EDUCATORS’ VIEWS ON THE CHALLENGES FACING THE TEACHING OF LIFE SKILLS
IN UMKHANYAKUDE PRIMARY SCHOOLS

by

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A mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education
in the field of
Research Methodology

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2016
DECLARATION

I, Mlambo Winile (Student Number 201330434), declare that this mini-dissertation, which is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Education to the University of Zululand, is my own work in design and execution, and has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at any university, and that all sources used are indicated and acknowledged by means of a complete reference.

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Mlambo Winile

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My sincere gratitude goes to the Lord Almighty for making this study/endeavour possible. Without Him I wouldn’t be where I am today.

I would like to express my profound gratitude to the following indispensable companions on my academic journey:

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My statistician and critique of statistical presentation Admire Chibisa.

David Tlaba, Gugu Mkhasibe and Lindiwe Mthethwa. They were there for me all the way; without them I wouldn’t have succeeded.
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my lovely husband, Thulani Mlambo, my beloved mother, Sizani and my late father, Mcetshwa Majozi and my late son Cabangani. This work is finally dedicated to my sister Nelisiwe Zulu and my brothers Musa and Thanda Majozi.
ABSTRACT

This study was designed to explore educators’ views on the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills in Umkhanyakude primary schools. The study was motivated, among other things, by the paucity of literature regarding educators’ views on the challenges facing Life skills in rural area primary schools. Life skills is a mandatory subject for all learners at Junior and Intermediate phases. It deals with the holistic development of the learner throughout childhood and equips them with knowledge, skills and values that will assist them to achieve their full physical, intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills (DoE 2012). To guide the study three research hypotheses were formulated and statistically tested at a/the 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a quantitative research approach using descriptive survey design.

The sample for the study comprise of 202 educators in Umkhanyakude Districts primary schools. This/the sample was obtained using the random sampling. Data was obtained from the sample using a questionnaire. The questionnaire is a 24 item, which was designed in a Likert like 5 scale. The validity of the questionnaire was obtained through a sample pilot test of 60 educators and the reliability coefficient of 0.753 was obtained using the Crobach’s Alpha. The data obtained from the sample was analysed using the Chi Square with SPSS.

The study’s findings revealed agreement amongst educators that there are challenges facing the Life skills teaching. In addition, the study revealed that an overwhelming majority of educators (99%) confidently agree that Life skills can be used as an intervention to counteract the challenges faced in the Life skills class. Additionally, the study revealed that biographical information like gender and post level have no significant influence on the educators’ ability to indicate different challenges experienced in Life skills class, while, on the other hand, age, phase, experience and qualifications was found to have a significant impact on the educators’ ability to indicate different challenges experienced in Life skills class. Likewise, the study revealed that there is no evidence that educators’ view on the challenges facing Life skills teaching depend on the post level and gender. The respondents’ opinions were independent of gender, meaning that males and female homogenously agree that there are challenges when teaching Life skills.

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that all educators teaching Life skills must be professionally qualified as the study revealed qualification influence the teachers’ ability.
More important is that educators with more years of teaching experience may be the ones teaching the subject as per the study results. It is also recommended that efforts should be made by stakeholders, especially the Department of Education, to motivate educators teaching Life skills considering the importance of Life skills education in equipping learners with essential skills to cope with the various challenges learners are facing. Efforts should be made to ensure the continuity of Life skills education as an intervention in schools. Finally, it is recommended that there should be networking and collaboration between educators; especially for those qualified and those unqualified to teach Life skills education, as the findings indicated as such.

**Keywords:** challenges, educators, intervention, life skills, primary schools, rural.
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CHAPTER ONE

MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The child rearing process has never been easy and/or constant. Children spend most of their time at school, therefore, schools have the responsibility to help children realise their full potential. Life Skills (LS) is the subject that deals with the holistic development of the learner through childhood, and equips them with knowledge and social skills (The National Curriculum Statement, 2012). The subject is too dimensional / manifold with three components. The three components are: Physical education, Personal and Social well-being and Creative arts. The multi-dimensional nature of the subject begs to question whether a possibility exists to find an (LS) educator that will be able to handle the entire subject component effectively and successfully. Life Skills is aimed at inculcating social ethics and instilling norms and values that can equip individuals with skills to become independent and self-reliable citizens (NCS, 2012).

Life Skills Education is a programme dealing with topics that affect both learners and educators. While some of the topics may be difficult to teach because of the issues addressed sensitive nature, it is important that suitable educators are prepared to do so, and equipped to deal with any issues affecting learners (Department of Education, 2007). Handling and addressing topics such as abuse, developing and maintaining self-esteem, decision-making, assertiveness, peer pressure, bullying and HIV/AIDS, support the sensitive nature idea of the subject. There are, however, those who have left schooling at a young age because of HIV/AIDS’s scourge that has ravaged our country (Mzindle, 2011). Some of the learners and educators experienced or was directly or indirectly affected by the inappropriate life traits mentioned above, and this makes it so difficult for educators to deal with such topics. The question to ask is whether the educators handling this subject are suitably prepared and equipped.
1.2 GAP ANALYSIS

Schools are societal institutions where knowledge sharing takes place with the aim of empowering learners with different skills that may help/assist them in realising their potential and to develop as responsible citizens. Current research indicates that although every effort is being made to educate everyone on the prevention of health-risk behaviours, behavioural change is not taking place effectively/quick/fast enough to combat health-risk behaviour (Pharaoh, Frans & Smith, 2011: 3).

The first Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (2002) undertaken by Health Promotion Research and Development Unit of the Medical Research Council, South Africa, reported on the key behaviour prevalence that place school-going learners at risk. The findings indicated that health-risk behaviours are increasing under South African youth as evidence by increased estimates in the lifetime and current engagement. Concerning sexual behaviour, the survey reported that under males the prevalence of practising and initiating sex before the age of 14, having two or more partners and using alcohol or drugs before sexual intercourse were significantly higher than for females. From this literature, it is clear that children’s lives can be in danger before one realises. This calls for early intervention when guiding and equipping learners with all the necessary skills needed if they encounter challenges along their life journey.

The Second South African National Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (2008) reported some positive developments and decreasing health threats. Significant reduction in sexual risk behaviour was reported under positive developments. Decreasing health threats includes reduction in threats to mental health and unsafe traffic behaviour. Increases in physical inactivity include watching TV for more than 3 hours per day. Physical Education, media influences, decision-making and road awareness are some of the topics covered under Life skills programme. This literature highlights the impact of these factors on children and the health threats it might cause. This could inform Life skills educators regarding the importance of dealing with these topics in a meaningful and effective manner.

Theron (2007) explored how township youth in Grade 9 rate the importance of Life skills taught as part of Life-orientation and how they believe Life-Orientation strengthens/equips them. The findings indicated that Life-Orientation educators need to be reminded of the context importance to the relevance of Life-Orientation skills. The Life skills educators should continuously be
encouraged to include context wherein a school finds itself and allowed to shape priorities and
down played in the Life-Orientation classroom. In order to encourage optimal functioning among
young people, Life skills Curricula need to be shaped/developed by the youth’s socially complex
and diverse needs according to the contexts they find themselves in (Theron, 2007). From this
literature it can be deduced that learners experience different challenges according to the social
context they find themselves in.

A recent study by Pharaoh, Frantz, and Smith (2011) attempted to assess Life Skills as the
predictors of engagement in health-risk behaviours. The survey was done among 1 027 grade
8-10 learners, aged 13-18 years and profile engagement in smoking, drug use, drinking and
sexual activity. The study discovered the alarming degree of learner engagement in health-risk
behaviours whilst the result support the combination of the eight Life Skills domains measured
by Life skills Effectiveness Questionnaire as significant predictors of engagement in smoking,
drinking, drug use, sexual activity and physical activity.

A study by Jacobs (2011) attempted to find/obtain the learners’ perspectives regarding Life
Orientation. Focus interviews were conducted with high school learners and the results showed
that many learners regard Life-Orientation as unnecessary, boring and irrelevant. Comparing
the study by Pharaoh, Frantz & Smith with Jacobs, it is clear that the importance of Life-
Orientation is not supported by all the learners. The first study indicated that Life skills is
important in reducing or preventing health risk behaviours whilst Jacobs report indicated
learners regard Life-Orientation as unnecessary and boring.

Toriola, Lateef, Amusa, Patriksson & Kougioumtzis (2010) undertook a project to investigate
discrepancies between intended subscription and actual provision for Physical
Education,(PE)/Life Orientation in Swedish and South African Education Provision and
children’s attitudes towards the subject in primary and lower secondary schools. Toriola,et.al
(2010) employed the 23-item questionnaire. The study revealed the similarity of their PE/Life-
Orientation curricula between South Africa and Sweden in terms of their focus on lifestyle
choices and their health effects.

Physical activity is widely recognised as a mode to improve or increase an individuals’ health
(Naidoo & Coopoo, 2012). Naidoo and Coopoo (2012) examined the impact of a primary school
physical activity intervention in KwaZulu-Natal. The investigators wanted to evaluate the impact
of physical activity intervention incorporated within classroom-based lessons, during lunch-breaks and after school. They concluded that a school based physical activity intervention can promote positive short-term effects on learners’ physical activity participation, as well as increase physical activity participation during formal instruction and lunch breaks.

The two studies by Toriola, Lateef, Amusa, Patriksson & Kougiousmtzis (2010), and Naidoo, and Coopoo (2012) recommend the importance of Physical Education as one component of the Life skills programme. This implies the importance for schools to have proper physical education facilities. Physical activities as pre-requisite for all classes, creates a problem for educators as all educators are not familiar or have interest and training in these activities. Schools are an established setting for health promotion activity, and this setting may influence health related beliefs and behaviours early in life before they are established as adults patterns Tones (Naidoo & Coopoo, 2012). Most of the schools do not have qualified Physical Education teachers with the necessary qualifications to teach Life-Orientation in general and more specifically for the learner’s growth and development (Deventer, 2009).

Pillay (2012) conducted a research to identify and describe skills, characteristics and support networks needed by Keystone Life-Orientation teachers in six Gauteng schools. The results of the research indicate that Keystone Life-Orientation teachers must be skilled counsellors, career guides and diverse role players. The argument exists whether it is possible to have skilled counsellors teach all primary school classes since specialisation does not apply in primary schools. From the above discussions it is clear that an ideal expected behaviour from children exist where educators or Life skills educators could be/are expected to model or channel the children towards such behaviour.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The importance of teaching Life skills in schools in South Africa cannot be over emphasised neither can the role of educators teaching Life skills be underestimated. It is thus necessary to establish, identify and determine the various challenges educators face when teaching Life skills. However, despite the importance of Life skills education not much research have been conducted to explore the educators’ view on the challenges faced when teaching Life skills at
primary schools in rural areas of South Africa. There is a paucity of literature in this regard. Most studies done on Life skills such those of Van Deventer (2008), Prinsloo (2007), Theron (2008) and Pharaoh, Frantz, & Smith (2011) were conducted at the Secondary and Further Education and Training Band where learners' attitude were examined towards the Life Orientation subject or its' components. There is therefore a need for a study which would identify the challenges faced when teaching Life skills in rural primary schools.

The researcher was motivated to conduct the study at the primary school level, taking into account the developmental stage of the learners in these phases. Pharaoh, Frantz and Smith (2011) reported that a package of interventions with teachers, parents and children provided throughout elementary grades could have an enduring effect on reducing violent behaviour, heavy drinking and sexual intercourse by age 18 years among ethnic urban children. Primary school learners look towards adults who could be either their parents and/or teachers. The effectiveness of the subject in this phase solely lies with the teachers. The findings of this study could assist in proffering solution to these problems. The researcher is of the opinion that providing solutions to these problems would make for more effective teaching of Life skills education thereby equipping learners with enabling skills to face life challenges and impede policy formulation to address the challenges.

In addition, teaching Life skills in schools does not seem to have the desired effects on the learners. This is evident in learners’ increase aberration such as violence, drug addiction and teenage pregnancy, especially in the rural area schools. The question is therefore what are the factors preventing the teaching of Life skills in primary schools to have the desired effects? Some researchers such as Khau (2013), after working with various schools and with some Life skills educators for a period of two years, observed that (i).some educators don’t really teach Life orientation when they should, they use the period as free periods or to teach other learning subjects ,and (ii) some educators find it difficult to teach Life skills because they don’t have the skills to cope with all the emotional issues that arise when addressing certain/specific concepts and topics as required.

