and I am currently registered at the University of Zululand for Doctor of Philosophy-PhD (Community Psychology) (2011). As part of the requirements for the completion of my studies, I am conducting a study on **“A Career Assessment and Counselling Programme for Disadvantaged High Schools in Eastern Cape Province.**

Executive Summary

In South Africa, the Eastern Cape Department of Education has shown poor performance and results. The reality is that the majority of people of the present generation, who are being trained in Eastern Cape Province for careers, may not get the opportunity to be gainfully employed. The increase in school population provides an unprecedented opportunity for the school counselling profession to make an even more positive impact on society. School performance is important in order to assist learners with realistic expectations. Decision making skills are very important and should have been taught since childhood. Many learners are, however, often uncertain about their careers. This uncertainty can have different causes that can be linked to career indecision.

This study is a career assessment and counselling programme for disadvantaged high schools in Eastern Cape Province. Furthermore, it seeks to empower disadvantaged students through participation in the process and to nurture learning through tolerance of mistakes and differences in ideas.

Contact Details

Name: Nokhanyo Rungqu

E-mail: nokhanyor@yahoo.com

Cell Number: +27 743134637

NB: All information collected will be treated in confidence and will only be used for the purposes of this study.

Section A: Demographic Information

Instructions: Tick the correct answer by making an **X** in the box of your choice

1. Gender

Male		Female	
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2. Race

Bl ac k	W hit e	Colo ured	In dia n	Other (Specify).....
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3. Age

Below 25 yrs	25- 35yrs	36- 45yrs	46- 50yrs	Above 51 yrs
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4. What is your nationality

South African	Zimbabwean	Nigerian	other
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5. What is your mother language

Xhosa		Zulu		English		other	
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6. Marital status

Married		Single		Divorced		Other	
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Section B:

This section is concerned with gathering information on career counselling. In completing each statement in this section, carefully read the statement and write down in your own words your response to the questions. Please answer all the statements below in full.

7. What problems does your school have in supporting learners when they have to make career and subject choice decision?

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8. What approaches does your school have to support learners who are making career and subject choice decisions?

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9. What knowledge, skills and experience does your school have in the career guidance field?

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11. What is the Eastern Cape Department of Education doing in terms of supporting schools and learners in career guidance?

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12. According to different authors the service of a psychologist is needed in order to help student in making right career choices. What specific duties and areas do you think the psychologist can be of importance?

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16. What form of training and help do you as educators need in order to help improve the career development of your students?

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17. What resources do you think those involved in career guidance in schools need to have to ensure an effective career guidance?

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19. What training competencies do career guidance workers and counsellors need to have in order to work with students?

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20. How should schools collaborate with out of school personnel such as social workers, youth workers and community workers in career guidance programmes?

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21. Do you think community based services for early school-leavers make adequate provision for career guidance as part of a wide range of individualised assistance?

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24. What should be done to ensure counselling effectiveness in schools?

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25. What should government do in order to improve the disadvantaged schools in aiding student to make correct decisions concerning their career development?

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Thank you for your participation in this research.

Appendix B

Sample data analysis sheet

Data Analysis example of final codes

Themes emerging from the study

Key Words	Code	Themes	%
Challenges	PC	Problems and challenges	20
Approaches	CA	Contemporary Approaches	10
Partnerships	GPS	Gvt, parents, Scholarships	10
Consultation	Con	Consultation, SME, Psych. Instruments	15
Roles	RCC	Roles	5
Community	CBS	Community Based Services	10
Student	SBI	Student Based Initiatives	5
Effectiveness & Feedback	Pro.Con	Promoting Counselling,	25

		Effectiveness & Feedback	
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Appendix C

Themes	Key Points
<p>Problems and Challenges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We do not have qualified persons to do guide students • a lack of financial resources and support from government • schools there is no budget for career guidance • low income families • Ignorance and lack of interest in career counselling and guidance issues by learners.
<p>Contemporary Issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners attend career workshops and career expos. • Newsletters - newsletters with information on the importance and benefits of career guidance. • Attending conferences. • Group discussions. • Visiting tertiary institutions.

<p>Government, Parents, Schools Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need a psychologist to be employed at our schools. • Other top schools pay psychologists • Government should do something about the plight of disadvantaged schools • There's need for collaborations of all stakeholders in career guidance. • Active involvement of parents. • Without the cooperation of government, parents and schools children will never realise their full potential
<p>Consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators are of the view that more expert-based support is needed in disadvantaged schools to enable learners to make better career decisions. • Psychologists have a base knowledge about career issues and their inputs are important to learners from disadvantaged schools • We need a psychologist to be employed at our schools that way learners may learn to make best decisions about their future.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantaged schools get lost on the program choice to study, because of lack of consultation.
<p>Training & Psychological Instruments and equipment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of tests by psychologists helps learners with realistic view of career outlook based on the learner's skills, their needs and their strength. • However acquiring these tests is expensive. • Students should always meet trained professionals regularly possibly after every 3 months. • Responsible authorities are not stepping up their efforts, their visibility is questionable. • We as educators haven't acquired any skills to enable our students in career issues. • We need to be sent for workshops, training and skills development programmes. • We don't have computers at this school and this makes it difficult to keep student's information related to their career issues.

<p>Role of Career counselling in Career guidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career counselling is important in career guidance because it gives learners a general idea about what they might be good at. • Provides clear direction • Helps in building capabilities and builds confidence in learners. • Highly motivational • Equips students to maintain balance between school life and family/home life
<p>Community Based Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to establish Community Based Services (CBS) for early school leavers. • Problem with learners who left school either before or after completing grade 12. • Can offer them an opportunity to benefit from training and engage in useful work within their communities. • No community initiatives to help school leavers.
<p>Student Based initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners should always know that their lives belongs to no one else except themselves.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners should work hard in class and achieve better results. • Students should express interest and motivation in career prospects, as most lack interest. • Easier to guide an interested student • A learner who works hard knows that he/she is in a better position to advance to the tertiary level which will lead to him/her getting a better well-paying job”.
<p>Promoting counselling effectiveness and feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling can be effective if conducted by trained professionals such as social workers and psychologists. • Will provide a lasting positive impact to learners. • To facilitate effectiveness and feedback, counsellor and the learner should constantly keep in touch, should anything not go according to the procedure or plan that has been set down.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enables one to evaluate whether the ideas given to learners are actually improving career decision making.• Those providing career counselling should ensure that their methods are effective, by fusing old and new effective counselling methods
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