This observation brings to the fore the need to investigate the educators’ views on the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills in rural primary schools. Could it be that not sufficient
time is allocated to the teaching of Life skills in the classroom? Or, that the educators teaching Life skills do not have the necessary qualification, knowledge and skills to teach Life skills effectively? Do the educators have enough resources to teach Life skills in rural primary schools? Exploring the views of educators on the challenges faced when teaching Life skills in rural primary schools would give the educators a voice. This could, in turn, inform the District on measures that could be taken to resolve the challenges of educators teaching Life skills in rural areas and in schools generally.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

This study is designed to investigate the educators’ views on the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills in Umkhanyakude primary schools. It also aims to offer solutions to such challenges with the bid to enhance the learner’s academic performance.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In an attempt to investigate the phenomenon, the researcher set out to achieve the following objectives:

1. To establish the nature of the educators’ views about the teaching challenges when teaching Life skills.

2. To find out whether educators do view Life skills contents as an intervention procedure.

3. To determine the relationship, if any, between the educators’ views and their demographical data:

   - Gender
   - Experience
   - Qualifications
1.6 INTENDED CONTRIBUTION TO THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

This study intends to unravel the challenges educators encounter in teaching Life-skills. The factors for effective teaching of Life skills in schools are considered important for success in implementing strategies for helping learner’s with behaviour aberrations. The contribution of Life skills teaching to learner behaviour aberrations will be a significant contribution in this study, both in terms of Life skills curriculum design and education policy on learner’s behaviour. This will be a contribution to the ailing rural schools that are highly affected by learner’s behaviour aberrations. This study’s findings will be disseminated in the form of a dissertation, conference presentation and publication. The results obtained will be made readily available to the educators and learners through the Department of Education and Curriculum development centres.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the nature of educators’ views about the challenges facing the teaching of LS?
2. To what extent do educators view Life skills as an intervention procedure?
3. Are educators’ views about Life skills influenced by their biographical particulars?
   - Gender
   - Experience
   - Qualifications

1.8 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

1. There will be a relationship between the educators ‘views about the challenges faced when teaching Life skills and mode of Life skills intervention.
2. Educators hold positive views on Life skills’ effects as an intervention agent in challenges faced when teaching Life skills.
3. There will be a relationship between the respondents’ biographical data and their views on the challenges faced when teaching Life skills.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.9.1 Research design

The researcher employed the descriptive design to determine the educators’ views on the challenges faced in teaching Life skills in Umkhanyakude District. Descriptive design is used to study or summarise the current status of events.

1.9.2 Sampling Design

This study employed the simple random sampling technique. In simple random sampling each sampling element in the population has an equal chance of being selected (Neuman, 2006). The sampling frame is composed of Primary Schools in Umkhanyakude District. Three out of the five cluster circuits in the district were purposively sampled for the selection of primary school teachers at Umkhanyakude District. It is estimated that each cluster circuit has an average of 30 schools with an average of 25 teachers in each school. Snowball sampling was used for selection of three schools in each cluster circuit. This was accomplished by assigning numbers on a piece of paper and allocating them to schools. The papers were folded and placed in a container. The contents were then shuffled and the researcher retrieved the paper samples one by one, recording the number of school. This process continued until the researcher obtained the designated number of schools. Purposive sampling was used to select 22 teachers in each school for interviews. 220 teachers were targeted for questionnaire interview schedule and only 202 were returned.

1.9.3 Research instrument

The research instrument (see Annexure 1) is discussed below considering the following:

- Its nature
• Scoring
• Data analysis
• Description of procedures

1.9.3.1. Its nature

Questionnaire consisting of close-ended questions was used as a research instrument. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section (Section A) required the respondents to provide personal information or school information. In Section B, the researcher employed a Likert-type scale where respondents were asked to express their degrees of agreement or disagreement to the given statement on the scale.

1.9.3.2 Scoring

Questions were formulated using the study’s aims. The 5-point Likert scale was used. The responses to the positive items will be scored from 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for unsure, 2 disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. The scoring was reversed for negatively coded items.

1.9.3.3 Data analysis

Quantitative methods for analysing data was used. The Computerised Programme called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to capture and analyse data. Questions will be coded and this will yield the quantitative data. Some questions required the respondent’s biographical information and were analysed with the aim of ascertaining any relationship.

1.9.3.4 Description of procedures

The researcher requested the permission from the Provincial Head of Department by submitting the application in/on time. Upon receiving permission from the Provincial Head of Department of education, the researcher sought the permission from the selected school’s principals. The permission was in the form of a written letter to attain access to the selected schools. The
1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher is aware of ethical considerations in research and publications hence, she complied with them. Initially, ethical codes are established by professional associations, with universities and other research organisations sometimes requiring their members to adhere to these codes (Hammersley & Traianou 2012). There are numerous ethical principles; however, the researcher cited those that are applicable to the present study.

- **Compliance with law and standards:** To adhere to this ethical principle, the researcher conducted research in a manner that is consistent with the law, internationally and nationally acceptable standards governing research with human participants and animal subjects.

- **Institutional written approval:** To comply with this ethical code, the researcher sought proposal approval from the University of Zululand Ethics Committee who awarded an ethical clearance certificate before the study commenced.

- **Research responsibilities:** To adhere to this ethical principle, the researcher entered into an agreement with participants (teachers) that clarified the nature of the research and responsibilities of each party. As consent, each participant signed an agreement form.

- **Informed consent to research:** While informed consent is an important principle that addresses, in particular, the issue of respecting people’s autonomy, it is not a simple concept, nor does it offer any blanket solution to ethical problems (Homan, 2006). To comply with this ethical code, the researcher included an informed consent form which included the research purpose, expected duration of participation time and procedures used in the research. The researcher informed participants that they had the right to
decline participating and withdraw participation at any time. The researcher ensured privacy by means of anonymity, confidentiality and appropriate storing of data.

- **Reporting research results**: To adhere to this ethical principle, the researcher reported data accurately and corrected discovered errors, as it is unethical to fabricate data or falsify results.

- **Plagiarism**: To comply with this ethical code, the researcher read/adhered to university policy and procedures on research ethics and its policy and procedures on managing and preventing acts on plagiarism and appreciates their content. Therefore, the researcher shall properly cite others’ ideas and work when reporting on their research.

- **Duplication of data published**: To adhere to this ethical principle, the researcher would not recycle previously published data.

- **Sharing data**: To comply with this ethical code, the researcher shared data with other researchers to allow result verification.

### 1.11 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Several terminologies are used in operational forms in this study. The terms are stated and explained below:

1.11.1. **Educator**

In this study, this term would mean qualified educators who are teaching Grades 1-6.

1.11.2. **Challenges**

In this study, this term meant the difficulties that might be experienced by educators in the teaching of Life-skills.
1.11.3. Life skills
Life skills is a mandatory subject for all learners at Junior and Intermediate phases. It deals with the holistic development of the learner throughout childhood and equips them with knowledge, skills and values that will assist them to achieve their full physical, intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills (DoE 2012). The present study embraces this definition.

1.11.4. Primary school
A primary school is a school for children from Grades R to Grade 7 (Longman, 2008).

1.12. PROJECT MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND RESOURCES

Time Management
Having developed the research proposal all the processes required to accomplish timely completion of each chapter is known. Scheduling is the process that assisted to determine the overall duration and when activities and events are planned/scheduled to happen/take place.

Costs Management
Before finally selecting the topic, consideration was given to the entailed expenditure problem. No part of the study has prohibitive costs.

Resource management
This research has no special resource implications. Current resources are adequate and apart from the usual research and travel grants, no additional institutional resources allocation is required.

1.13 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND INNOVATION
Other than the usual copyright issues, no special intellectual property rights are expected to emanate from this research.
1.14 KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION

The information garnered from this study would be disseminated in the form of a dissertation, conference presentation and publications.

1.15 THE ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This study will be organised into the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter consists of the introduction, problem statement, aims of the study, the operational definition of terms and organisational plan of the entire study.

Chapter 2: Review of related literature

This chapter focuses on review of related literature. It will discuss the educators' views on the challenges in the teaching of Life Skills.

Chapter 3: Research design

Chapter 3 will discuss the research design, methods of investigation, instrument used to collect data and procedures for administration of a questionnaire.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter consists of the presentation of results, interpretation and analysis of the data.

Chapter 5: Discussion and conclusion

This chapter discusses findings, limitations of the study and concludes with the summary and recommendations.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains reviewed literature on the concept Life skills education, Life skills education in some African countries and studies on implementing challenges of Life skills curriculum in primary schools. Furthermore, it consists of literature on Life skills education review under the following sub-headings: resources, training, teaching methods, time allocated, teachers related problems and school context. Other areas of review include non-examinable status of Life skills education, biographical data and views on Life skills. The chapter ends with a summary of information the chapter contained.

2.2 THE CONCEPT LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

Life Skills according to UNICEF (2012), ‘refer to a large group of psychosocial and interpersonal skills that can help people make informed decisions, communicate effectively and develop coping and self-management skills that may help them lead a healthy and productive life” (p. 1). On the other hand Life skills education is the existence of a three components balance: knowledge or information, attitudes and values and Life Skill as the most effective method of developing and changing behaviour (UNICEF, 2008). In addition, Life skills education is regarded as “the practice and reinforcement of psychological skills that contribute to personal and social development and the prevention of health and social problems” (UNICEF, 2002, p.4). With the necessary life skills to make informed and responsible decisions, learners will be better equipped to deal with the challenges they face (UNICEF, 2002).
The World Development Report (2007) identified “enhancing capabilities through Life skills education” as 1 of 3 policy directions recommended to assist young people in developing and contributing to society. According to Kids Holistic Education and Life skills (2017), Life-skills are a critical element in UNICEF’s definition of quality education and also find mention in 2 of the 6 Education for All Goals (UNESCO) – committed to by 164 nations – which aim to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015. Today, Life skills education is offered as part of the formal school curriculum in at least 70 countries. By teaching children how to make informed decisions and navigate their way in a world beset by challenges, Life skills equip, enable and empower tomorrow’s leaders (UNICEF, 2008).

Likewise, researchers highlighted some of Life skills education’s benefits. For instance, Rooth (2005) argues that Life skills education can delay the onset of drug usage, prevent high-risk sexual behaviour and promote beneficial social adjustment. Furthermore, Mwita (2014) opines that Life skills education enables children and young people to translate knowledge, attitudes and values into action. It promotes the development of a wide range of skills that help children and young people cope effectively with everyday life challenges, enabling them to become socially and psychologically competent. According to Roux (2013), Life skills education is possibly among the most important answers to the problems and challenges many young people face. Life Skills programmes are being developed to address the alarming increase in high risk health behaviours among adolescents. Life skills education addresses the whole individual’s development to equip a person with the skills to apply all types of information, whether it is related to HIV/AIDS, STDs, reproductive health, safe motherhood, general health issues and other communication and decision-making situations.

Among African countries that have introduced Life Skills Education in schools, is Malawi. According to Chirwa (2009), Life skills Education was introduced in Malawian primary schools as a way of empowering children with appropriate information and skills in the fight against HIV infections and AIDS as well as assisting them to deal with various other everyday social and health problems. In addition, Kalanda (2010) emphasises that the purpose of Life Skills and Sexual/Reproductive Health Education in Malawi was to empower children and teachers with HIV prevention skills/knowledge and how to deal with sexuality issues.

In a bid to mitigate the spread of HIV/AIDS infection in Kenya, the AIDS Education Programme for Youth inside and outside schools, was launched in November 1992. The overall aim of the
programme was to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS among the youth, through the development of Life Skills leading to attitudinal and behavioural change. This was followed by the curriculum revision in 2003, which infused and integrated Life skills education into the curriculum. The mainstreaming of Life skills education into the core curriculum was in tandem with the Education Sector Policy on HIV and AIDS (GOK, 2004). In 2006, the Life Skills Stakeholders Forum reached a consensus on the need to teach Life skills as a stand-alone subject (UNICEF, 2012). The introduction of Life skills education as a stand-alone subject in 2009 replaced the integrated approach to Life skills education. This approach integrated Life Skills into curriculum and co-curriculum subjects, whereas in the stand-alone approach, Life Skills are taught as a main subject by a regular teacher. The Life Skills Education syllabus was rolled out in 2008 and focused on three main areas: knowing and living with oneself, knowing and living with others and making effective decisions.

According to the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD, 2008), Life skills education curriculum entailed the following: knowing and living with others, which include skills such as effective communication skills, conflict resolution and negotiation skills, skills on friendship formation, assertiveness and peer pressure resistance skills. The second category consists of knowing and living with oneself which includes skills such as self-awareness, self-esteem, coping with emotions and coping with stress. The last category in the Life-skills curriculum is effective decision making skills which includes critical thinking, problem solving and decision making. The education system should impart Life skills as it can prevent youth involvement in violent acts.

Life skills education in Lesotho aims to equip learners with various life skills in an attempt to promote acceptable attitudes and behaviours. To ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and Life skills programmes, and improving all aspects of education quality and ensuring excellence to achieve recognised and measurable learning outcomes by all, especially in Literacy, Numeracy and essential Life skills (MOET, 2005). Life skills education was introduced in Lesotho primary and high schools in 2008. Similarly, the Life skills programme was also introduced in one of the teacher training colleges and the National University in 2006. The Lesotho government has afforded to education, including Life skills, priority status and therefore supported it with substantial funding because of the significant role education contributes in the national development and alleviation of poverty (Kolosoa & Makhakhane, 2015).
South Africa is experiencing rapid socio-economic changes in societies which burden children's lives. Parents are often compelled to leave their children with guardians who may be grannies, aunts, nannies or relatives. Some children grow up in reconstituted families, foster-homes and as street children that put their lives at risk because of unfavourable conditions which might be due to the lack of guidance (Mpangana, 2012, 17). Furthermore, children become orphans because of the HIV pandemic and do not have parents as role models for proper guidance and nurturing. Many of the parents in these instances are young teenage mothers as well as scholars. Schools therefore remain the sole organised setting where learners can obtain/acquire formal and on-going guidance and nurturing.

Schools are generally known for providing the advanced academic skills which include reading, writing and counting. However, in contrast, growth in life needs more than only advanced academic skills. Young lives needs to be equipped with all necessary skills that might help in an unpredictable life journey which is filled with both opportunities and hopelessness. Within this context the Department of Education introduced Life skills education with the aim of equipping learners, irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability, with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country (CAPS, 2007:3).

Life skills is offered as a subject from grade R to 6 (Foundation and Intermediate phase) while Life-Orientation is offered as a subject in Grade 7 to 12 (Senior and FET). Life skills form the foundation or major part of the Life Orientation learning area. The subject aims to develop learners through three different but interrelated study areas, namely Personal and Social Well-being, Physical Education and Creative Arts. In trying to equip learners with this knowledge and skills, topics such as abuse, developing and maintaining self-esteem, decision making, assertiveness, peer pressure, bullying, HIV/AIDS, mental and physical maintenance are dealt with in Life skills. Maree and Ebersohn (2002: 224) referred to drug abuse, self-awareness and self-concept, HIV/AIDS and sex as critical themes in the South African context.

Researchers have identified some encountered challenges in teaching Life skills. The next section will review some literature regarding these challenges.
2.3 STUDIES OF CHALLENGES FACED WHEN TEACHING LIFE SKILLS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

There is a paucity of literature on challenges educators face on teaching Life skills education (Yankah & Aggleton, 2008). From the literature search the researcher observed that not many studies have been conducted regarding challenges educators face when teaching Life skills education in primary schools as well as in rural primary schools. Most available literature are on the implementation of Life skills curriculum and not specifically understanding teaching challenges from the teacher’s perspectives when teaching Life skills education. This section will attempt to review some of the available literature.

Chirwa (2009) investigated factors affecting the implementation of the Life skills programme in four primary schools in the Zomba District, Malawi. The study adopted a quantitative research design employing case study approach. The study sample consisted of 6 teachers teaching in Standard 4 and 4 principals from four schools in the Zomba District of Malawi. The researcher used interviews and observations as methods of data collection. The data collected was analysed using the thematic content analysis method. The study found that teaching Life skills is constrained by a variety of social and structural contextual factors. The study further revealed that poor working conditions of teachers lead to a lack of motivation and teachers could not give adequate attention to teaching Life skills. Other factors revealed by the study include the fact that most of the teachers do not have the pre-requisite knowledge of the curriculum and were only exposed to 2 day training. The training was conducted by their school principals who are not subject experts. Because of the HIV/AIDS prevalence which affects both the Life skills teachers and their learners, some teachers felt uncomfortable and reluctant to teach what affects them and their learners.

Likewise some of the teachers and Principals found a conflict between cultural belief styles and the Life skills program. The findings of this study cannot be generalised taking into account the type of research approach a/and case study. This is predicated on the fact that there is a general difficulty in establishing the boundaries of the cases, problems of negotiating access to study settings as well as the observer’s effect on the natural setting. In addition, the sample size of 6 teachers, 4 principals and only 4 schools is too small compared to the number of schools in that
district. This also makes it difficult to generalise the study’s finding. Furthermore, the research did not amplify the teacher’s voice, as the sample consisted of other participants such as principals. A suggestion would be to increase the sample size though this may necessitate a change of the research approach and the study done only with teachers.

Similarly, Roselyne (2014) conducted a teaching of Life skills curriculum survey in public primary schools in Lurambi Division of Kakamega County, Kenya. The objectives of this study were to identify teaching and learning resources used in teaching Life skills and whether they were adequate, what issues affected teachers during its implementation, the attitudes the teachers and pupils had towards the subject, factors influenced by the community during implementation and lastly, aimed at establishing the extent to which the subject was taught. The study adopted a descriptive survey method of investigation. Data was collected using questionnaires for teachers and pupils, and interview schedules for the head teachers. From a population of 47 public primary schools, the study sampled 10 schools using convenient sampling based on their location for ease of access. Study respondents included all head teachers, 30 teachers of Life skills and a total of 90 pupils. Data collected were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

The study revealed among other things the following: the majority of pupils and teachers reported not to like/enjoy Life skills; teachers reported that they infrequently taught Life skills citing being overburdened with other teaching loads as the main cause. They observed that even though none of them had been involved in the development of Life skills curriculum, very few had been trained on how to teach the subject. The question that comes to mind is how Life skills education will be able to achieve the purpose for which it was introduced into primary schools, taking a cue from the teacher’s responses who are supposed to transfer the knowledge.

Though the study adopted a quantitative approach using a questionnaire which, to a large extent, could reduce the bias element and researchers’ influence, however the number of Life skills teachers (30) used as the sample is small compared to the pupils (90) and head teachers (47). Another observation/question here is why seek the views of pupils and head teachers in trying to gain an insight into the challenges of teaching Life skills education. The opinion exists that since the teachers have the primary responsibility of teaching the subject, the study ought to lay more emphasis on the teachers. Furthermore, the finding of the study may not be generalised as the number of schools (10) representing 21.28% is negligible. The researcher
could have made use of at least 30 schools as it would have increased the chances of generalisation.

A study by Maogoto (2011) was designed to investigate implementation challenges of the Life skills curriculum in Nakuru Municipality public primary schools, Kenya. The study aimed to establish the teachers' awareness level of the Life skills curriculum objectives; determined the influence of in-service teacher training in Life skills curriculum and established the extent to which the timetable accommodates the Life skills teaching. Cluster sampling based on groups was used to collect data which was analysed qualitatively using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The Pearson correlation coefficient \((r)\) was used to test reliability where an/the coefficient of 0.85 was realised and was deemed reasonable for the study. Findings from the study showed that most teachers were aware of the Life skills curriculum importance but do not implement it effectively in their schools. The study revealed that the Life skills curriculum was accommodated in the time table but there was no emphasis on the teaching of Life skills and instead examinable subjects were taught during the Life skills period/slot/session. The study also noted that in-service training of teachers in the Life skills curriculum has influence in the implementation.

2.3.1 Studies on resources and teaching of Life skills education

The issue of resources in teaching and learning cannot be under-played, especially in the teaching of Life skills education. According to Whitaker (1993: p. 26), resource materials and facilities have a substantial influence on the implementation of a curriculum in that the availability and quality of resource material and facilities have a large influence on the curriculum. Teaching/learning resources have been identified as essentials for student learning. Material resources include teaching/learning aids, relevant text books and other reference books used in teaching Life skills. However, studies have shown that most schools do not have the required resources meant for the teaching of Life skills. For example, Onganga (2007) and the Kenya legal and ethical issues network on HIV/AIDS (2011) report that there is a serious shortage of material resources necessary to carry out Life skills implementation in Kenyan primary schools. Some of these resources required for teaching Life skills include newspaper clips, audio visuals, magazines etc., which involve the use of role play and formation of focus groups.
Also, the availability of resources such as magazines clips, audio visuals, amongst others could depend on funds available to purchase and maintain them and the type of policy in place. Kadzamira (2006) indicates that the primary school system in Malawi faces the lack of facilities challenge such as staffrooms, classrooms, teaching and learning materials, especially the rural primary school" (p. 26). Lowe (2008) also found that there were not enough text books in the schools he studied in Malawi’s Zomba district. Likewise Chirwa (2009) in a case study of challenges facing the Life skills education implementation in the Zomba district primary schools, found that the teaching and learning Life skills resources was inadequate and that there was high pupil to textbook ratio (6:1) in the schools involved in this study. In another study Roselyne (2014) revealed a shortfall when using learning resources while teaching Life skills in primary schools in Lurambi Division, Kakamega County, Kenya. Adhiambo (2013) reported that most public secondary schools in Uriri and Awendo Districts in Migori County do not possess the teaching curriculum for Life skills education due to the fact that the schools had no Life skills education syllabus, textbooks and other materials necessary for Life skills teaching. In addition, the study reported that the inadequate resources and materials as well as the teachers’ level of preparedness were inadequate (Aboho & Orodho, 2014).

2.3.2 Training and teaching of Life skills education

Researchers submitted that one of the challenges of implementing Life skills education in schools is the lack of training for Life skills teachers. For example, Roselyn (2014) reported that 28 out of 30 Life skills education teachers representing 93.33% of participants in her study reported they did not have any kind of training or in-service in Life skills. This implies that a majority of teachers lack professional expertise on how to teach Life skills. This will obviously affect how the subject is taught by Life skills education teachers.

Likewise Chirwa (2009) revealed that Malawian Life skill teachers are exposed to the Cascade model of training. The cascade training model leaves the responsibility of training Life skills teachers to school principals who are not subject specialists. Chirwa further stated that the cascade training model also undermines the professional responsibility of each teacher to empower themselves in becoming subject experts in the subjects they teach. Another challenge regarding this type of training is that it takes place for only two days and this is not adequate for teachers to fully comprehend the content of Life skills education. In another study, Aboho &
Orodho (2014) reported that most teachers at the secondary level were not trained on Life skills education. Similarly, Okech & Role (2015), in their own study established that the majority of the teachers are not formally trained to teach the Life skills curriculum. Gachuhi (1999) cited in Mwita (2014) reported on Zimbabwe’s Life skills education indicated only one third of the teachers received any in-service training, the same fraction of teachers was unfamiliar with experimental learning and participatory methods. Awuor & Chemutai (2015) reported that although Life skills education teachers were professionally qualified, the majority of them were not trained to handle Life skills education. Kolosa & Makhakhane (2010) posit that prior to the introduction of Life skills education in Lesotho schools, there was no training provided to teachers expected to teach the course, in addition no in-service training exist to equip teachers with the relevant and appropriate skills which could facilitate quality teaching and learning.

From the various findings highlighted above it is evident that most Life skills education teachers do not have the perquisite training for teaching Life skills education. The implications of this situation could be enormous. For example, a lack of expertise caused by little or no training in Life skills education could culminate in Life skills lessons ending up as a medium for teaching and learning other academic skills such as reading and comprehension rather than the emphasis being on learner’s social and personal development. In addition, lack of training will hinder teachers from employing the appropriate approaches for the teaching of Life skills. It is observed that most of the findings highlighted were not from studies conducted in South Africa as well as some studies were conducted in secondary schools and only one such study was conducted in rural areas. The situation in secondary and primary schools may be different and there is a likelihood of different responses obtained from teachers in urban and rural areas. This study is designed to investigate the educators’ views on the challenges they face when teaching Life skills in primary schools in a rural South African setting.

**2.3.3 Teaching methods and teaching of Life skills education**

Any programme’s successful implementation is contingent, to a large extent, on the methods and materials used to convey ideas. When teaching Life skills education, the World Health Organisation (1993) suggests brain storming, group discussions, debate, role-play and homework assignment as ideal methods because these methods interest the learners. The position of WHO on teaching Life skills education methods is lent credence by Bandura (1977)
who opined that these methods build upon what pupils learn from people around them and hence helps them distinguish between what is right and wrong so as to emulate the healthy behaviour and avoid flawed behaviour.

Studies have however shown that one of the challenges of implementing Life skills education curriculum is non-adherence to these teaching methods. Adhiambo (2013) found that teaching strategies such as discussions, debates on relevant topics, storytelling on different topics, using case studies to solve particular problems, implementing question and answer sessions and using songs and dance were inadequately used when teaching Life skills education. Chirwa (2009), employing the observation method as a data collection tool, reported that participants (Life skills teachers) in the study only used group discussion. The use of one method, as practised by the teachers in this study, limits the learners’ opportunities to engage in other hands-on activities that promote the learning of skills and values. The teacher’s methodologies can undermine the successful implementation of Life skills.

Meyers (2011) cited in (Okech & Role, 2015), reported that teachers were not prepared to teach Life skills and implemented Life skills education on a limited basis. Due to insufficient training, most teachers approach teaching Life skills education in the same way they teach other subjects. The importance of teaching methods cannot be over-emphasised because no matter how excellent a curriculum is, if the teaching mode is not adequate or appropriate, the designing purpose of the curriculum will not be achieved. Due to the fact that not many studies have been conducted on teaching Life skills education, especially in rural areas, this study intends to investigate what teaching methods Life skills teachers in rural primary schools employ and if such teaching methods are adequate.

2.3.4 Time allocated for teaching Life skills

One of the major problems identified by teachers teaching Life skills is the time allocated to teaching Life skills. Teachers felt that teaching Life skills was not given adequate time in the timetable. The usual time allocated for the teaching Life skills is one 35 minute lesson during the week (Okech & Role, 2015). Likewise, Roselyne (2014) reported that only 23.33% of the participants in her study (teachers) taught Life skills education regularly while the remainder either taught rarely or never. The study further revealed that Life Skills education is taught only
once a week in primary schools in Kenya’s Lurambi division, Kakamega County. The inadequate time allocated for teaching Life skills compromised on the content coverage (Kawira, 2012). As a result, learners are inadequately trained in developing psychosocial competencies.

Kitimo (2014) observed that though most schools in Kinango District, Kenya offer Life skills education, the subject is allocated one lesson per week. The study by Kitimo further revealed that among the 28 teachers who reported that their schools offered Life skills, 24 indicated that Life skills was allocated one hour per week, 1 indicated two hours while 2 indicated more than three hours. However, 12 teachers reported that their respective schools were not teaching Life skills. These findings revealed that in most schools Life skills was allocated only one lesson per week. These findings indicate that not much premium is placed on teaching Life Skills education. The time is too short and inadequate for any meaningful teaching and learning to take place and additionally suggests that the subject is not important. Muteigi (2012) findings on school factors influencing the implementation of Life skills education revealed that 1 lesson per week was not sufficient to cover the Life skills curriculum and as such the maximum lessons required were 3 per week.

A study by Gitahaiga (2011) established that most schools were allocating Life skills education only once per week. Some schools had no allocation at all in the normal class hours; they only taught Life skills after regular classes or at other available times. The study also revealed that the weekly Life skills time was constantly devoured by examinable subjects as teachers tried to cover the syllabus in order to generate high mean scores for their schools.

This study intends to determine the time allocated to teaching Life skills and if Life skills educators in South African rural primary schools hold the view that time allocated to teaching Life skills is one of the challenges they encounter while teaching Life skills education. The view herewith is to make recommendations to policy makers on the need to increase the amount of time allocated to the teaching of Life skills education.

2.3.5 Teachers related challenges and teaching of Life skills education

There are some challenges hampering the teaching effectiveness and teacher related learning of Life skills education. This section will highlight some of these challenges.
One of these challenges is that teachers are overburdened. This fact was revealed by Roselyne (2014), who reported that 90% of the teachers who were participants in her study cited being overburdened as the main hindrance to Life skills curriculum implementation and heavy workloads caused by teacher shortages and lack of Life skills trained teachers.

Chirwa (2009) identified some of the crucial factors hampering Life skills teaching and learning related to teachers as poor conditions under which teachers are working, teachers are paid low salaries and this affects teaching motivation. This leads to some of these teachers giving most of their attention to what they perceive as priority subjects such as Maths and Languages at the expense of Life skills.

Aboho & Orodho (2014) investigated challenges facing implementation of Life skills education in Secondary schools in Kenya’s Trans-nozia West District and found that teachers have negative attitudes towards teaching Life skills education. This could be due to some factors such as non-exam inability of the subject, cultural and religious beliefs, poor remuneration and working conditions, amongst others. These challenges would also determine the attitude of Life skills education tutors. Furthermore, a study by Kolosoa (2010) regarding Life skills for national development in Lesotho revealed that lack of capacity among teachers in schools is one of the challenges encountered in implementing the Life skills curriculum,

Another Prinsloo (2007) study in South Africa on challenges facing the implementation of the Life skills program indicated that many teachers were not able to handle issues of HIV/AIDS and they avoided engaging pupils on the subject. Teachers failed to engage the learners on the curriculum’s HIV/AIDS content because they feel it is sensitive (insensitive?) to teach that which affect their learners. Although curriculum designers plan that all the curriculum document content should be taught to learners, the actual curriculum implementation may not necessarily happen/be as planned. Both teacher and learner factors might lead the teacher to either radically change what was initially planned or even drop some content. Likewise Chirwa (2009) submit that in Malawi, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS affects both the teachers of Life skills and their learners, resulting in teachers feeling uncomfortable and reluctant to teach topics affecting them and their learners. Some teachers believe that it is inappropriate to teach sexual matters to children of/at this age. This results in the teachers omitting the very issues that the Life skills curriculum seeks to address.
Kitimo (2014) identified teacher’s personality, identity, curriculum knowledge, resistance to change and professional development as factors restricting a teacher’s ability and willingness to implement a curriculum effectively. In addition, teacher’s personal and social circumstances such as personal or family health and poverty are also factors that can undermine the curriculum implementation. For example, Lowe (2008) argues that many teachers in Malawi are constrained by social circumstances such as caring for sick children, personal ill-health (including HIV/AIDS) and a meagre income. These social circumstances often cause teachers to be absent from work. This study intends to identify teacher related challenges as identified by educators in South African primary schools in rural areas and draw a conclusion if these challenges are similar to other previous findings. Identifying these teacher related challenges is crucial as teachers are central to the curriculum implementation of the subject.

2.3.6 School context and teaching of Life skills education

School context could refer to some inherent factors in schools where Life skills education and other subjects are taught. Studies identified some of the school related context to include school location, the school’s physical condition and number of people in the classrooms. The school’s location could also pose a challenge to effective curriculum implementation including Life skills education. According to Whitaker (1993), schools located in affluent socio-economic environments and those with adequate human and material resources can implement the curriculum to an extent that would be difficult or impossible for schools in poor economic environments. This highlights the issue of schools in rural areas. Rural areas are characterised by poverty and lack of basic infrastructure amongst others. This type of environment could be an impediment to the curriculum implementation.

Regarding overcrowding of classrooms, Prinsloo’s (2007) study in South Africa also noted that classroom overcrowding acts as a barrier in the process of teaching curriculum subjects. Prinsloo quotes one teacher involved in his study on the implementation of Life Orientation as arguing that to reach 40 or more learners at the same time in a short period is a difficult task. This comment reveals a perception that teachers feel they are not always able to create an atmosphere of personal trust between themselves and all the learners in their class. For example, Lowe (2008) explains that classes over 60 reduce the teacher’s ability to teach and
pupils to learn; the World Bank (1998) recommended that classes should be no larger than 40 in in sub-Saharan African primary schools. In contrast, Lowe (2008, p. 19) found that in the 4 schools sampled, the average class size was 68. Kadzamira (2006) notes that in developing countries the working environment in the majority of schools is deplorable with dilapidated school structures and large classes. These daunting conditions contribute to teacher’s work discontentment. The teacher’s low morale may affect their performance and consequently affect the implementation of any curriculum subject including Life skills education.

2.3.7 Non-examinable status of Life skills education

A major challenge for Life Orientation as a new Learning Area/Subject is the preconceptions that exist about the non-examinable status of its previous constituents known as Religious Education as well as Guidance. Rooth’s (2005) study in South Africa indicates that Life skills is not being taken seriously because it is not an examinable subject at National level. In some cases, it is not being taught at all despite the fact that it is included on the timetable and in other schools, it is not even included on the timetable. Therefore the learners are inadequately prepared to deal with every day demands and challenges of life. This could be the reason why some secondary school students resort to risky behaviour such as drug abuse, rioting, violence, school drop-out and engaging in pre-marital sex.

Van Deventer (2004) found out that non-examinable status of subjects such as Life skills, physical education and guidance and counselling in schools makes them less of a priority when it comes to providing qualified teachers and resources, with learners not taking them seriously. In addition to this, Manwa (2012) in his study on factors influencing implementation of Life skills in schools, found that the non-examinable status of Life skills significantly influenced its implementation in schools.

Kitimo (2014) in his study showed 97.5% of the teachers reported that most of the school stakeholders regarded Life skills education as not very important. Results further showed that 77.5% of the teachers reported that learners, parents and other staff members viewed Life skills teaching as a waste of time and therefore most of them suggested that Life skills time allocation should be utilised performing other school activities or teaching other subjects. Moreover, 60.0% of the teachers reported that learners viewed Life skills as a leisure activity whereas
47.5% indicated that teachers viewed it as a boring subject. This clearly indicates that according to teachers, learners and parents had a negative attitude towards teaching and learning of Life skills in schools due to its non-examinable nature.

Kolosa and Makhakhane (2010) findings report that the launched primary and secondary Life Skills curriculum is not examined. According to the authors, not introducing any assessment and evaluation measures at the end of Primary School Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate may lower the status and recognition that Life skills education deserves. Since the practice, in most instances, is that teachers put more effort into courses that are examinable and add value to learners passing exams. Similarly, learners also do not take unassessed courses seriously; therefore they do not give them the deserved attention.

### 2.4 STUDIES ON THE EXTENT IN/TO WHICH THE EDUCATORS VIEW LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION AS AN INTERVENTION

One of the main purposes of introducing Life skills education in schools is to serve as an intervention in equipping learners with life skills to make informed and responsible decisions, and by doing this learners will be better equipped to deal with the challenges they face. From various literature reviewed earlier, Life skills education was introduced to combat issues like HIV/AIDS, health related issues, making quality decision and conflict resolution amongst others. However, not many studies was conducted regarding teachers’ views on whether they perceive Life skills education as an intervention. The researcher is motivated to investigate this because, if the educators perceive Life skills as an intervention, it could affect their attitude towards teaching the subject.

In a case study of a number of countries by UNICEF (2012) on the Global Evaluation of Life Skills Education Programme (LSEP), it was reported that there is strong evidence from across Life skills education programmes that learners, parents and teachers found the content and themes of Life skills education interventions relevant to the pressures and challenges which learners face. This evidence includes both the thematic knowledge and the psycho-social skills promoted by interventions. The countries involved in the case study were Malawi, Mozambique, Kenya, Mynamar, Jordan, Barbados and Armenia. However, based on the finding of the study,
the extent of the teachers’ perception is not clearly defined. For example, the study report was not specific on teachers’ agreement degree regarding Life skills education. There is a strong evidence that the Life skills education interventions’ content and themes are relevant to the pressures and challenges face by learners. Hence, this study intends to explore this gap regarding educators teaching Life skills in South African primary schools using Umkhanyakude district of Kwazulu Natal Province as case study.

In a study by Nduangu, Wauma-Nagara & Wango (2013), it was reported that the majority of teachers who participated in the study indicated Life skills education had a positive impact on learners and that Life skills education teachers see the benefits of Life skills education in the growing/developing child. Likewise, Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, and Abbot (1999) reported about the empirical evidence existing for the hypothesised beneficial impact of Life skills reducing health risk behaviour by making an example of a package of interventions with teachers, parents and children provided throughout the elementary grades. This study affirms the acknowledgement of educators teaching Life skills that they are often referral personnel for learners experiencing problems at their schools. Educators use different intervention programmes which are mostly supported by research and applaud the new effective approach of the South African Education that recommends learners to actively participate.

Other studies such as Okech & Role (2014) revealed that pupils support the teaching of Life skills education in the school. They also felt that the program assisted them to develop various competencies to deal with modern day challenges. They reported the program assisted them most in understanding themselves while it meant the least in developing the ability to communicate. Furthermore, Durlak et al. (2011) reported similar findings in the study. In their meta-analysis of reported studies on the effects of school-based social, emotional and learning interventions, they established that several studies indicated a positive association between these interventions and improved psycho-social competencies such as improved attitude, self-esteem and emotional distress.

Visser (2005) carried out a study to determine the factors influencing implementation of Life skills training as HIV/AIDS preventative strategy in South African secondary schools. The study evaluated Life skills implementation in 24 schools in two Gauteng province educational districts using an action research approach. Implementation data were gathered through interviews and focus group discussions with school principals, teachers and learners. A repeated
measurement research design was used to assess the intervention impact in terms of knowledge, attitudes and reported risk behaviour in a sample of 667 learners representing grades 8 to 12 learners from different population groups. Results in an outcome evaluation over the period of a year shows that learners’ HIV/AIDS knowledge increased and their attitudes were more positive. This finding suggests that the intervention was, to a certain extent, successful. Other study findings include that the programme was not implemented as planned due to schools’ organisational problems, lack of teacher and principal commitment and non-trusting relationships between teachers and learners. The study found that teachers did not have the status in the school to impact on the school’s organisation by suggesting timetable changes and work allocation. The teachers needed substantial support from the project teams to facilitate change in their schools. This study aims to determine the extent to which school principals support Life skills implementation.

2.5 EDUCATORS’ VIEWS REGARDING LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION IS INFLUENCED BY THEIR BIOGRAPHICAL PARTICULARS:

2.5.1 Experience

Teacher experience cannot be underplayed when discussing the issue of teaching and learning. Considering the pivotal role of teachers in teaching and learning, it is expected that for a teacher to be effective in teaching, subject knowledge is an essential component (Palmer, Stough, Burdenski & Gonzales, 2005: 14). Khulisa Management Services, (2000) went a step further to assert that subject knowledge and experience are important factors to consider with regard to Life Orientation (LO) teachers, but could become a problem if they are not trained to teach Life Orientation.

From the literature review it is observed that most available literature is on teachers’ experience in teaching Life Orientation. Life Orientation is a subject for high schools in South Africa while Life skills education is taught in primary schools. Pillay (2012) submit Life Orientation teachers need specific skills and characteristics that are essential to be effective and influential in their teaching of Life Orientation. Some of the specific skills identified by Prinsloo in his study include counselling skills, career guidance skills and skills to fulfil diverse roles. The study also highlighted some personal characteristics that Life Orientation teacher must possess, they
include the ability to maintain confidentiality, warmth, caring, approachable, support learners and be role models. Literature emphasises that “the character of the Life Orientation teacher is of the utmost importance” and should be displayed with integrity (Prinsloo, 2007: 168). It is also expected that Life Orientation teachers need to have a critical understanding of educational, social and cultural contexts, if they are to be keystone teachers in their schools.

However, researchers observed that most Life orientation teachers lack most of these skills. For instance Diale (2010) found that most teachers have not been trained in counselling skills. Another major challenge is that most Life Orientation teachers do not have the perquisite training. For example, Rooth (2005) found that 30% of all teachers in her national study were not specifically trained in teaching Life Orientation. In Lesotho, Kolosoa & Makhakhane (2010) reports that there was no provision for training teachers expected to teach the course, in addition there is also no in-service training to equip teachers with relevant and appropriate skills which could facilitate quality teaching and learning. Hence, there was no possibility/opportunity the Life skills education teachers could acquire the necessary skills and experience that would assist them to teach Life skills education.

Aside from professional experience, the teachers' personal experiences is also a factor that could impact on the teaching of Life skills education. For instance, some of the teachers are facing the same challenges learners face, hence it becomes difficult to teach on some sensitive issues such as HIV/AIDS, sexual abuse, rape, physical abuse and poverty, to mention but a few. The South African Department of Education recognises this challenge by highlighting the importance of suitable educators who are prepared and equipped to deal with any issue that may affect learners (Department of Education, 2007).

Chirwa (2009) similarly reports that teachers teaching Life skills in primary schools in Malawi are affected by issues such as HIV/AIDS infection, hence they feel restrained and not pre-disposed to teaching on issues that affect them. In Kenya it was even reported the teacher absentee rate in school is often occasioned by ill health due to HIV infection.

The SA Department of Education also acknowledges that apart from the fact that most schools are under-resourced, educators likewise come from under-resourced backgrounds. This experience will no doubt pose a challenge to teaching of Life skills education (DoE, 2002).
As mentioned earlier, not many studies have been conducted regarding teacher experience with Life skills education in rural area primary schools. This study would therefore explore the views of teachers teaching Life skills with an objective to determine the experiences they have/encountered which could be affecting Life skills education teaching in rural primary schools.

2.5.2 Gender

Gender as a variable has been noted to have an effect on different human endeavour, including teaching and learning. However, not many studies have been conducted regarding the impact of gender on the educators’ views on the teaching of Life skills in primary schools as well as in rural areas. Arif & Saqib (2003) opines that teachers’ gender had significant and negative effects on students’ learning achievements by indicating that students’ test performance was higher when taught by female teachers than those who had male teachers. Hence, at the primary level, females appear to be more effective teachers.

In a study designed to explore the gender factors facing Life skills education implementation in Kenya’s Secondary Schools in Nairobi East District, Nairobi County, Nduangu, Wauma-Nagara & Wango (2013) observed that gender has an influence on implementing Life skills education. The study revealed that there were gender limitations when selecting teachers to teach Life Skills Education in schools and those life skills was mainly taught by female teachers. Teachers indicated that they were uncomfortable teaching sensitive topics to students of the opposite sex and that the syllabus was not fully covered. The majority of female students did not like sharing their problems with boys and preferred girls. The gender challenge was noted in/on the fact that women teachers teach both boys and girls. This demonstrates that the responsibility of imparting Life skills is seemingly bestowed to women teachers, again confirming the fact that raising children in Africa is perceived to be a women’s affair.

Mzindle (2011) argues in the study titled: An investigation of the attitudes of high school learners towards Life-Orientiation, that there are significant differences between males and females’ attitudes toward Life orientation. One of this study’s motivating factors is to investigate if the gender of educators teaching Life skills in rural areas has any impact on the teaching of Life
Skills Education (LSE). The finding of this study is expected to add to the scanty literature on gender differences and teaching of Life skills in general and specifically in rural primary schools.

2.5.3 Qualification

Kolosa & Makhakhane (2010) reports that in Lesotho, the majority of teachers in the schools that implement the Life skills education curriculum have very little information about the programme. The authors further stated that prior to the Life skills education introduction, there was no training provision to teachers expected to teach the subject. According to them Life Skill Education (LSE) was introduced in Lesotho’s only teacher training college and the National University in 2006 to support and build capacity of the graduating teachers. In another study by Barnet, de Koning & Francis (1995) in Pakistan and India on the challenges facing a Life skills program, illustrates how teacher development as an economic factor affects the implementation of a curriculum. The study found that teacher training is considered as an implementation cost. This results in schools selecting teachers to teach the subject who are not trained and who are at times inexperienced and newly qualified, and this negatively affects subject teaching. In Kenya, Rungu (2008) submitted that most teachers do not have qualifications to teach Life Skills Education. The teachers were not fully qualified to teach Life Orientation as the majority of Life Orientation teachers were not qualified in Physical Education (PE) to present Physical Development Movement (Van Deventer, 2008).

The consequences of unqualified teachers teaching an important subject such as Life skills education is likely to be counterproductive as they will be teaching Life skills like any other subjects and learners will not be able to acquire the necessary skills to cope with life’s challenges. This study intends to discover if the educators teaching Life skills in South African rural primary schools possess the necessary qualifications.
2.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher reviewed literature on the concept of Life skills education, giving some background of Life skills education in countries such as Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi and South Africa. The literature review indicated that Life skills was introduced into schools as a means to equip leaners with life skills to cope with various challenges. The chapter observed that not many studies were conducted on Life skills education, especially in primary schools as well as in rural areas. The little literature available were not conducive to investigate the educator’s view on the encountered challenges in teaching Life skills education and/as most studies done were on Life skills curriculum implementation. This lack of data on educators’ view on teaching Life skills education challenges is a missing literature gap that this research intends to provide answers to.

Furthermore, the literature review in this chapter identified some encountered challenges when implementing the Life skills education curriculum. Some of these challenges include inadequate resources, teaching methods, lack of training for Life skills educators, not enough time allocated to the teaching of Life skills education and non-examinable status of Life skills education. Other problems identified are teacher related problems which could include lack of motivation, teachers being overburdened, poor working conditions, negative attitudes and inability of teachers to teach because of their health status. Furthermore, the literature review indicated that some of the challenges may be school context based, for example overcrowding, school location (rural or urban areas) and poor working environment such as dilapidated school buildings. This study intends to determine if these identified challenges in the literature review will be similar to those in rural South African primary schools.

In addition, the study reviewed literature indicating whether educators teaching Life skills view Life Skills Education as an intervention. The literature review did not reveal much in this aspect/regard as not many studies was carried out on this topic/subject matter. One of this study’s objectives is to investigate the views of educators teaching Life skills education in rural primary schools and if they consider Life skills education as an intervention. The finding of this study will contribute to the scanty literature available on the subject matter and could precipitate further research in this area. Finally, the chapter reviewed literature on whether educators’
views about Life skills education is influenced by their biographical particulars such as gender, experience and qualification
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a comprehensive description of the procedures used in conducting this empirical study. The main components of the chapter include research design, sampling design and the research instrument. It discusses the sampling design, data type and source, the research instrument, method of scoring, variables and the data analysis. The challenges educators encounter in the teaching Life-skills and the important factors to be considered for the effective teaching of the subject are the principle variables examined in the study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

There are many research designs in empirical research and these have subsequently populated increasing numbers of research methodologies in the social sciences. Research designs are mainly structures of how a researcher anticipates the end product of his/her study (Babbie & Mouton, 2010). It is important to note that the present study employed the descriptive research design. Descriptive study describes the present status of events where an independent variable cannot be manipulated. Descriptive study aims to provide accurate quantitative information and to ascertain the existence of an association between variables (Sibaya, 1992: 32).

In cases using descriptive study, the adopted research design must also provide descriptive evidence as those factors investigated should be able to explain and describe the status of events or the research problem being investigated (Merriam, 2009). The contextual description of the current challenges educators’ encounters when teaching Life skills in primary schools requires an explanation regime of important contextual thoughts on questions addressed in the research tool. The current contents and methods status of teaching Life skills was found wanting and an empirical assessment could best be understood through rigorous explanations and descriptions of the factors.
There are multiple other studies that adopted descriptive designs in the assessment of numerous Life skills problems in schools, such as Mzindle (2011), Makhubele and Qalinga (2009) and Pengpid, Peltzer and Igumbor (2008). Mzindle (2011) made use of the non-experimental research descriptive strategies to investigate high school learners’ attitudes towards Life Orientation. Similarly, Makhubele and Qalinga (2009) used the descriptive design on Life skills educators and social workers to explore the effectiveness of integrating socio-cultural knowledge in Life skills Education in preventing health and social pathologies.

Furthermore Pengpid, Peltzer and Igumbor (2008) also used descriptive design to explore the involvement of parents and community in Life skills and sex education in schools

### 3.3 SAMPLING DESIGN

This study employed the simple random sampling technique. In simple random sampling each sampling element in the population has an equal chance of being selected (Neuman, 2006). The target population in the present study are primary school educators. The sample was drawn from primary school educators in the Umkhanyakude District. Durrheim and Painter (2006) define sampling as the selection of research participants from an entire population. It involves decisions about people, settings, events, behaviours and or social processes to observe. Three circuits under the Hlabisa Management Centre were selected through probability sampling. The probability sampling technique allows subjects (educators) to be drawn from a population of a known distribution as McMillan and Schumacher (2010) defines probability sampling as the sampling type in which subjects are drawn from a population in known probabilities. Subjects are drawn from a larger population in such a way that the probability of selecting each member of the population is known.

In the sampling procedure, selecting an appropriate sample size should ensure that the population is efficiently and successfully represented in order to allow inferences. Factors like costs, time constrains and statistical power was considered to determine the sample size, although larger sample sizes has a higher degree of characteristics representation of the population being surveyed. Due to some constraints already mentioned, ten primary schools from the Hlabisa Management Centre in Umkhanyakude District were sampled.
The researcher visited the principals from the ten selected primary schools where a meeting was held/conveyed with all the educators. The purpose of the study was then explained and educators were asked to voluntarily take part in the survey.

3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A Likert-type questionnaire was used to collect data from the educators (see Annexure 3). The questionnaire comprised of closed ended questions. Penpid, Peltzer and Igumbor (2008) stated that valid and reliable data can be collected on behaviour and general lifestyle by means of a Likert-type questionnaire. The questions asked sought to examine the educators’ perceptions on specific challenges faced when teaching Life Skills. The questionnaire was then divided into two sections. Section A included specific components of questions but not that limited to supply personal information looking at variables such as gender, age, phase, rank, experience, qualifications and education level.

In Section B, the use of a Likert-type scale was administered where respondents were asked to express in degrees their agreement or disagreement to the specific statements on the scale (see Annexure3). The statements were designed according to the aims of the study. Section B.1 covered the behaviours viewed as challenges in the Life skills class and section B2 covered the items in which the educators regard as an intervention strategy to rectify learners’ adverse behaviour.

3.5 SCORING

Section B of the questionnaire used a 5-Likert type scale for scoring the pertinent statements that were drawn from the research objectives. The items that represent responses to the statements were structured as positive and negative items. Positive items were scored from 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for disagree, 2 disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. The scores were, however, reversed for negatively corded items.
3.6 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Chirwa (2008) points out that the main purpose of a pilot study is to determine how the subsequent study can be improved to identify possible flaws in the questionnaire. Four schools not taking part in the empirical study, participated in the pilot survey. Permission for the pilot study was granted from the local District Office and communicated to the schools. These four schools were not included in the empirical study. The principals assigned two educators who were Head of Departments (HoDs) to act as co-ordinators between the researcher and the educators.

The following was communicated to the co-ordinators:

- They were informed of the study’s purpose
- Assurance of the response confidentiality of the respondent
- Participation is voluntarily - no educator is bound/forced to take part in the pilot study

Two expert opinions were sought in the questionnaire’s compilation with the aim of ascertaining the questionnaire suitability.

3.6.1 Validity

The pilot study was conducted with the aim of testing the questionnaire’s validity and reliability. According to Woolfolk (2007), validity is the degree to which a test measures what it intends to measure and reliability is the consistency of test results mostly assessed from the responses to the items being examined.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett test were used in a test run to check the validity of the questionnaire. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy provides an index (between 0 and 1) of the proportion of variance among variables that might be common variance (Pallant, 2013). Using the KMO test a measure 0.810 was obtained, which is close to the mandatory 1. This means that the scale is valid.
The Bartlett test forms something of a bottom line test for large samples where the values of significance (below 0.05) indicate probability that there are significant relationships between variables (Pallant, 2013). The probability from Bartlett test is 0.000 which is a lot smaller than the mandatory 0.05. It was therefore concluded that the instrument was highly valid for the study.

### 3.6.2 Cronbach’s Alpha

Cronbach’s Alpha reliability test was also used to further explore the reliability of the instrument.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>STD. Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>90.68</td>
<td>98.128</td>
<td>9.906</td>
<td>0.834</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.7 PROCEDURES FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The permission to conduct the research in the Kwa-Hlabisa Management Cluster was obtained from the Provincial Chief Director (see Annexure 5). The researcher informed the officials of the Department about the procedures to be followed and the copies of the relevant documents were attached, including the questionnaire.

The researcher personally visited the ten selected schools. All the principals assigned their SMT’s to co-ordinate the process with the educators. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and the procedures that were followed. During the discussion it was agreed that the filling in of the questionnaire must not interfere with the teaching time and the/a time frame of two weeks was given before the questionnaires was collected. Thirty questionnaires were left for each school to be filled/completed.

3.7.1 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher is aware of ethical considerations in research and publications and complied therewith. There are numerous ethical principles; however, the researcher will cite those applicable to the present study.

- **Compliance with law and standards**: to adhere to this ethical principle, the researcher planned and conducted the research in a manner consistent with the law, internationally and nationally acceptable standards governing research with human participants and animal subjects.

- **Institutional written approval**: to comply with this ethical code, the researcher received approval for the proposal from the University of Zululand Ethics Committee. They awarded the ethical clearance certificate before the study commenced.

- **Research responsibilities**: to adhere to this ethical principle, the researcher entered into an agreement with participants (teachers), clarifying the nature of the research and responsibilities of each party. Each participant signed the agreement form.
• **Informed consent to research:** to comply with this ethical code, the researcher included an informed consent including the purpose of the research, expected duration of the participation and procedures used in the research. The researcher informed participants that they have a right to decline participation and could withdraw participation at any time without any consequences.

• **Reporting research results:** to adhere to this ethical principle, the researcher shall report data accurately and correct discovered errors, as it is unethical to fabricate data or falsify results.

• **Plagiarism:** to comply with this ethical code, the researcher read university policy and procedures on research ethics and its policy and procedures on managing and preventing acts on plagiarism, and appreciates their content; therefore, the researcher shall properly cite others’ ideas and work when reporting research.

• **Duplication of data published:** to adhere to this ethical principle, the researcher shall not publish previously published data.

• **Sharing data:** to comply with this ethical code, the researcher shall share data with other researchers to allow verification of results.

### 3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The data were collected and captured in Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The coded questions generated frequencies that allowed quantitative analysis and interpretation. Coding is the process of dividing or segmenting data into topics or categories.

The coding procedure also assists in reducing large data quantity into more meaningful units for interpretation and categorising large quantities (Chirwa, 2009). Various researchers like Chirwa (2009), Makhubele and Qalinga (2009) and Pengpid, Peltzer and Igumbor (2008) use questionnaires to obtain information from principals and Life skills educators and further employed the SPSS to process the information collected.
A total of 202 questionnaires were analysed. The scale was designed by assigning the values 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 to positively worded statement. The score for negatively worded items were reversed as 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. The total score for individual responses was determined by adding all the individual items. The highest possible score for each individual is 24 x 5 = 120 and the lowest possible score was 24 x 1 = 24.

The high total scores therefore indicated a positive attitude towards the use/teaching of Life skills as an intervention strategy to learners’ problems and the lowest total scores indicated a negative attitude to the use/teaching of Life skills as intervention strategy. Teachers who scored 60 on average were regarded as having a positive attitude towards the use/teaching of Life skills as an intervention strategy to learners’ problems. The educators who fall below the said average were regarded as having a negative attitude to the use/teaching of Life skills as an intervention strategy to the challenges facing learners in the selected schools.

To analyse data for research objective number three, a Chi- Square test was conducted to determine the relationship between biographical data and views of educators about the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills. Where there was a relationship, a correlation test was used to determine the extent of relationship.

3.9 SUMMARY

In this chapter the research design method and sampling design used in this study were discussed. The research instrument was explained as well as the scoring procedure on the instrument. The results of the pilot study were analysed together with issues of validity and reliability. Ethical considerations were also discussed as well as methods of analysis of data. The next chapter will deal with data presentation/, analysis and interpretation.
CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter captures an overview of the pertinent findings in respect of the educators’ views on the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills. Although the study population focuses on educators in primary schools in uMkhanyakude District, it will not be surprising that/if the Life Skills curricular is posing even greater challenge in secondary schools. The first phase of the analyses examined the frequency of specific responses among the 202 educators surveyed. This was then followed by examining the correlation between certain demographic characteristics to the main study variables such as the educators’ views on challenges facing the teaching of Life skills and Life skills intervention programmes at the schools surveyed.

Table 2: Distribution of participants in the final study (N=202)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation of Demographic Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (Years)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 and Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qualification</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matric and Below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experience (Years)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HoD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REQV Level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 and below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 REITERATION OF HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses were formulated and designed with the intention of accomplishing the study aims:

(i) There will be a relationship between the educators’ views about the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills and mode of Life skills intervention.

(ii) Educators hold positive views on the effect of Life skills as an intervention agent in challenges facing the teaching of Life skills.

(iii) Educators view the teaching of Life skills as an intervention agent

(iv) There will be a relationship between the respondent biographical data and their views on Life skills.

4.3 FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In the analysis of data, hypotheses are tested and the data are presented in the form of tables. The presentation of data in the form of tables comes before the reiteration of each hypothesis.

4.3.1 Analysis of Data

A total score of each individual was obtained by summarising all individual item scores. There were twenty four items in total. A general mean score was obtained by adding the total scores for the respondents and dividing the sum by the number of respondents. A higher total score indicate positive attitude towards the use of Life skills as an intervention. The lower the scores indicate negative attitude. A frequency count was made above and below the cut-off point.
4.3.2 Hypothesis number one

There will be a relationship between the educators' views about the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills and mode of Life skills intervention.

HO: There is no significant relationship between the educators’ views about/regarding the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills and mode of Life skills intervention.

H1: There is a significant relationship between the educators’ views about/regarding the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills and mode of Life skills intervention.

Table 3: Educators’ views on challenges facing the teaching of LS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views on challenges</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>159</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calculated $\chi^2 = 66.61$, $\alpha = 0.05$ and df $=1$, tabled $\chi^2 = 3.841$ for $p < 0.05$

The calculated Chi-square value for the distribution of the variable on views with df $= 1$, and $\alpha = .05$ is 66.6 which is larger than the tabled value of 3.84. Therefore, reject the null hypothesis $H_0$ and uphold the alternative hypothesis $H_1$. This means that the results are significant.

4.3.3 Hypothesis number two

Educators hold positive views on Life skills’ effects as an intervention agent in challenges faced when teaching Life skills.

To test this hypothesis, the researcher has to calculate the number of respondents who agreed that Life skills can be used as an intervention and those who oppose intervention by getting/achieving the percentage.
H$_0$: There is no significant relationship between educators’ views on Life skills as an intervention and challenges.

H$_1$: There is a significant relationship between educators’ views on Life skills as an intervention and challenges.

Table 4: Distribution of subject along positive and negative continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views on intervention</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>199</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>98.5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering the number of respondents who agreed that Life skills can be applied as an intervention, there was no necessity to do the statistical calculation. The overwhelming majority of educators (98.5%) confidently agreed that Life skills can be adopted as an intervention to counteract the challenges faced in the Life skills class. The difference between those who hold positive and negative views on the effect of Life skills as an intervention agent in challenges facing the teaching of Life skills is statistical significant. This significance could be the results of the educators’ practical experiences in the adoption of Life skills as an intervention in their schools. Therefore, educators hold positive views on the effect of Life skills as an intervention agent in challenges facing the teaching of Life skills.

4.3.4 Hypothesis number three

There is a relationship between the respondent biographical data and their views on the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills.

To test this hypothesis the chi-square test was used for all these variables as the data are categorical.
Hypothesis number 3.1

“There is a relationship between educators’ gender and their views on challenges facing the teaching of Life skills. “

H₀: There is no significant relationship between gender and views on Life skills challenges.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between gender and views on Life skills challenges.

Table 5: Gender vs Views on Life skills Challenges: (N=202)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views on Challenges</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>MT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calculated $\chi^2 = 0.811$, $\alpha = 0.05$ and df = 1, table $\chi^2 = 3.841$

A $\chi^2 = 0.811$ does not exceed the tabled value at the level of significance, which is 0.05 (3.84). Therefore, the calculated value is less than the tabled value, where df = 1. This means that the H₀ is upheld. Results are not significant. Male and female senior teachers do not differ significantly when it comes to their perceptions of identifying the challenges.

Hypothesis number 3.2

“There is a relationship between educators’ age and their views on challenges facing the teaching of Life skills”

H₀: There is no significant relationship between age and views on Life skills challenges.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between age and views on Life skills.
Table 6: Age vs Views on Life skills Challenges (N=202)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views on Challenges</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>MT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 - 30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 40</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 &amp; above</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
\chi^2 = 15.210, \alpha = 0.05 \text{ and df} = 3, \text{ table } \chi^2 = 7.815
\]

\[
\chi^2 = 15.210 \text{ exceed the tabled value at the level of significance, which is } 0.05, \chi^2 = 7.815.
\]

Therefore, the calculated value is greater than the tabled value, where df = 3. This means reject of the \( H_0 \). Results are significant. With increase in years of teaching experience, the better the educators become in identifying the challenges. These results highlight the importance of the experience in the education fraternity.

Hypothesis number 3.3

"There is a relationship between educators’ phase and their views on challenges facing the teaching of Life skills“.

\( H_0 \): There is no significant relationship between phase and views on Life skills challenges.

\( H_1 \): There is a significant relationship between phase and views on Life skills challenges.
Table 7: Phase vs Views on LS Challenges (N=202)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views on Challenges</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>MT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 9.372, \alpha = 0.05 \text{ and } df = 2, \text{ table } \chi^2 = 5.991 \]

The chi-square value of 9.372 at df = 2 is significant (p < .05). Reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant relationship between educators’ phases of specialisation and their capability of identifying the challenges. Different phases do influence views of teachers differently.

**Hypothesis number 3.4**

“There is a relationship between educators’ post level and their views on challenges facing the teaching of Life skills”

H⁰: There is no significant relationship between post level and views on Life skills challenges.

H¹: There is a significant relationship between post level and views on Life skills challenges.

Table 8: Post Level vs views on challenges (N=202)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views on Challenges</th>
<th>Post Level</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>MT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educator</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HoD</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MT</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 2.538, \alpha = 0.05 \text{ and } df = 1, \text{ table } \chi^2 = 3.841 \]
The chi-square value of 2.538 at df = 3 is not significant (p > .05). Null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Conclude is that there is no significant relationship between levels and educators views on LS challenges. Deputy Principals and Principals are lumped together with HoD5 because they were too few to make a statistical difference. Different post levels in which teachers are serving at schools have no effect on their capability of identifying the challenges. The reason could be that all challenges experienced at schools are commonly reported and resolved through the school management teams which include all the educators' levels found at school.

**Hypothesis 3.5**

“There is a relationship between educators' experience and their views on challenges facing the teaching of LS’.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between and experience views on Life skills challenges.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between and experience views on Life skills challenges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views on Challenges</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>MT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 &amp; above</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
\chi^2 = 12.588 \quad , \quad \alpha = 0.05 \quad \text{and} \quad df = 4, \quad \text{table} \quad \chi^2 = 9.488
\]
The chi-square value of 12.588 at df = 4 is highly significant (p<.05). The calculated value is greater than the tabled value at df = 4. Reject the H₀ and uphold the H₁. Conclusion is that there is a significant relationship between experience and educators' views on Life skills challenges. The experienced teachers are the ones who are more capable of identifying the challenges.

**Hypothesis number 3.6**

“There is a relationship between educators’ qualification and their views on challenges facing the teaching of Life skills”.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between qualification and views on Life skills challenges.
H₁: There is a significant relationship between qualification and views on Life skills challenges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>MT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matric &amp; below</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

χ² = 12.143, α = 0.05 and df = 2, table χ² = 5.991

The chi-square value of 12.143 at df = 2 is highly significant (p<.05). The calculated value is greater than the tabled value at df = 2. Reject the H₀ and uphold the H₁. Conclusion is that there is a significant relationship between qualification and educators’ views on Life skills challenges. Knowledge gained through studying help educators to identify the challenges which could be difficult for novice educators.
4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter concerned itself with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of empirical data. One of the analysis results was that educators view LS as intervention in challenges facing the teaching of Life skills. Different variables yielded different results. There were no statistically significant differences in educators’ views on Life skills as intervention based on their gender, age, levels, phase and specialised qualifications. Senior teachers’ years of experience were, however, found to have a significant influence on their capability to identify challenges. Teachers with more than 6 years of teaching experience were found to be more capable in identifying challenges compared to those with fewer years of teaching experience. The implication is that the more experienced teachers are the more they are capable of identifying challenges. Lastly, teachers were in harmonious agreement in accepting that Life skills can be used as an intervention. In the next chapter a detailed discussion of the findings, recommendations and limitations is presented.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the summary and discussion of findings collected from the data. This chapter concludes with recommendations and areas for possible further research. The researcher also discusses limitations of the study. In order to determine whether the objectives of the study were achieved, the research questions and aim were examined in relation to findings.

5.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study intend was to find answers to the following research questions:

a) To establish the nature of the educators’ views about the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills.

b) To determine whether educators do view Life skills content as an intervention procedure.

c) To determine the relationship, if any, between the educators’ views and their biographical data:

- Gender
- Experience and
- Qualifications

5.3 THE FOLLOWING HYPOTHESES WERE FORMULATED AND TESTED

a) There will be a relationship between the educators’ views about/regarding the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills and mode of Life skills intervention.
b) Educators hold positive views on the effect of Life skills as an intervention agent in challenges facing the teaching of Life skills.

c) There will be a relationship between the respondent biographical data and their views on Life skills.

5.4 THE ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter one consisted of motivation for the study in this field, while chapter two comprised a review of previous work done/conducted in this field. Chapter three detailed the method used in this study. The measuring instrument was a Likert-5 point scale questionnaire constructed and validated by the supervisor. Chapter four contained the findings and chapter five provided a summary and discussion of findings.

5.5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.5.1 Findings with regard to the nature of the educators’ views about/regarding the challenges faced when teaching Life skills

The present study’s findings revealed that the majority of the participating educators in this study agree that there are challenges and they were able to identify the challenges experienced in teaching Life skills education. This study finding confirms the findings of Chirwa (2009) who, in her study, investigated factors affecting the implementation of life skills in Malawi’s Zomba District and reported that Life skills teaching is confronted with many challenges. Likewise, the finding of this study corroborated that of Magoto (2011) who investigated challenges in the Life skills curriculum implementation in Kenya’s Nakuri Municipality public primary schools. The researcher concluded that implementing the Life skills curriculum is ridden/riddled with many challenges. In addition, this finding corroborates that of Roselyn (2013) who also found that teaching of Life skills education in Lurambi Division of Kakamega Country, Kenya’s public primary schools is faced with many challenges.
The most plausible reason for this study’s finding is that the educators were not consulted during the curriculum design and that not much has been done to identify these problems, especially from the educator’s perspective who implement the curriculum.

Since there were earlier studies that reported Life skills education to have challenges, it therefore means that the problem is not only isolated among educators in South African rural primary schools. The same challenges exist in countries like Kenya and Malawi, to mention only a few. The consequence of this finding is that stakeholders must address the various identified challenges if the objective of equipping learners with the necessary skills to cope with life challenges is to be achieved.

5.5.2 Findings with regard to the educators’ views on Life skills as an intervention

One of this study’s aims was to determine whether Life skills can be utilised as an intervention for the various life challenges learners experience. The study revealed that the majority educators regard Life skills as a practical intervention towards the problems learners experience. Schools are portrayed as having a great/large/enormous influence on children and their families and schools are formidable institutions for Life skills interventions (WHO, 1999). The finding of this study is consistent with the findings of Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, and Abbot (1999) and Steyn (2008) who, in their different studies, submit that Life skills was found to be effective in reducing learner’s health risks. The authors’ findings further revealed that the majority of educators are confident enough that the effective implementation of Life skills can save children’s lives towards adverse behaviour and improve the culture of learning. Makhubele and Qalinga (2009) believe that Life-skills are assets which could be a source of strength and can be an alternative for improving learner’s social functioning and address health and social pathologies. The finding of this study also lends credence to that of UNICEF (2012) on the Global Evaluation of Life Skills Education Programme, who reported that there is a strong evidence that learners, parents and teachers have found the content and themes of Life skills interventions relevant to the pressures and challenges faced by learners.

The study findings additionally affirms the submission of Nduangu, Wauma-Nagara & Wango (2013) who reported that the majority of teachers who participated in their study indicated that Life skills had a positive impact on learners and that the Life skills teachers see the benefits of Life skills education in the growing child.
From the finding of previous studies other stakeholders such as parents and learners agree that Life skills is an effective intervention tool to equip learners with positive skills in dealing with life challenges. However, this study sought the views of educators teaching Life skills in rural primary schools who physically teach Life skills. This study’s findings shows that educators view Life skills as an intervention and it is encouraging taking into consideration the importance of educators' role in implementing the curriculum. This implies that the educators are positive about the potentials of Life skills as an intervention, hence the need to address the identified challenges so that the educators can effectively implement the Life skills curriculum. To conclude, if these problems are resolved the objectives of introducing Life skills into schools will be accomplished.

5.5.3 Findings with regard to the relationship between the educators' views and their biographical data

The aim of the present study was to ascertain whether educators’ biographical data such as gender, years of teaching experience, phases and qualifications have any relationship with/about educators' views on the challenges facing the teaching of Life skills. Findings relating to these are discussed below:

The relationship between gender and the views of educators

The finding of this study with regards to the relationship between gender and views of educators on the challenges educators face in teaching Life skills education revealed that male and female teachers do not differ significantly when it comes to their respective views. This means that both male and female educators view the teaching of Life skills challenges in the same manner. The likely reasons for this finding is that since the educators are resident in the same locality/location and are familiar with the environment, their views may not significantly differ. This finding is not in agreement with that of Mzindle (2011), who reported that there are significant differences between males and females regarding their attitudes towards Life-Orientation. Likewise, the finding of this study is not supported by Nduangu, Wauma-Nagara & Wango (2013) who, in their study, observed that gender has an influence on implementing Life skills education. The/their study revealed that there were gender limitations to teaching Life
skills education, when selecting Life skills teachers at schools and that those life skills was mainly taught by female teachers.

The finding of this research would generate further discourse on whether gender has any implication on the educator’s views regarding challenges they face while teaching Life skills in primary schools, with special reference to rural primary schools. The reason is because of scanty literature on this variable displays gender has implications on the Life skills education issue while the finding of this study revealed otherwise.

**The relationship between age and the views of educators**

The results indicated that age differences do influence educators’ views about the challenges faced when teaching Life skills. The age distribution among educators ranged between 31 and 50 years of age. The assessment of age distribution among educators from different schools is important in examining Life Skills programmes that have the intervention aimed at behaviour change. Educators ranged between 20 and 30 years are likely to have started establishing themselves in teaching Life Skills. This age group are quite energetic and are likely associated with new teaching skills and models relevant to the Life Skills curricular/curriculum.

This perception is likely to change as some consider educators above 31 years of age to have practical experience in handling Life Skills and they easily adapt to new training as well as modes that can enhance performance in Life Skills among learners.

**The relationship between the different phases and the views of educators**

The study’s findings indicated that there is a relationship between phases handled by educators and the capability of educators to identify challenges. Different teaching phases influence teachers’ views differently. The data analysis revealed that teachers from/in the intermediate phase are able to identify challenges the most/faster/earlier etc.. The researcher opined that the intermediate phase is the transition stage from childhood to puberty. Commonly learners start to act/behave/interact differently in this phase. No previous studies were found that dealt with the relationship between phases and the challenges faced when teaching Life skills. The researcher also observed that this could be attributed to the fact that the other studies reviewed
were conducted in totally different settings and environments from those of the present study conducted at primary schools whilst most studies were done in secondary schools.

**The relationship between post level and the views of educators**

It should be remembered that the aim of this study was to determine whether there was any relationship between educators’ post level and their views on challenges faced when teaching Life skills. During the data analysis, because of their low number deputy principals and principals were lumped together with HoD’s to make a statistical difference. This study’s findings indicated that there is no relationship between levels and educators’ views on Life skills challenges. Different post levels in which teachers are serving at schools have no effect on their capability to identify the challenges.

**The relationship between experience and the views of educators**

The findings of this study revealed that there is a relationship between experience and educators’ views on Life skills challenges. The results indicates that experienced teachers are more capable of identifying the challenges. Without any doubt experience will play a major role in educators identifying the challenges. One cannot compare an educator teaching Life skills to have the same experience as a newly employed/appointed educator. This is in line with the findings by Pillay (2012) who advocated that experience is an important factor to consider with regard to LO teachers. Pillay (2012) also argued that keystone Life Orientation (LO) teachers should be skilled counsellors, career guides and diverse role players who are open, approachable, have integrity, be trustworthy, resolves conflict and make good use of internal and external support within the context of schools. Only educators with acquired experience could develop such skills. One of the finding results could be that teachers with experience are at a stage where they have acquired adequate skills of handling the challenges and feels comfortable to solve them. Shechtman, et.al (2005) argues that Life Skills requires a teacher to serve as a model, motivator, facilitator and trainer, all of which are skills that must be acquired and takes time to cultivate.
The result from the data analysis revealed that educators’ qualifications have a significant relationship with their views on the challenges faced when teaching Life skills. Without any doubt educator’s qualification would/doe have an impact. This is because an unqualified educator may not be able to identify the challenges since he or she is not aware of Life skills education’s content and pedagogy. This finding support the previous findings of Mestry et.al, (2009); Van Deventer (2009) and Pillay 2012) who, in their different studies, argued that the single most significant factor why teachers should be professionally developed is based on the conviction that the quality of teachers positively influence the quality of the learners’ experience and achievement. The finding also find relevance Kolosoa in & Makhakhane (2015), who concluded that most teachers teaching Life skills do not possess the qualification/knowledge to teach Life skills. Many higher institutions do not have qualification modules/subjects/study fields/disciples containing Life skills education.

Life skills educators are only developed through in-service (internal) training and workshops since there is no higher institution who offers Life skills as a major subject, instead its life-orientation that is being taught from grade 7 to grade 12. Life skills is infused in the Life-orientation curriculum. Life skills form the basis of Life-orientation in the Junior and Intermediate phase. This finding points out that the teachers trained in Life orientation are suitably qualified to teach Life skills.
5.6 IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

a) Based on finding number one, the educators agreed that they face challenges with the teaching of Life skills. This finding is consistent with the literature (Pharaoh, Frantz & Smith 2011, Makhubele & Qalinga 2009) which present Life Skills as the engagement predictors of learners in health-risk behaviours which cause the challenges in Life skills classes.

b) Based on finding number two, the overwhelming majority of educators (99%) confidently agree that Life skills can be used/applied as an intervention to counteract the challenges faced in Life skills classes. This findings support the existing study conducted by Steyn, 2008 who asserts that Life Skills training as a uni-modal intervention shows promise to alter child troubled behaviour effectively. Contrary to the above findings, Jacobs (2011) assert that many learners regard LO as unnecessary, boring and irrelevant.

c) Finding number three indicated that different variables yield different results. It was found that gender and post level have no significant influence on the educators’ ability to indicate different challenges experienced in the Life skills class. While on the other hand age, phase, experience and qualifications was found to have a significant impact on the educators’ ability to indicate different challenges experienced in the Life skills class.

The study therefore revealed that there is no evidence that educators’ view on the challenges faced when teaching Life skills depend on the post level and gender. The respondents’ opinions were independent of gender, meaning that males and female homogenously agree that there are challenges facing life skills teaching.

Age, phase, experience and qualifications influences the educators’ views on teaching challenges of Life skills. Aged/older and experienced educators are normally referred to as senior educators who have more years of teaching experience and are more capable of identifying the challenges faced when teaching Life skills. Furthermore, qualifications empower educators and influence their views positively on identifying these life skills teaching challenges.
5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although the study succeeded in achieving its objectives, some limitations exist with regard to sampling, instrument used and administration of the research instrument and the non-return of some completed questionnaires.

a) There were limitations emanating from the data collection method. The sampling method that was used in the study is probability sampling. Some of the teachers were unqualified and have no formal training on Life skills.

b) The sample size was not very large and consisted of two hundred and two educators. The researcher had time constraints and could therefore not secure a sizeable population sample. Schools were distant from one another.

c) Other educators did not respond to all the statements in the instrument which lead to some of the questionnaires being discarded. Some schools returned the instruments long after the stipulated time.

5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study succeeded in achieving its objectives. Notwithstanding, the study recommends the following which, in researcher’s view, could minimise the challenges faced by the educators:

a) All educators teaching Life skills must be professionally qualified since the study has revealed that qualification/s influence the teachers’ ability.

b) It is also recommended that experienced educators may/could be those who teaches the subject, as per the study results.

c) The findings also lead to the recommendation that Life skills can be used as an intervention at schools.
d) Networking of educators at school is recommended since the findings illustrate that some of the educators are still unqualified.

5.9 FUTURE AVENUES

The following reflects the scope for future research:

a) The sample of this study was from only four circuits, but other Umkhanyakude district circuits is necessary to determine which circuit needs more attention.

b) The sample of this study consisted of two hundred and two (202) primary school educators. Another research, with a larger sample, would be ideal to generalise the findings nationally and internationally with greater confidence.

c) A comparative study between rural and urban primary schools is a necessity to determine whether the educators have unilateral feelings in terms of their views as far as Life skills is concerned. Life skills curricula need to be shaped by the socially complex and diverse needs of young people according to the contexts in which they find themselves (Theron, 2007). From this literature, one can deduce that learners can experience different challenges according to the social context they find themselves in.

d) The use of LST programmes together with Life skills is also recommended as one method towards effective intervention.

5.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the findings of the study and established that the aims of the study were achieved. Recommendations for future studies were made and limitations of the study were listed.
REFERENCES


Roselyne, K. (2014). Teaching life skills curriculum in primary schools in Lurambi Division, Kakamega County, Kenya. A research project presented to the School of Education in partial fulfilment for a Master’s degree in education (curriculum studies) Kenyatta University.


ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE 1: Information sheet

VOLUNTARY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EDUCATORS

Educators’ views on the challenges in the teaching of Life skills in Primary Schools under Umkhanyakude District

University of Zululand
Faculty of Education
Department of Educational Psychology
Researcher: Mlambo Winile
Supervisor: Prof. P.T. Sibaya

Note to the respondent

I appreciate your willingness to assist in this research, however, please note that you are not compelled to partake in this survey.

Your contributions to this questionnaire will remain private and confidential. No one will be able to trace your responses back to you as a person.

This is a confidential survey and your name will not be linked to your responses. All personal information will remain confidential.

How to complete the questionnaire

1. Your opinion is required. It does not matter what other people think. I am solely interested in your opinion. Tell me how you feel. Your responses are important to me.
2. Read each question carefully and take a moment to ponder your answer.
3. Please use a pen to mark your responses by placing a tick (✓) or a cross (X), in the appropriate column, or by writing down the appropriate information, where ever required. Please do not make use of tippex.

Thank you for your participation

CONTACT DETAILS:
MLAMBOWINILE
📞 0827281745
✉️ wmlambo5@gmail.com

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ANNEXURE 2: Consent form

Educators’ views on the challenges facing the teaching of life skills in Umkhanyakude primary schools

Declaration

I, _________________________________ (full name), hereby confirm that I understand the contents of the covering letter and the nature of the research project and consent to participating in the research project by completing the attached questionnaire.

I am aware that the answers I provide in the questionnaire will contribute towards research regarding challenges facing the teaching of life skills in Umkhanyakude Primary Schools. I am also aware that my anonymity is guaranteed. I am also aware that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time prior to the publication of the result.

Signed: ___________________________ Date: __________________

Name (in full): ______________________
ANNEXURE 3: Questionnaire

Questionnaire

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA
FILL IN YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION BY TICKING IN THE CORRECT COLUMN:

1. GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. AGE IN YEARS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>21-30YRS</th>
<th>31-40 Years</th>
<th>41-50 Years</th>
<th>51 Year and Above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. PHASE IN WHICH YOU ARE TEACHING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Senior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4. WHICH POST DO YOU CURRENTLY HOLD IN YOUR SCHOOL?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educator</th>
<th>HOD</th>
<th>D. Principal</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN YEARS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0-5YRS</th>
<th>6-10YRS</th>
<th>11-15YRS</th>
<th>16-20YRS</th>
<th>21+YRS and Above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
6. QUALIFICATION/S

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic qualification</th>
<th>Professional qualification</th>
<th>Matric and Below</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. EDUCATION LEVEL/S (REQV)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15 and above</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>11 and below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION B

Put a tick (✓) or a cross (X), in the appropriate column to mark your answer

KEYS:

SA-Strongly Agree,  A –Agree, DA –Disagree,  NS-Not Sure, SD-Strongly Disagree

1. BEHAVIOURS VIEWED AS CHALLENGES IN THE CLASS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Do you view the following as the challenges faced by learners in the LS class</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>DA</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Bullying behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Hyperactive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Substance abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.1</td>
<td>Smoking cigarette</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.2</td>
<td>Drinking alcohol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.3</td>
<td>Taking drugs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.4 Stealing

1.5 Fighting

1.6 Learners who has been abused

| 1.6.1 Physical |
| 1.6.2 Sexual |
| 1.6.3 Verbal |
| 1.6.4 Emotional |

2. DO EDUCATORS VIEW LS AS AN INTERVENTION STRATEGY TO RECTIFY LEARNERS’ ADVERSE BEHAVIOURS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
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<th>NS</th>
<th>DA</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.1 Mediation skills help to bring about harmony among learners</td>
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<td>2.2 LS teaching help to discover learners’ abilities, strength and hobbies</td>
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<td>2.3 Assertive skills help to enhance learners’ self-image</td>
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<td>2.4 LS teach learners to respect different Religions and culture</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
<td>LS can help learner counteract gender stereotyping and sexism</td>
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<td>2.6</td>
<td>LS can teach learners to say no to abuse</td>
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<td>2.7</td>
<td>LS differentiate between fact and myth about HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>2.8</td>
<td>Learners appreciate creative and visual art</td>
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<td>2.9</td>
<td>Physical activity discourage sedentary behaviour</td>
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<td>2.10</td>
<td>LS makes a difference in the life of a child</td>
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<td>2.11</td>
<td>Learners do not always feel at ease to confide with their LS educators</td>
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<td>2.12</td>
<td>It is difficult to handle LS sensitive topics</td>
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# ANNEXURE 4: Ethical clearance certificate

**UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND**  
**RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**  
(Reg No: UZREC 171110-Q30)

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**ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificate Number</th>
<th>UZREC 171110-Q30 PCM 2015/245</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Title</td>
<td>Educator’s views on the challenges facing the teaching of Life Skills in Ukukhanyakude Primary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Investigator</td>
<td>W Mambai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor and Co- supervisor</td>
<td>Prof PT Sibeko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Educational Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of Project</td>
<td>Honours/4th Year x Master’s x Doctoral x Departmental</td>
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</table>

The University of Zululand’s Research Ethics Committee (UZREC) hereby gives ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project proposal and the documents listed on page 1 of this Certificate.

**Special conditions:**

1. The Principal Investigator must report to the UZREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.
2. Documents marked “To be submitted” (see page 2) must be presented for ethical clearance before any data collection can commence.

The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this Certificate, using the reference number indicated above, but may not conduct any data collection using research instruments that are yet to be approved.

Please note that the UZREC must be informed immediately of:

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the documents that were presented to the UZREC
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

W Mambai - PCM 2015/245
ANNEXURE 5: Permission to undertake research study

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DOE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: “EDUCATORS’ VIEWS ON THE CHALLENGES FACING THE TEACHING OF LIFE SKILLS IN UMKHANYAKUDE PRIMARY SCHOOLS”, in the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principal and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 August 2014 to 30 November 2015.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Mr. Alwar at the contact numbers below:
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it The Director-Resources Planning, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (UMkhanyakude District).

Entweni Primary       Msizi Wamakrestu Primary
Mzabalazo Primary     Qalangokuhle Primary
Nsabalele Primary     Nqiwaneni Primary
Ntikili Primary  Qalakancane Primary
Ubuhlebemvelo Primary  Ingaqa Primary
Head of Department
Department of Education
Province of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X 9137
Pietermaritzburg
3201

Dear Sir/Madam

PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH STUDY

The above subject matter refers.

This letter serves to request your office to grant me a permission to collect data in this very important study on challenges facing the teaching of life skills. I am studying towards a Masters Degree in the Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Psychology and Special Education at the University of Zululand. The title of my dissertation is: “Educators’ views on the challenges facing the teaching of life skills in UMkhanyakude Primary Schools.”

The objective of the study is to investigate and examine whether educators can identify misdemeanours where Life Skills can be applied.
I confirm that I am a registered student with the University of Zululand.

I would appreciate it if you will grant me permission to embark on this study by sharing teacher's views. In the completion of the interview and questionnaire, the information furnished by teachers will make an important contribution to the success of my study.

Their contributions will be regarded as confidential and they can be assured that it will not be divulged to any person. A summary of the findings will be recorded in my dissertation which I will submit to my examiners for evaluation.

Your co-operation in this matter will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Winile Mlambo
Student No. 201330434